



Two Dutch barns, each with a capacity of 3000 bales of hay, have been erected on the property.

and now 110 cows are kept for this. In addition each spring cattle are bought in as the feed position warrants, and by December the farm is usually carrying between 600 and 700 cattle, mainly large bullocks. These are fattened and sold before winter and only the breeding cows and calves are wintered. The calves are fed hay, generally during July and August, and the cows are fed hay for 2 to 3 weeks in August. In the winter of 1953 the cows wintered solely on the 180 acres of new grass on the tussock block and the calves received hay for 1 month only. It is intended to increase the breeding herd of 110 Hereford cows to about 150 head and to breed replacement stock by crossing with Aberdeen Angus bulls. In the past it has been customary to sell the progeny as yearlings, but in future all calves will be kept to 2½ or 3 years old to overcome the difficulty of buying in sufficient numbers of cattle in spring to control pastures.

Production

Revenue on the farm over the last 4 years has been received in almost equal proportions from the sale of beef cattle, wool, fat lambs, and sheep.

About 450 to 550 cattle are fattened each year and about 120 calves or

yearlings are sold. The wool sold each year is between 80 and 90 bales and the average clip is about 10lb. per head. In addition, between 450 and 500 ewes are sold fat to the works and about 1100 to 1200 are sold as cast ewes.

Lambing Percentage

The lambing percentage averages about 125, ranging from 115 per cent. to 135 per cent. At least 50 per cent. of the lambs are sold fat off the mothers every year. The best record for lambs fat off the mothers was set some years ago when 1050 ewes were put to the ram and 120 per cent. of lambs were tailed. The first draft was taken early in December and the second at weaning in the first week of January, and only 16 lambs remained as unfit to draft. It has been impossible to repeat this performance and usually not quite half of the lambs have to be fattened on grass or, very occasionally, on rape. In favourable years it is customary to buy in store lambs for fattening. Some indication of the fat lamb production may be obtained from the following details of the 1952-53 season:—

Ewes to ram, 2,888		
Lambs tailed, 3,770 or 131 per cent.		
Drafts		
Date	Lambs	Average weight lb.
8/1/53	540	39.43
15/1/53	787	35.37
21/1/53	757*	35.59
	2,084	36.50

* All twin lambs.

These drafts were all off the mothers (55 per cent. of lambs) and contained very few seconds. With the exception of 39 kept for mutton, the remaining lambs, with 542 Romney wether lambs which had been bought in, were all sold fat off pastures at an average weight of 38.14lb. by 10 June 1953.

Details of lambs fat off the mothers for the 1953-54 season are:—

Ewes to ram, 2,800		
Lambs tailed, 3,600 or 128 per cent.		
Drafts		
Date	Lambs	Average weight lb.
10/12/53	502	36.2
18/12/53	427	34.0
5/1/54	554*	34.2
8/1/54	462*	33.9
	1,945	34.60

* All twin lambs.

Drafts were taken earlier than usual. These drafts were all fat off the mothers (54 per cent. of lambs) and contained very few seconds.

This farm has increased its carrying capacity from approximately 1½ ewes to 3 ewes per acre since 1929, it sells consistently 50 per cent. of the lambs fat off the mothers, it produces about 27lb. of wool per acre, and it has shown the part that cattle can play on this foothill country. There are approximately 1,000,000 acres of similar country in Canterbury which in the past has been classed as marginal land. By the application of sound management practices, as have been adopted on this farm, this 1,000,000 acres has a considerable potential.

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