

# CARE OF LIVESTOCK DURING SEPTEMBER

Contributed by the Animal Research Division.

**W**ELL-REARED cattle at the Department of Agriculture Animal Research Station, Ruakura, outproduced their poorly reared mates by a total of 40lb. of butterfat over the first two lactations; both groups were treated alike from first calving onward. Frequent changes to good, clean pasture are essential if calves are to be successfully reared. (See notes in the July issue of the "Journal".) Rotational grazing avoids deaths in winter, eliminates the need for drenching against worms, and produces yearlings 100lb. heavier than those kept in the one paddock for weeks at a time.

## ROTATIONAL GRAZING OF CALVES

Autumn-saved pasture is almost equal to high-quality spring pasture as a milk-producing fodder. It should therefore be rationed to the milking cows to make it last until the spring feed comes away and hardens up. An electric fence is essential for efficient utilisation, enabling it to be grazed in small breaks. Unless sufficient reserves of this pasture are available for full feeding, the balance should be made up with silage. Make sure enough hay is retained to balance up the lush spring growth.

## FEEDING THE MILKING HERD

For the first month or 6 weeks of its life a lamb depends almost entirely upon its mother's milk. Research has shown that ewes rearing twin lambs give considerably more milk than those rearing singles. Ewes with singles are capable of producing more milk in the early part of lactation than the lamb can drink. This

## CARE OF EWES WITH TWIN LAMBS

is not the case with ewes rearing twins, the two lambs together soon being able to take all the milk which the ewe can produce. For this reason ewes with twin lambs should be grazed separately and given the best feed available. Many farmers have worked out practical methods of achieving this.

Late-farrowed spring litters should receive special attention, since they will be approaching weaning age. Creep feeding is the secret of securing the heavy weaner, and best results will be obtained by having a supply of meal and milk always before the litter. Weaned pigs must be well fed, and if meal has been used before weaning, its use should be continued for at least a fortnight to avoid an after-weaning check. The meal ration should be reduced as the skimmed-milk supply increases. It is preferable to feed meal to weaners up to half their daily rations and give the milk saved to the store pigs rather than feed meal to the older pigs at this stage. Sows should be hand mated, and receive sufficient milk and meal to enable them to regain some of the weight lost during the previous suckling.

## CARE OF PIGS

On farms where scabby mouth occurs each new crop of lambs should be vaccinated, and this is most conveniently done at marking. If lambs are not protected, they are liable to suffer a severe check, as the disease makes eating very painful. The vaccine, which is available free through any office of the Department of Agriculture, gives very good protection if properly used. Care is necessary to keep the needle prong clear of grease. If it becomes blocked, no vaccine is applied and lambs may still be susceptible.

## VACCINATION AGAINST SCABBY MOUTH

Mastitis is usually most prevalent in spring. Milk from all quarters should be carefully examined in a strip cup each day. If there is any abnormality, treat the quarter without delay, using three tubes of penicillin cerate at 24-hour intervals. Prompt treatment at this time of the year will greatly reduce loss in production from light or dry quarters.

## MASTITIS

To prevent coccidiosis in chickens it is necessary to keep them growing steadily. Any check is dangerous. Cleanliness is very important, as the disease spreads through the soiling of food by droppings. If an outbreak occurs, sulphamezathine should be used in the drinking water. Full particulars of dosage may be obtained from Poultry Instructors of the Department of Agriculture.

## COCCIDIOSIS IN POULTRY

