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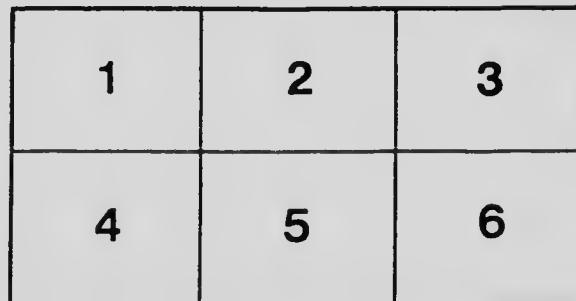
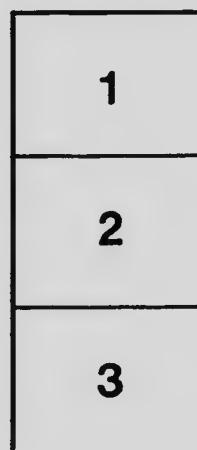
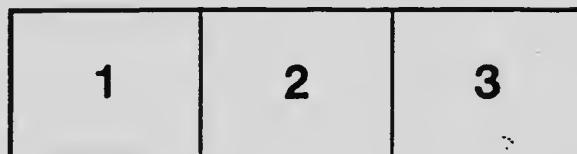
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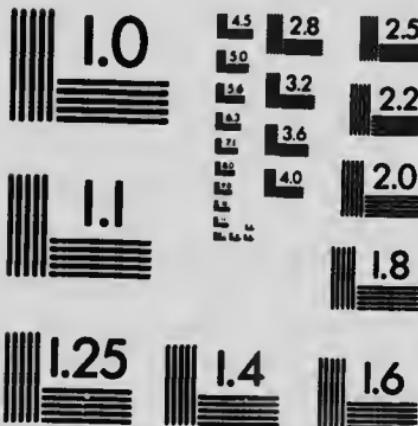
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DOMINION DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

LIVE STOCK BRANCH.

JOHN BRIGHT,
Commissioner.

H. S. ARKELL,
Asst. Commissioner.

SHEEP AND GOAT DIVISION.

THE MANAGEMENT OF SMALL FLOCKS SERIES.

PAMPHLET No. 5.

April 1914.

CARE OF THE EWE AND LAMB.

BY
T. REG. ARKELL.

Lambing time is by no means a fixed period. It depends largely upon the purpose for which the shepherd is raising his sheep. The breeder of pure-bred sheep who sells his ram lambs as flock-headers in the fall requires them dropped fairly early, at least some time in March or the beginning of April. The average flock holder who raises sheep for mutton purposes only need not have his lambs come until the succeeding month unless he is catering to a special market. In fact, if adequate facilities cannot be provided for caring for the lambs during the cold winter weather, it were better not to have them before April or such time as to permit placing them, when two or three weeks old, upon pasture. Where the winters are long and severe, most shepherds find they can obtain greater growth from lambs dropped during March or even the first of April than in January or February, inasmuch as the early lambs, being kept on dry feed for a long period, may become stunted or dwarfed. However, where a plentiful supply of milk and an abundance of succulent feed are supplied stunting, to a great degree, can be avoided. The practice which, it is to be regretted, all too many farmers follow, of having their lambs dropped "any old time" in summer, should be condemned. Young lambs will not thrive so well during the hot weather and, besides, will not attain sufficient growth to be sold for a reasonably high price in the fall. Such farmers comprehend the class with whom sheep raising does not pay and who are continuously disparaging the remunerativeness of the industry. The unprofitable feature in this, as in most instances of like nature, is created entirely by improper management. Every sheep-raiser, to attain success, should endeavour to have his lambs arrive in good season so that he can dispose of them upon the early market when the best prices prevail.

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CARE OF THE PREGNANT EWE.

Care of lambs should begin before they are born. The ewes, during the breeding season, should be placed upon as good pasture as can be afforded and, if necessary, some supplementary soiling fodder be provided. When they are brought into winter quarters, their diet should be changed gradually from pasture conditions to dry rations, and throughout the winter some feed of a succulent nature should always be supplied them. Roots and silage can be given to excellent purpose in this regard. Neither, however, should be fed extravagantly, for over-feeding is prone to cause the production of flabby, goitered lambs and sometimes abortion. Silage may be given at the



Monarchs of all they survey.

rate of from two to three pounds per day, and roots, three to four pounds. A good quality of hay, preferably alfalfa or clover, and some grain should be provided. After the breeding season the ram should no longer be kept with the ewes. He will thrive much better apart, and danger of his butting the ewes, thereby possibly injuring the foetus or unborn lamb, will be prevented. Narrow doorways should be avoided, for ewes, if frightened, are liable to become wedged in the opening with dangerous results to the foetus. Moderate exercise is also absolutely necessary for the proper maintenance of the ewe's health. In fact, every care should be taken to promote and sustain the vigor and strength of the ewe, for her energy is imparted to the foetus and its strength is directly in proportion to that of its mother.

