

FARMER'S ADVOCATE

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Stock Journal
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DIFFERENT BREEDS OF SHEEP.

To the Editor of the Live Stock Journal:

I should like to see, in the Journal, a full and fair description of the Cotswold, Leicester, and Lincoln sheep so as to distinguish one from another. Sheep are being brought to my part of the country under the names, always, of course, of the most popular breeds of the neighborhood.

F. H.
This inquiry has been answered in a former number of the Journal. But as large numbers of new subscribers are being added to our list every month, it may be proper to repeat a general description of the various breeds of long wool and mutton sheep.

The Leicesters are usually placed at the head of the long wool breeds as being the finest in form and fleece, and also because it has been largely used in crossing, for the improvement of the other varieties.

The head is hornless, and rather long and narrow; ears thin, with spots of bluish tinge. The long, well cut ear of the pure Leicester, with its slightly backward inclination, is a distinguishing characteristic of the breed, as is also the full prominent eye, with quiet and lively expression. The face and forehead must be bare of wool, though covered with a fine coat of hair—white, with a little inclination to the bluish tint.

The body is straight, with ribs well sprung and barrel-shaped; the pelt inclined to be thin; the wool exceedingly soft, fine and lustrous, and should be uniform over the whole of the carcass.

The extremities—muzzle and legs—are exceedingly fine, but the quarters are full and wide, with back broad and level. Indeed, the carcass of the true Leicester sheep is as near perfection in form as can be conceived possible.

The Cotswold, though of late years modified by crosses of the Leicester blood, and, therefore, strongly resembling that breed, is somewhat coarser and longer in carcass; with a heavier fleece, which should be as lustrous, though not so fine as the Leicester. The head is larger, and must have a tuft of wool on the forehead, which the Leicester variety never has.

The Lincoln is as large as the Cotswold, though in other respects, as now bred, very strongly resembling the Leicester. The head is long, the face narrow and bare of wool, with white fine hair and light bluish tint as in the Leicester. They stand rather higher on the leg than the two varieties before mentioned, and the carcass is apt to be less symmetrical; but the fleece is longer and heavier, and though not quite so fine as the Leicester, is unsurpassed in lustre, and, therefore, commands the best prices in the markets.

It is difficult to describe animals so as to enable a person to determine the pure-bred from the mongrel; indeed, the best judges are not always able to detect the presence of a slight dash of inferior blood.

One thing the producer may rely upon—that long-wool sheep peddled about the country at low prices are never pure-bred. Indeed, blooded stock of all sorts should be purchased of parties that are known as reputable breeders—this is the only reliable security the purchaser can have that the animal purchased will turn out what it is represented to be.

The Southdown sheep has a broad, rather short, though extremely neat, head; forehead covered with wool, and the face and legs with grey or brown hair. The fleece is rather short, of good felting quality, equal to half-blood Merino, but superior for flannel, &c., and should be solid and compact, and of uniform quality throughout without any projecting hairs.

The carcass should be straight, with well-sprung ribs and broad, level back, having wide quarters, deep flank, and well-packed twist. This being held in higher esteem than any other breed for the production of superior mutton, the full and perfect development of carcass is deemed of the highest importance.

The Hampshire Downs are coarser in form and fleece, with black faces and legs.

The Shropshire Downs are a cross between the Southdowns and long-wools—a large breed with long, coarse wool, in form resembling the Cotswolds, with black faces and legs.

In regard to this matter of the color of the faces and legs, it is remarkable that while the Southdowns, which stand at the head of all these varieties, have, as before observed, brown or grey colors in these parts—their crosses on other breeds will frequently show black faces and legs.

When the object is to keep a small flock for mutton, rams of this variety are found exceedingly profitable to cross on ewes of a most any other breed. But the nearer they go to the pure blood, the better the mutton.

CARE OF SHEEP.

If possible, make arrangements to keep all the sheep under shelter the present winter.—And in the construction of sheds keep away from low, wet ground. If left to choose for themselves, they seek that which is high and dry.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD MILKER.

We find in an exchange the following rules given as a guide in purchasing dairy stock:—

1. Youth. A cow is in her prime when from four to six years old, and the best paying time to buy is just after the birth of her second or third calf.

