

SHEEP AND SWINE.

RAISING MUTTON.

Many of our farmers have gone out of sheep raising, and not nearly the number of sheep are now kept as there was a few years ago. The reason given for thus reducing the flocks is that wool is so cheap that it does not pay to keep sheep. But, granting that wool is low priced, sheep husbandry is more profitable now than when wool brought from thirty to thirty-five cents a pound, from the fact that mutton is so much dearer, and the demand for fat sheep greater. In relation to the weight of the carcass, the wool is only about one-eighth; so the great object in keeping sheep should be rather for the price of the meat than the wool. Mutton is fully two or three cents a pound higher now than when farmers sold their wool at a high figure—result, a better net profit than the difference in the price of wool then and now would make. So that those who own sheep at the present time have property worth more than ever before. Then, again, what a price will be given for early lambs; and how eagerly they are sought after both by shippers and butchers. With attention to breeding, and proper winter quarters for the ewes, early lambs may be easily raised and got ready for market when lamb commands the highest price. With such inducements for profitable sheep raising, it seems strange that farmers should persist in discouraging this branch of stock raising because wool happens to be cheap. A butcher, doing a large wholesale business, assured us recently that he never found sheep and lambs so scarce as now, and a large area of country has to be travelled over before a suitable lot can be gathered together for shipment.

A flock of sheep should double themselves each year, and the early lambs will sell for quite as much as the sheep cost in the first place, thus leaving the parent stock and wool to the good. In fact, sheep breeding is one of the best paying branches of mixed farming, especially in this country, with its dry climate and rich pastures. There is no country in the world where sheep thrive so well, are so free from disease, and attain such perfection, as in Canada. Those farmers who are neglecting this important industry are standing in their own light, and those who have kept up their flocks by careful breeding, have never done so well as during the past few years.

SPRING CARE OF BREEDING SOWS.

On many farms the breeding sows are perhaps the most profitable stock. But the profit is largely dependent upon the safe rearing of good-sized litters. We know so well how much depends upon practical experience in the safe rearing of large litters, that we shall not attempt to give minute instructions for the novice in such case. It is recommended, for safety, if the weather be cold, to take the pigs from the sow as fast as they are dropped, in a warm basket, to a warm room, and keep them warm till the sow is ready to suckle them.

In this case, it is supposed that the sow is quite docile, and will not be alarmed at the presence of an attendant. When the sow is done farrowing, a warm bran slop, with a gill of boiled flaxseed stirred in, should be given her.

When she has taken this, the pigs may be brought to her to suckle, and they will usually commence their work with activity.

The sow must be fed sparingly for a few days, so as not to produce or keep up a feverish condition of the system. But when this danger is passed, she must be fed with special reference to

Suppose she has eight pigs to feed, few have considered what a draught this is upon her system. After they are ten to twelve days old, they will drink three pounds of milk each per day. This will require the sow to produce twenty-four pounds per day—as much as an ordinary cow. To do this, she must be fed on the most nutritious food. Two hundred pounds of oats and one hundred pounds of corn, ground together, with one pint of linseed oil-meal added to each day's food, the whole cooked, and given in a thin slop, will be as good a diet as can be found. This will produce milk that will fill out the jackets of the little pigs, and make them grow to your satisfaction.

After the pigs are three weeks old, they should be taught to take cow's milk by themselves, as part of their food. The sow can not furnish all the food they want after that period. But the pigs should get all the food they want, so that there may be no check in their growth. If you have no cow's milk for them (and it may be skimmed milk), then give them ground oats and shorts, cooked with one-fifteenth part flaxseed. Feed this blood-warm in a thin slop. They will soon eat it greedily. It will also be easy to wean the pigs from the dam on this food. This small proportion of flaxseed will assist in keeping the pigs healthy. It is well to wean the pigs at about six weeks old, but not before that, and do it gradually, so as not to injure the sow. After weaning the pigs, the sow should be fed liberally, so as to soon recover from the heavy draught that the pigs have made upon her. When grass comes she should have a good pasture, as this will be a healthy situation for her to recover and get ready for another litter. A successful breeder should be kept for that purpose till four or five years old.

