

CARE OF LIVESTOCK DURING JANUARY

Contributed by the Animal Research Division.

WEANING is an important event in the life of a lamb and special care taken at this time will be well repaid. Long-wool lambs should be

LAMB WEANING shorn and all others crutched. Weaning is the most important time for drenching against worms, and this is especially necessary in wet summers. A full dose of 20 gm. of phenothiazine should be given. If fattening crops are not available, lambs should be drafted into clean paddocks after drenching. Lambs should never be weaned into paddocks in which ewes and lambs have been grazed during the previous month. Unless very good paddocks of spelled pasture are available, hoggets should be spread thinly over as large an area as possible.

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

LAMB-FATTENING FODDERS

in breaks which last the 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 paddock can be cleaned up with ewes. Run-offs have little to recommend them and unless they contain good pasture they will depress the rate of growth of lambs. 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 only grazed lightly before moving the lambs 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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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

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. The lambs of such ewes often die from starvation before they are a week old. Condition is a poor guide for culling, as the ewes which have not reared a lamb are always in the best condition. Ewes should be kept on low rations during the next 2 months to prevent them from becoming overfat.

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Campaigns for foot-rot eradication should be started as soon as the lambs have been weaned. Once foot-rot has been eradicated from a flock it does not recur unless it is re-introduced from outside.

FOOT-ROT ERADICATION

Department of Agriculture Bulletin No. 325 gives full instructions for eradicating foot-rot from a flock.

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Modern dips are so effective that the eradication of lice and ticks should be quite feasible. Best results, however, will only be achieved 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, the shear cuts are liable to become infected and deaths from blood poisoning may occur. This risk can be prevented by vaccinating with blackleg vaccine at least a fortnight before dipping. The vaccine is available at a reasonable price, and Departmental Veterinarians or Inspectors of Stock should be consulted regarding its use.

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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 sheep in such conditions are dipped,

ST. JOHN'S WORT MAKES DIPPING DANGEROUS

they take convulsions and may be drowned. If possible, sheep should be grazed for several weeks before dipping on country free from St. John's wort. If this is not possible, dip on dull days only.