2. Prominence and fullness of milk veins, and velvety softness of skin. The milk veins run down on either side of the animal towards the udder, and are easily perceptible to the eye, or can readily be found by pressure of the hand, if the animal is not over fat. The skin should be soft and mellow, not hard, rough and "staring."

3. Symmetry, fullness and softness of the udder. It should be broad, well spread out, projecting behind the legs, and also reaching forward under the belly. These should be a softness to the touch, and an absence of fleshiness and thickness.

4. Perfect number and condition of teats. If one teat is wanting, about a fourth less milk will be the result. A cow's udder is not, as some suppose, a barrel with four taps, but it is divided into four different compartments, called "milk glands," each of which has its own tap or teat. It is not only important that the full number of teats be present and in working order, but it is desirable that they will be well placed, not crowded together, but pretty far and uniformly apart; but rather long and tapering; all pointing out and downwards; equal in size and even in appearance.

5. Docility and quietness of disposition. These are indicated by large, mild and clear eyes, and an air of contentment generally. A cow that is quiet and contented feeds at ease, chews her cud with entire satisfaction, and will secrete and yield more milk than any restless and turbulent animal, having similar characteristics in other respects.

FROM CONTINENTAL CORRESPONDENCE OF PRAIRIE FARMER.

We have at last a clean bill of health respecting the plague. One case of suspected typhus was notified to the authorities, the animal was slaughtered, but the post mortem examination revealed no signs of the scourge. Far otherwise is the condition of the foot-and-mouth disease. It rages not only extensively but with intense gravity. That it is contagious is now admitted, and much regret is expressed that in point of vigorous inspection and summarily circumscribing it, all was forgotten. The milk, too, of affected stock is no longer considered safe, even when boiled. Carbolic acid given as a drink or used as an injection, in small doses cautiously diluted, is highly spoken of both as a remedy and a preventive. Vaccination has been tried but unsuccessfully. A drink composed of cooked barley, following a slight dose of Glauber's salts, produced good effects. It has been observed that a sure symptom of the disease is when the milk, left to set, throws up but little cream.

TRANSACTIONS IN LINCOLNS.

Richard Gibson, Esq., writes to the *National Live Stock Journal*, that he has purchased all of J. C. Snell's imported Lincoln. Also, that he has sold four imported shearing ewes, to Mr. Thomson, London, Ontario; an imported ram to Mr. Wright, of Windsor, Ont.; a ram to F. Sales; and 23 high grade ewes (on Leicester foundation), to Col. King, of Minneapolis, Minn.

John Snell & Sons, "Willow Lodge," Edmonton, Canada, have recently made the following sales:—To S. Truman, Mitchell, Iowa, one Cotswold ram lamb; to J. Tompkins, Spencer, N. Y., one Cotswold ram lamb and one ewe lamb; to R. Kenny, Ottawa, one Cotswold ram lamb, one Leicester ram lamb, and six Leicester ewes; to H. Jeffrey, Whitby, Ont., 10 Leicester ewes; to J. Rowart, Barrie, Ont., one Cotswold ram lamb; to P. Cameron, Perth, Ont., four Leicester lambs.

THE NECESSITY FOR IMPROVEMENT.

A correspondent of the *Rural Home*, in discussing the sheep question, declares that it is no longer profitable to keep flocks of Merinos in the older States which will only shear an average of 4 lbs. of wool. He mentions the names of Geo. Ashley, of Hemlock Lake, N. Y., and also those of Messrs. S. P. Reed, R. C. Beach and H. D. Adams (same place we presume), which have been carefully bred, and average from 7½ to 8 lbs. of washed wool; "and the day is far distant," he thinks, when such flocks "will not pay in in Western New York." Keeping the best, and studying hard for improvement in all directions, is the price of success.

PURCHASE OF COTSWOLDS.

Messrs. Snell have purchased the entire flock of Cotswolds of A. & J. Jeffrey, Whitby, Ont., bred from the stock of F. W. Stone, of Guelph.

COTSWOLD SALES.

