

CARE OF LIVESTOCK DURING JANUARY

Contributed by the Animal Research Division.

WEANING is an important stage in the life of a lamb and special care at this time will be well repaid. Long-woolled lambs should be shorn and all others crutched. Weaning is

LAMB WEANING the most important time for drenching against worms and this is especially necessary in wet summers. A full dose of 20 grammes of phenothiazine should be given. If fattening crops are not available, lambs should be drafted into "clean" paddocks after drenching. For this purpose hay or silage aftermath is excellent. Lambs should never be weaned into paddocks in which ewes and lambs have been grazed during the previous month.

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After weaning the ewes should be gone through carefully to select those which require culling. Teeth, feet, and wool should be examined carefully,

EWES CULLING while special attention should be paid to udders and teats, and ewes should be culled if they have defective udders or very large or damaged teats, as the lambs of such ewes often die from starvation before they are a week old. Condition is a poor guide for culling, as ewes which have not reared a lamb are always in the best condition.

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Modern sheep dips are so effective that the eradication of lice and ticks should be quite feasible. Best results, however, will be achieved only if the

SHEEP DIPPING instructions for mixing and replenishing dips are followed accurately. Carelessness in dipping can cause disastrous losses. If sheep are dipped off the shears, shear cuts are liable to become infected



and deaths from blood poisoning may occur. These can be prevented by vaccinating with blackleg vaccine at least a fortnight before dipping. The vaccine is available through the Department of Agriculture's Veterinarians or Inspectors of Stock.

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Sheep that eat St. John's wort become sensitive to sunlight, and scabs develop on the ears, face, and back. If such sheep are dipped, they take convulsions and may be drowned. **ST. JOHN'S WORT MAKES DIPPING DANGEROUS** If possible, sheep should be grazed on country free from St. John's wort for several weeks before dipping. If this is not possible, dip on dull days only.

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Rape should not be grazed until the leaves show a purplish tinge. "Unripe" rape does not fatten so quickly and seems to "scald" more readily. Best results are probably obtained by grazing in breaks which last the

LAMB-FATTENING FODDERS lambs about a week. As it is false economy to keep lambs on a break until the last leaf is eaten, move them on while they are still getting a full feed. The paddocks can be cleaned up with ewes. Run-offs have little to recommend them and unless they contain good pasture they will depress the lambs' rate of growth. If hay is fed, it must be of the very best quality. Thousand-headed kale is splendid lamb-fattening fodder, but because it is relatively unpalatable it must be managed properly and always fed in small breaks and grazed only lightly before the lambs are moved on to the next break. Never use a run-off. Treated in this way the kale makes excellent regrowth and can be regrazed several times, and, if necessary, the grazing can be extended into autumn and winter.

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Campaigns for foot-rot eradication should be started as soon as lambs have been weaned. Once foot-rot has been eradicated from a flock it does

FOOT-ROT ERADICATION not recur unless it is re-introduced from outside. The Department of Agriculture's Bulletin No. 325, "Foot-rot in Sheep can be Eradicated," gives full instructions for eradicating foot-rot from a flock.

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A recent occurrence of serious lameness in cattle caused by eating hay heavily infested with ergot emphasises the danger of ergotised hay.

ERGOTISED GRASS MAKES DANGEROUS HAY Such hay can be easily recognised by the presence of the black ergots which replace the seeds of rye-grass and other grasses. Where ergot is known to occur hay should be made before the grasses have time to seed.