PARTURITION.

Normal presentation of the lamb in the womb is head and fore feet first, the head lying upon the feet. Under normal conditions the ewe can virtually always relieve herself of the lamb without assistance. Should the lamb be very large, or lying in any position than the natural one, it may be necessary to aid the ewe, but no attempt should be made unless she is totally unable to yean herself and shows evident signs of exhaustion. In aiding parturition great care should be taken to clip the finger nails short so that they will not tear the tender tissue of the vaginal passage or of the womb. It is also a good plan to grease the arm with vaseline. Place the ewe on her side upon the ground, and thrust the arm gently up the vagina. If the presentation is normal, grasp the fore legs and pull gently while the ewe strains. Never use undue force. If the lamb does not lie in the natural position, it must be turned



Ewes and lambs on the Range.

as best the operator can, so that it can be drawn forth without injury to the lamb or rupturing the passage of the ewe. Experience is the best teacher in this regard, and, after a few trials, any person should become expert. Sometimes the lamb is so large that it cannot be removed naturally. It may be necessary, in a case of this nature, to dismember it so as to save the ewe's life. To prevent poisoning, the womb and the vagina should be douched with a 1 per cent carbolic acid solution of warm water. This can be administered by means of a syringe. Care should also be taken to see that the after-birth is removed, for, if this remains in the womb, it will putrefy and cause toxic poisoning, which may result in the death of the ewe. Should the womb be ejected or "east" as it is commonly called, it must be replaced, after being thoroughly disinfected and cleansed. If it continues to fall the vagina should be sewed up with fine catgut, except for a small opening at the lower part of the orifice

to permit the exertion of urine. The ewe should be given special attention and permitted to rest for a few days when the stitches may be removed. In stubborn cases it may be necessary to hold the womb in place by a pessary until it has regained its normal size and position.

ADOPTION OF THE LAMB.

The first action of the natural dam, after parturition, is to lick the lamb. The licking dries it and helps to start the blood into rapid circulation. Besides, the ewe gets the odor of the lamb, by which she subsequently recognizes her offspring.



Ewes and lambs on an Eastern farm.

Trouble sometimes arises in this respect from yearling ewes who, having their first lamb, become exhausted and unable to lick it. The result is that the lamb may die from the cold, and, if it does survive, the mother may possibly not claim it.

If a ewe, having lost her lamb, will not adopt another, some artificial means should be taken to attain this purpose. The old-fashioned method, which is yet in vogue and frequently produces the desired result, is to cover the orphan lamb with the skin of the dead one. This should be securely fastened upon the lamb. In about a week's time, if the ewe and lamb have been kept constantly together, it is possible

she will have adopted it. The skin may then be removed. Another method is simply to keep the lamb and ewe in a small enclosure, holding the ewe when the lamb suckles and allowing her to smell it at the same time. The ewe's perseverance in refusing to recognize the lamb will seldom last long. Some females, however, having little or no motherly feeling, are much worse than others.

RAISING PET LAMBS.

One of the greatest difficulties that besets the shepherd is the raising of cosset or pet lambs. On a large scale it is not profitable, but usually where only three or



Lamb creep.

four lambs have been unfortunate enough to lose their mothers and cannot claim an adopted one, they may be raised economically by hand. If great care and discretion are used by the shepherd in feeding, stunting will be avoided, but it must be admitted that usually a cosset lamb can readily be recognized in the average flock by its smallness and haggard appearance. An ordinary bottle and rubber nipple should be used. In commencing the lambs upon the cow's milk, avoid feeding too heavily upon a milk that is very rich, as it may cause indigestion. The milk is more palatable when slightly sweetened with sugar, and it may be necessary to feed with it, at intervals,

some castor oil, to prevent constipation which cow's milk is prone to cause. The first feed of the lamb should be, if possible, colostrum or the milk of the first five days after commencement of the lactation, which, containing laxative qualities, will cause proper exertion of the faeces or manure. If this cannot be gotten, use castor oil freely until the faeces show yellow. If many lambs are to be raised by hand, a bucket with several rubber tubes and nipples attached thereto, can be used to advantage. This arrangement will permit the feeding of several lambs at one time.

