

Care of Livestock during June



By the Animal Research Division

EXPERIMENTS have shown that cows fed well during winter will produce from 26 to 63 lb more butterfat in the following lactation than those which have been poorly fed during winter. These results were obtained when both groups were well fed after calving.

WINTER FEEDING OF DAIRY COWS

It is therefore very important to feed the cows well from now until calving, so that they have ample body reserves to draw on during the first two months of the lactation.

It is difficult to build up these body reserves with even liberal amounts of hay and/or silage unless some grass is also available throughout the dry period. With a portion of the farm closed for autumn-saved pasture for feeding after calving, it is particularly important to graze the rest of the farm under a controlled rotational grazing system with adequate spelling between grazings, both to ensure continued grass growth during winter and to ration what grass is available throughout this period. Where subdivision is inadequate for this purpose break grazing with the electric fence is essential. Since cows will eat grass in preference to most other feeds, they should be fed as much hay as they will clean up in addition to 20 lb of silage per cow per day.

In areas where sheep become infested with liver fluke flocks should be drenched now. The only effective drug is carbon tetrachloride, which should be mixed with four times its volume of liquid paraffin. The dose of the mixture is 5 c.c. for sheep of all ages, and 1 gallon is enough for about 900 sheep. Further information

LIVER FLUKE IN SHEEP

about liver fluke in sheep and cattle will be found in Bulletin No. 248, "Liver Fluke of Sheep and Cattle", which is available from the nearest office of the Department of Agriculture.

Worms are sometimes still troublesome in May and June, and if lambs or calves are not doing well, they should be drenched with fine-particle phenothiazine at the full dosage rates recommended by the manufacturers. Further information about worms and drenching will be found in Bulletins No. 171, "Internal Parasites of Sheep", and No. 189, "Control

WORMS IN LAMBS AND CALVES

of Internal Parasites by Phenothiazine", which are obtainable from the nearest office of the Department .

Poultry lice can cause considerable loss of condition in birds and reduced egg laying. To control these parasites a fine trickle of 40 per cent nicotine sulphate should be run along the perches on a calm night before the birds go to roost. A second treatment should be given 10 to 14 days later to kill any lice hatched out from nits or lice eggs.

LICE ON POULTRY

Rickets in lambs occurs frequently during winter in Canterbury and other South Island districts. It is also occasionally seen in the North Island. Lambs wintered on green oats or barley are most susceptible, but other green feed or good pasture may also produce the condition. It can be prevented by giving one dose of 25 m.g. of calciferol (a vitamin D concentrate) at the beginning of winter. This preparation can be bought dissolved in olive oil with full instructions for use. It is unlikely to be beneficial during autumn and the best time to administer it is about the end of May.

Sows and store pigs should be fed on roots, grass, and up to 1 lb of meat meal or other high protein feed daily. Grazing pigs should not be confined to small paddocks during winter. The use of large grazing areas will reduce pasture damage considerably. Warm accommodation is essential for winter store pigs to avoid losses and maintain steady growth. Early farrowing sows should be put in their farrowing quarters and fed 3 to 4 lb of meal daily. After farrowing they should be fed 4 gallons of milk plus 2/3 gallon for each piglet suckled. Where insufficient milk is available meal should be used to replace milk substituting 1 lb of meal for 1 gallon of milk. Constipation, which is common in late pregnancy, can be avoided by feeding 1/2 lb of bran daily or 4 oz of molasses two or three times during the last 10 days before farrowing.

FIG PRODUCTION

Where pregnant ewes are wintered on swedes, turnips, rape, chou moellier, or kale for several weeks before lambing, goitre, sometimes accompanied by high death rates, may occur in their lambs. This can be prevented by giving the ewes extra iodine during the last two months before lambing.

GOITRE IN LAMBS

If iodised salt licks are used, these should contain 5 oz of potassium iodate to the ton. However, it is better to dose the ewes with iodine contained in a drench. For this purpose potassium iodide is a safe and convenient compound because it dissolves easily in water. Sufficient drench for 160 doses is made by dissolving 1 1/2 oz of potassium iodide in 1 gallon of water. Each ewe should receive a 1 fl. oz. dose of the resulting solution about two months before lambing and a second similar dose about one month before lambing.

Beef herds have probably been worked to a hard store condition. From now on they should be slowly improved in condition. Pastures which have "got away" under lax grazing by hoggets are ideal for this purpose. Crops and hay if available may be rationed out to the cows. On dirty faces feeding out of hay is best, as it leads to both seeding of the pasture and crushing of unwanted growth through trampling.

BEEF HERDS