

Care of Livestock during November

Contributed by the Animal Research Division



VACCINATION has reduced the New Zealand average rate of abortion in dairy cows from about 5 per cent. to about 1 per cent. There are, however, still too many dairy farmers who do not have their calves vaccinated. Past freedom from abortion is no excuse for not vaccinating, as infection may be introduced into a herd at any time. Though vaccination does not start until January or February, application for vaccination should be made now, as Veterinarians and Livestock Instructors have to plan their vaccination itineraries, and late applications make this very difficult. Calves should not be vaccinated until they are over 4 months old. Poor immunity results if they are vaccinated before this.

VACCINATION AGAINST CONTAGIOUS ABORTION

Dry sows should have access to good pasture, and in addition should receive from 2 to 4 gallons of milk per day, depending on their condition. They should be kept thriving, but should not be allowed to become too fat. Keep only as many of the spring litters for baconers as can be fed adequately. The remainder should be sold as porkers.

CARE OF PIGS

During the season of maximum grass growth the problem is to control pastures at their most leafy, nutritious stage. This is best achieved by conserving all growth surplus to requirements as silage and hay. Later on in the season it is important to maintain sufficient pasture cover to ensure growth during the dry summer period. As grass growth declines the period which paddocks are spelled between grazing should be gradually increased and as much silage as the cows will clean up should be fed out.

GRAZING MANAGEMENT OF DAIRY PASTURES

Preparations for shearing should be made now. Attend to sheepyards and scrub out the woolshed. This will reduce trouble from such diseases as blood poisoning, tetanus, and caseous lymphadenitis ("lympho") after shearing. Check over all machinery to see all parts are in good working order. Dag all dirty sheep and shear hoggets, wethers, dry ewes, and rams. When culling sheep before shearing pay particular attention to teeth and udders and watch for dropped bellies. On fat lamb farms ewes are best shorn after one or two drafts of lambs are away.

SHEARING PREPARATIONS If dry ewes have not already been removed from the flock, they should be separated immediately. It is a good plan to shear them and, during shearing, they should be inspected carefully for udder abnormalities.

DRY EWES All ewes whose udders were empty at lambing and ewes with diseased udders, damaged teats, very large teats, very small teats, or badly placed teats should be culled. Dry ewes with defective mouths and old ewes which did not have a lamb this year should also be culled. Dry ewes which are retained should not be allowed to get too fat during summer. If kept in hard store condition, they are more likely to hold when mated next autumn.

Pastures on which ewes and lambs are grazing should never be allowed to become rank. If pastures are getting too long, they can best be controlled by cattle. Yearling beef cattle soon become quiet and they can then be run with ewes and lambs even in small paddocks.

CONTROL OF FAT LAMB PASTURE

DIP RAMS EARLY

Rams should be dipped before they begin to flush, preferably before Christmas. Flushed rams sometimes scald after dipping.

Where bidi-bidi comes away early, and is troublesome, ewes should be shorn toward the end of this month. Cull run cows not required for breeding. Brand calves and handle them as opportunity permits. In warmer districts put bulls out with the breeding herd. Where water is not laid on attention should be given to dams and springs so that water supplies will be plentiful during the hotter weather.

Numbers of Seeds per Pound

INQUIRIES are received from time to time about the numbers of seeds of different species contained in a certain weight of seed.

Information of this nature can be found in textbooks dealing with seeds and in periodicals and handbooks. It is probably based on overseas determinations, however, and so may not apply to seeds grown in New Zealand. Figures for some seeds were published in volume 33 of the "Journal" (page 393).

These figures have now been revised and the list has been extended. To obtain the determinations below the results from at least five samples of seed of each kind, taken from two seasons' harvests and from as wide a range of districts as possible, have been averaged. They can be taken only as average figures, as samples from different lines vary considerably. This variation was most noticeable in the crested dogstail, chewings fescue, alsike clover, and turnip samples.

The approximate numbers of seeds per pound in the kinds examined were as follows:—

Perennial ryegrass ..	245,000	Alsike clover ..	580,000
Italian ryegrass ..	215,000	Montgomery red clover	245,000
Short-rotation ryegrass ..	235,000	Cowgrass ..	245,000
Browntop ..	7,000,000	Subterranean clover ..	65,000
Chewings fescue ..	450,000	Lucerne ..	225,000
Crested dogstail ..	800,000	Rape ..	125,000
<i>Phalaris tuberosa</i> ..	335,000	Turnip ..	220,000
Cocksfoot (including attached empty florets)	510,000	Swede ..	185,000
White clover ..	740,000	Linseed ..	70,000

—Department of Agriculture Seed-testing Station, Palmerston North