FEEDING THE LAMBS.

Lambs should be taught to eat as soon as possible after birth. Even when a few days old they will commence nibbling, and when they are two weeks of age should be



Docking the lamb - Correct position.

eating fairly regularly. A separate compartment should be provided wherein they can be fed without molestation by the ewes. To effect this, a lamb creep can be readily constructed by means of two wooden rollers revolving around iron pins placed in a hurdle a sufficient distance apart to allow only the lambs to go through. The rollers are better than stationary slats, since rubbing and consequent wearing of the wool from the lambs' sides are minimized. A good quality of hay, preferably alfalfa

or clover, should be provided in small racks within reach of the lambs. Grain and some succulent feed, as cabbage or turnips, should be fed twice a day in amounts consistent with their appetites. The lambs should be fed all they will eat of a palatable and nutritious ration, so as to keep them in thriving condition and avoid serious checks in growth.

DOCKING.

Docking should be done when the lambs are about ten days old. The easiest method is to place the lamb between the operator's legs, its rear end in front of him.



Docking the lamb—The tail severed.

The operator lifts the tail and with a heavy knife pushes the skin half way on the under side of the third vertebra back to its juncture with the second. Then with a sharp cut he severs the tail at this point. Many shepherds leave the tail one vertebra longer, but a short tail is greatly to be desired since it cannot collect so much manure. Very seldom if the lamb is docked early, will there be sufficient bleeding to cause any material harm. If profuse bleeding does occur, a cord should be tied very tightly around the stump of the tail. Pineers, heated to a high temperature, may also be used for this purpose and by many are preferred. The tail is severed by

closing them upon it. The stump is seared or burned, which completely prevents bleeding. However, a burn will not heal so quickly as a clean cut, and in the former condition suppuration or the formation of pus underneath the scab may occur. Of course, there is greater liability of dangerous infection where the knife, without cauterization, is used, since the seared surface tends to prevent the entrance of bacteria. Infection, however, can be avoided by the maintenance of cleanly and sanitary surroundings. The pincers can satisfactorily be adopted for docking lambs several weeks old, when the contingency of bleeding is more likely.

CASTRATION.

Castration should also be done at the time of docking. It may be performed by cutting off with a knife the bottom of the scrotum, seizing the end of the testicles, after slitting the covering membrane, with pincers and drawing them and the cords



Spring lamb in the making.

gently out. Many shepherds withdraw the testes by means of their teeth. To some this may appear repulsive, but it must be said in its favour, however, that it is more effective than using the fingers, since with the latter, it is difficult to obtain a firm grip of the minute testicles and, consequently, there is greater likelihood of bruising them, which may result in serious injury to the lamb. There are also patent emasculators on the market, which usually consist of scissor-like instruments with one blade notched. They are used to sever the scrotum and the cords an inch above the testicles. Since they are purposely made very dull, little bleeding will follow the

operation. After castration the wound should be treated with some good antiseptic, as a five per cent solution of carbolic acid or creolin, and covered with a light coating of pine tar to prevent the entrance of maggots. If the operation is properly performed, the lamb will soon recover from the shock and in a few days be eating as though nothing had happened.

All ram lambs not intended for breeding purposes should be unsexed. Wethers will make greater growth and fatten more readily, and the flesh is of a more delicate



Method of docking lambs with pincers.

texture. They will always command a better price on the market. Some stock yards now levy a fine upon sheep-raisers or dealers who offer rams for sale. Wethers, upon the same markets, are received at a premium.

WOOL BALLS IN THE STOMACH.

Wool ball in the stomach is one of the most dreaded diseases to which lambs are heir. Many lambs every year are killed from this cause, and the average breeder does not know what is the matter with them. Wool, taken with the feed into the stomach,

will collect at the intestinal openings, preventing proper passage of the digested material and at times completely closing the orifice. In all cases it results in mal-nutrition and ill health which may subsequently lead to death. The disease can be avoided by clipping, from the ewe's flanks and around the udder, all stray locks and tugs of wool, so that the lamb cannot mistake a strand of wool for the teat. Also dip the lambs, if they are infested with ticks. The presence of this pest will so annoy the lambs as to cause them to bite themselves, and in so doing they may obtain a mouthful of wool. A purgative, as castor oil, represents the only practicable remedy.