Now the feeder must remember that pigs should never stop growing until ready for sale. The aim should be to have the pig increase in weight at least one pound per day until ten months old, and then he is ready for sale, as more profit can then be counted on than ever after. It is generally true that every pound put on after that costs more than it will bring. Quick returns are the rule in pig-feeding.

CARE OF SHEEP.

A farmer, to be successful, should never sell a poor sheep, but sell fat ones and fatten the poor ones. Some farmers do not stable sheep, claiming that they can make them thrive out-of-doors. Now it is absurd to tell people that sheep will do better out-of-doors, and that it does not pay to shelter them. A man that can make a sheep fat out in the wet and cold would make a good success of feeding in shelter, if he would put his attention to his work like he would have to out-of-doors. A man should never keep more sheep than he can shelter without crowding, although some breeds will stand crowding more than others will.

The first thing in feeding is to be regular. Feed at a certain hour, and then stick to that time; for where feeding is done with regularity you can go about the stable and sheep will not pay any attention to you until the feeding hour.

Second is cleanliness. Keep the troughs clean, and do not let them stand in the wet manure, but use plenty of straw.

Third, I would say that good hay or corn-fodder should be used. If you have poor hay, feed it to the cattle, but never to the sheep. Corn shelled and mixed with oats and bran makes a good feed, but when the farmer has the money it is good to buy oil-meal; but we do not always have the money. The best rations are shelled corn, and

make certain that they get salt, mix a small amount with the grain, for some feeders are apt to be forgetful when it comes to giving on a cold morning.

The last, and most important, is water. A great many farmers claim that sheep do not need any water. I often wonder how they would like to be fed on bread and potatoes for six months without water. Water is necessary to animal existence, and why deprive them of it? To feed successfully, sheep should have water accessible at all times. In these days of bored wells it will pay a farmer to have a well by the sheep stable.

Do not scare your sheep, but make them know that you are their friend, and they will thrive; and it will be a pleasure to stand in the stable and watch them crack corn and eat hay without being on the watch to see if any danger is near. Shoot all stray dogs and some that are not stray. I believe the best motto would be, shoot all dogs not with their owners, and it would be better for the farmer and shepherd.—*National Stockman*.

LAMBS IN APRIL.

An exchange seasonably remarks that it is not only necessary to have the lambs early, but also to keep them growing. In addition to that which they derive from their dams, a feed of oats, either whole or ground, will cause them to keep in health and grow rapidly. In fact there is no grain so well adapted to feeding to sheep as oats, and they are very fond of such. One of the difficulties in allowing sheep and lambs on the same pasture is that the lambs are liable to all the ills that affect the older animals, such as cough, distemper, and if the pasture is wet perhaps the foot-rot may cause trouble. The lambs should not be permitted to remain with the flock, as they can be more easily and properly cared for when separated, and as it is the early lamb that brings the highest price, every effort should be made to secure it.—*Farmer and Fruit Grower*.

FEED THE LITTLE PIGS.

When a lot of pigs are running together, the larger and stronger ones get what they want to eat, but at the expense of the little ones, which have to be thankful if they get off with a whole skin, let alone having anything to eat. If a board is nailed so that the smaller ones can get through the fence into an adjoining yard or pen, they can there be fed more liberally and have a chance to get their rations in peace. On account of water and shed-room it sometimes is not convenient to divide the lot and keep the smaller ones by themselves, but by the arrangement of providing food for them in a small adjoining pen they can have as good a chance as the rest.

Sheep should have their feet trimmed at least twice a year. If they are not trimmed the hoof turns under at the edges and retains a mass of filth and dirt which is apt to cause foot-rot.

Keep a few sheep on the farm, if not many. Wool will always bring cash at some price, and it comes off when there is little else to sell. Mutton always sells well, and is always good for the table. Keep sheep.

Spare pigs, as a rule, are worth more than any others. It is of much importance therefore that as many of them as possible should be saved. If lost, the main profits of the year are gone. Considering them as a source of wealth to the breeder and the nation at large, great care should be taken in providing for their safe delivery and in so arranging that they may thrive and do well from the first. No one having sows in farrow at this time should allow them to be neglected.