

"water rot." Back strike or body strike is relatively more important in New Zealand than it is in Australia. It is usually encountered in Merino and halfbred hoggets after a period of heavy rain when the fleece remains moist and high humidity prevents thorough drying.

### Prevention

In the Merino where wrinkliness of the breech is an important factor in producing a susceptible state, the logical method of attack is to breed for plain bodied sheep. This would be a long and costly process and as most New Zealand Merinos have little development, as compared with those of Australia, this aspect of the problem is less important than in the latter country.

The surgical removal of offending skin folds which would become soiled with urine has been used with considerable success. Folds running down each side of the centre of the crutch are removed with shears starting well up towards the side of the tail and finishing 2-3 inches above the inside of the hock. The sheep is held on a rail as for docking, but the hocks should be bent or the folds will be obliterated as the skin is stretched. The folds are raised with the fingers

so that half an inch of skin is removed on each side of the base of the fold. If part of the bare skin is included in the fold, the latter should be rolled outwards so that none of the bare skin is removed. It is a simple matter to remove the skin without damaging the deeper tissues and the wounds produced, if reasonable care is taken with cleanliness, heal completely within a fortnight leaving an otherwise susceptible sheep quite as immune as one naturally plain in the breech.

Australian workers have shown recently that the length at which the tail is docked has a considerable effect on the incidence of breech strike. Sheep with tails four inches long suffered less than those with two-inch tails, while those with tails docked close to the buttocks suffered most. It appears that the longer tails press the breech wrinkles apart and so reduce the liability to wetting. In New Zealand where vulval deformity is a more important factor in urine soiling than the presence of breech wrinkles, the effect of tail length may be different from that observed in Australia. Macfarlane suggests that a tail which extends beyond the upper third of the vulva may produce distortion and subsequent soiling of the breech.

### Shearing and Crutching

Shearing renders sheep insusceptible to fly strike for some considerable time to where possible this should be done just before the worst fly period. In Marlborough ewes in particular should be shorn before Christmas if necessary leaving wethers and dry sheep till later.

Crutching, the removal of wool from the breech, above the tail and well down the back of the hind legs, is the best method of controlling crutch strike. Crutching of lambs in December or early January will give considerable protection when fly waves occur in late January and February. Crutching normally gives protection for about six weeks.

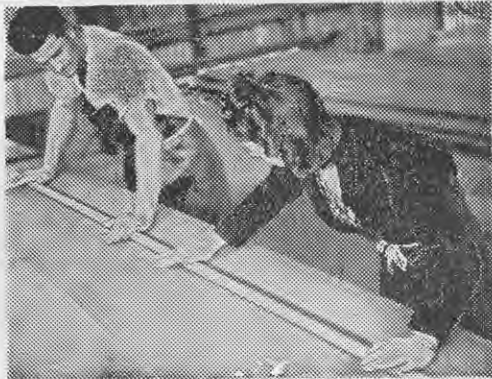
### Jetting

Jetting is a practice which has been developed and used for some years in Australia with excellent results. Two to three pints of a one per cent. suspension of calcium arsenite is forced into the wool of the crutch, at a pressure of 40-90 lbs. per square inch, from a pump which may be hand or power driven. Fluid which drains away may be re-used if a properly constructed jetting race is available. Jetting will give protection for about a month and

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