NAVEL ILL.

There are a few other diseases that may attack lambs, as navel ill, white scour and constipation, but the practice of careful feeding and strict sanitation in the buildings will easily suppress these. Navel ill can better be prevented than cured. It is caused by manure and filth coming in contact with the umbilical cord before it has completely dried and withered up. Therefore, preventive measures should comprise the maintenance of the utmost cleanliness in the barns. Should infection occur, the navel will become discoloured and greatly swollen. If the swelling extends up the belly, the animal will most probably succumb. The diseased part should be carefully opened and cleansed with a five per cent solution of carbolic acid or some equally good disinfectant and subsequently covered with powdered bluestone which will tend to dry the wound.

WHITE SCOURS.

White scours are due to a derangement of the digestive system. The milk does not pass properly into assimilation but becomes curdled and soured in the lamb's stomach. Ill health of the dam may be responsible for producing milk containing injurious qualities or it may be created by feeding a heavy grain ration. Rich grains, as peas or corn, are especially prone to cause this disorder. The following treatment will be found beneficial: baking soda, one quarter ounce; magnesium sulphate, one ounce; ginger, one ounce. This should be administered in a little linseed gruel. Four hours afterwards give two ounces of linseed oil. The first remedy will tend to dissolve the curdled material, and the second will remove it from the stomach. If it is thought that the trouble is with the milk, the dam should be provided with a plentiful supply of succulent feeds, as turnips, mangels or cabbage, which are most helpful correctives in promoting health and vigor.

LEAVES FROM THE NOTE-BOOK OF A SUCCESSFUL SHEPHERD.

1. Regulate the time of lambing to suit the requirements of the market, or in other words, have lambs of requisite size and weight ready for the shambles or for sale as flockheaders in the case of pure-breds, when the demand is keenest and the price highest.

The shepherd should estimate and fix his breeding season, by reckoning backwards 21 weeks, which is the approximate period of gestation, from the time he wishes his lambs dropped.

2. If you wish to assure the birth of strong, vigorous lambs, keep the pregnant ewes in a thriving and healthy condition.

3. Do not neglect to provide some succulent feed for the ewes, as turnips, cabbage or mangles, for the winter ration. Maintenance upon a very dry feed may result in constipation and serious ill-health.

4. A word of warning in respect to mange's. They should be fed in very limited quantities to rams, since they are prone to produce calculi or stones in the kidneys or bladder. These may become large enough to close completely the urethral opening, which, unless relief can be quickly provided, will result in the death of the ram. The ewes, having a larger urinal canal, are not so subject to this danger. Turnips and cabbages can be fed to both sexes with impunity.

5. Separate the ram from the ewes after the breeding season. The ram will thrive better apart, and, besides, danger of his butting the ewes is averted.

6. Every well-regulated sheep barn should have a warm lambing pen. This should be located in the south end. There is no better means of insuring warmth than by constructing the walls of boards tightly fitted on both sides of the studding, so as to form a still air space. It is much more effective, in conserving heat and preventing the entrance of cold air, than where one layer of boards is placed directly upon another with building paper between.

7. If pasture is not ready, commence feeding the lambs, when about two weeks old, a little grain, mostly oats, and a good quantity of clover or alfalfa hay.

8. Lambs should be fed in a separate pen from their dams, otherwise the ewes would take what is intended for them and they would get little or nothing to eat.

9. In raising pet lambs, watch that the cow's milk does not cause constipation. To correct this condition give a little castor oil with the milk.

10. All lambs must be doeked. This operation can be done most satisfactorily when they are from ten to fourteen days old.

11. Ram lambs not intended for breeding purposes must be castrated. Pure-bred animals only should be preserved entire, and many of these, possessing marked defects of type, had best be unsexed.

12. Sore teats and udder should be carefully treated. Since eaked udder is most frequently caused by exposure to draughts or lying in cold damp pens, every

means should be taken to keep the ewes in comfortable surroundings. After weaning ewes, showing distress with their udders, should be milked for several days.

13. To prevent wool balls in the stomach, clip all tags and locks of wool from around the udder.

14. Remove the manure from the pens frequently and keep them well bedded with clean straw.

15. Do not permit the sheep to drink from stagnant pools. These are prolific breeding places for internal parasites.

16. Dip both lambs and ewes, after shearing the latter and before placing them permanently upon pasture.

17. Remember that one ounce of preventive is worth pounds of cure. This is especially true of many parasitic diseases of sheep, for which there are no certain remedies.