John R. Craig, Esq., Edmonton, Ont., reports sales of a Cotswold ram each, to Mr. Moffat, of Ohio; B. F. Doran, Buncetown, Mo.; Robert Kerr, Mexico, Mo.; H. Wellens; Blackwell, Mo.; J. W. F. Belt, Bethalto, Mo.; Mr. Duffy, St. Louis, Mo.; B. L. Dorsey, Dorsey Station, Ill. Four rams to Wm. Gill, Bunker Hill, Mo.; five rams to A. S. Ferguson, St. Louis, Mo.; one ewe to E. M. Chrisman, Jacksonville, Ill.; four ewes to Messrs. Miller & Powell, Beecher, Ill.; and four ewes to Capt. Bastle, St. Louis, Mo. Also a prize pen of five, embracing selections from the winners at the English Royal of 1871, and the Canada and American fairs of 1872 (being the pen to which was awarded the sweepstakes for any age or breed at St. Louis, 1872), for \$1,000.

Poultry Yard.

HENNERIES NECESSARY.

The *German Town Telegraph* says:—Those not fully familiar with all the requirements of the "henneries," should remember that if they desire a liberal crop of eggs in the winter, fowls must be fed with raw meat chopped fine, not less than twice a week. They should have a constant supply of gravel, also old mortar, lime or ground bones. They should be kept warm—the house should have a southern exposure, if possible, with window lights to shift when necessary. No one who cares about the appearance of his lawns, or the cleanliness of his yards, doersteps, etc., should allow his fowls to wander about. A chicken yard as well as a chicken house, is indispensable. As a dessert, a feed of crushed bones or bone dust should not be overlooked. On it mainly depends the success of the henneries in winter.

DISEASES OF POULTRY.

Nearly all poultry diseases are caused either by wet, want of cleanliness, or bad feeding; in other words by neglect somewhere. It is easier to guard against this than to cure birds when they are ill, which is almost always a very unsatisfactory speculation. The chief obstacle is that being covered with few feathers, there are few symptoms to observe; and as the poor dumb things cannot tell what is the matter with them, we often have to prescribe very much in the dark. We see, for instance, a fowl evidently ill, with feathers ruffled, comb dark and dull, appetite nearly gone, and listless and dull in manner; but this may be the result of many different causes, and more special symptoms are hard to discover, seeing we can hardly feel its pulse, and its skin is difficult to examine. Common fowls hardly pay the trouble they give in treatment; but with valuable birds the case is different, and it is chiefly on their account we give what is yet known, so far as we are able to discover, of poultry disease.

There can be no doubt whatever that a certain percentage of death amongst fowls is an actual benefit. Fowls, like everything else, must die some time; and, again like everything else, it can but seldom happen that the cause of death will be mere old age. A certain proportion of loss, therefore, is not necessarily a proof of mismanagement, but is rather part of economy of the great superintendent of the universe, by which creatures no longer really capable of maintaining the vigor of the species are taken from a world in which they are of no further use. As is well put by a writer in one of the American poultry journals, "the sure eye of Nature has picked out of the very ones that you would be glad to get rid of could you detect them, and has left you the hardier individuals to breed from; the weakness, moreover, often consisting in some profound fault that does not show itself."

It is cases of this nature, in which some extra trial of weather or circumstances has only developed latent weakness, issuing or not, as the case may be, in any well-marked complaint, which are difficult or even impossible of cure. There are, however, many cases in which exposure or other active cause has occasioned acute disease in the most healthy birds, presenting plainly-marked symptoms, the treatment of which is well understood. Such are the mostly amenable to judicious treatment, and fowls of priceless value may thus be saved, which otherwise must be lost to the amateur. Between the small group of such plainly marked diseases—as roup—and the many instances in which to all present knowledge the symptoms are totally obscure, and recovery must be left to the natural powers of the bird, aided by such nursing and regimen as appears best, is a large class of cases in which partial ground for guidance is afforded by some one or more symptoms of a marked character. In these also treatment may be adopted with hope if the affection be of a sudden or acute character; but chronic symptoms usually betray a constitutional weakness, and are not only difficult to deal with, but even in the interval of the yard it is often better to let them run their natural course, or to anticipate their effect by merciful execution. —*Wright's Illustrated Book of Poultry.*

PURCHASING UNDRAWN POULTRY.

