

Veterinary Notes for the Farmer

Proper Housing and Feeding of Dogs

Will Prevent the Spread of Hydatids

NO apology is offered for again discussing the important part played by the sheep dog in his relationship to sheep farming in this country. The value of the sheep dog in the management and handling of the sheep flocks has been fully recognised, and sheep dog trial associations and other kindred bodies have demonstrated to the public the wonderful work which the dog is capable of doing in the interests of his owner. It is not too much to ask, then, that such dogs should be adequately fed and looked after at all times. Each animal is not necessarily a trial dog, but each animal, if properly cared for and trained, will respond by giving useful service in return.

One feature of the close association of the dog with livestock is the ready means thus provided for the propagation and spread of the notorious hydatid disease in animals and man. The dog is the distributor of this disease, and the country dog is more troublesome in this respect than the city dog. This position should not obtain if the country dog's movements and feeding were under proper control, and means has already been provided for the removal of the disease worms from dogs. All owners are supplied with a reliable remedy to be used for dosing dogs to remove the worms responsible for hydatid disease. Every owner should see that his dogs are dosed at regular intervals, and should insist that all shepherds' dogs on the farm are also treated. If the dog's food is then under control, the risk of hydatid disease in farm animals and farmers themselves is in like measure reduced.

Apathy of Public

The fact that a marked reduction in the incidence of hydatid disease in animals and man has not taken place since the introduction of the worm remedy is a direct reflection on the apathy of the dog-owning public in country districts. The time has arrived

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when an improvement in the incidence of hydatid disease in all lambs and younger animals going forward for slaughter should be apparent. The following notes on the treatment of the sheep dog in regard to housing, feeding, and the prevention of the spread of hydatid disease have been repeated in the hope that more owners will endeavour to rid all dogs on the property from worms, and thereafter endeavour to keep the dogs free from such serious disease-producing parasites. It is in the interests of the farmer, his family, his livestock, and his dogs.

In a country which excels in many other aspects of public health it is a serious reflection to think that New Zealand holds such a notorious position in regard to the incidence of hydatid disease in man and animals.

Housing

The ideal housing is a dry and well-ventilated kennel, free from draughts, which can be easily cleaned out at intervals. The addition of a small yard will eliminate the necessity of keeping the dog on a length of chain for long periods, which is not beneficial to the dog's health. Short of the above, much can be done to ensure the dog being reasonably warm, dry, and comfortable. Kennels can, for instance, be made easily movable, and sites should be changed at frequent intervals. Surroundings should be sheltered, sunny

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3