We are one of a score of housekeepers who totally object to the purchasing of poultry unless it be drawn. The habit of forcing fowls on the market undrawn, and allowing them to freeze and thaw (generally with full crops), by which process they become fetid and turn green, can not prove otherwise than unwholesome food—not fit to be eaten. No fowls should be purchased by housekeepers unless they are properly cleaned and drawn. In many cities there is a fine imposed upon the person who offers undrawn poultry upon the market for sale.

PURCHASING POULTRY FOR THE TABLE.

As we have given the mode for fattening fowls for market, &c., we now have a word of caution to offer those purchasing poultry which may not, perhaps, come amiss. Those who are not good judges of poultry, as to their age, may, and often do, have old, tough fowls palmed off upon them by an unscrupulous dealer.

Fowls are killed and prepared for market with much dexterity and care by some dealers, and many devices practiced to catch the eye of the unsophisticated purchaser—the best side of the poultry being shown to the greatest advantage. Every sort of fowl is killed, plucked and put on the market, and if the purchaser buys an inferior article at an exorbitant price, he has only himself to blame for so doing.

HOW TO JUDGE THE AGE OF POULTRY.

The age of a plucked fowl can be judged simply by the legs. If the scales on the leg of a hen are rough and the spur hard, it will not be necessary to see the head to determine that she is old; still the head will corroborate your observation; if that of an old hen, the bill will be stiff and hard, and the comb rough and thick. The scales on the leg of a young hen are smooth, glossy and fresh colored, whatever the color may be; only the rudiments of spurs are observable; the claws tender and short, the under bill soft, the comb thin and smooth. An old hen turkey has rough scales on the legs, callousities on the soles or bottom of the feet, and long, strong claws; while a young turkey has the reverse of these marks. A young goose or duck can be readily told by the tenderness of the skin under the wings, the strength of the joints of the legs, and the coarseness of the skin.

If the foregoing directions are strictly followed, in purchasing poultry, we will venture the assertion that the "good housewife" will have no fault to find with the length of time it takes to cook, or the toughness of her holiday turkey, goose or chicken. This mode of finding out the age of fowls is infallible.

HEALTHY FOOD FOR CHICKENS.

I have noticed lately, in many of the Eastern and Western papers devoted to the interest of farmers, a great complaint in regard to "Chicken Disease," almost equal to the "Ept-zootic" among the horses. Now I find no such reason to complain of mine, and I have as fine stock as there is in the county, full-bloods of different kinds. Having had considerable experience in the "chicken business," I will tell you thousands of readers how I feed mine from Nov. 1st to Feb. 31st.

For one hundred hens I take every morning one dozen medium sized potatoes boiled and mashed, together with five quarts of bran, one quart of good wheat middlings, and one teaspoonful of Cayenne pepper; mix the whole with hot water. This dish they relish, keep perfectly healthy and produce an abundance of eggs. I, of course, give them fresh water every day, and get at the butcher's every Wednesday morning three lbs. of what we, in the West, call "cracknels," or the refuse of renderings of lard. The cost of this latter is very cheap—three cents per lb.—and the chicks devour it with as much zest as you and I do our mince pies.

When there is snow on the ground I keep them in the hen house, which is always kept clean and dry, one built expressly for them, 28 by 40, with every convenience for their comfort. Of course to have nice, healthy and fat chickens, and plenty of fresh eggs, requires care; but I do this, in the morning while breakfast is being prepared, and don't seem to miss the time; and when we desire a nice, fat, plump hen for dinner or eggs for breakfast, we always have them on hand. Our Brahmas, when roasted, are about equal to a turkey.—C. S. S. Tonn, Plymouth, Ind., in "Moore's Rural New-Yorker."

A Louisville man who had only been acquainted with his girl two nights, attempted to kiss her at the gate. In his dying deposition he told the doctors that just as he "kissed her the earth slid out from under his feet, and his soul went out of his mouth, while his head touched the stars." Later dispatches show that what ailed him was the old man's boot.