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4-H Sheep Club Manual



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4-H Sheep Club Manual

BY

I. M. C. ANDERSON, Livestock Specialist

Revised by

E. P. ORCUTT, Livestock Specialist

The Ewes

Selection. A good time to start a 4-H Club with ewes is soon after the ewes have been bred in the fall. The best aged ewes to select are two to four year olds. Yearling ewes, coming two, are more apt to have trouble at lambing time and they are a little harder to winter the first winter they are carrying a lamb. Ewes over four years old have reached their peak and are going down hill.

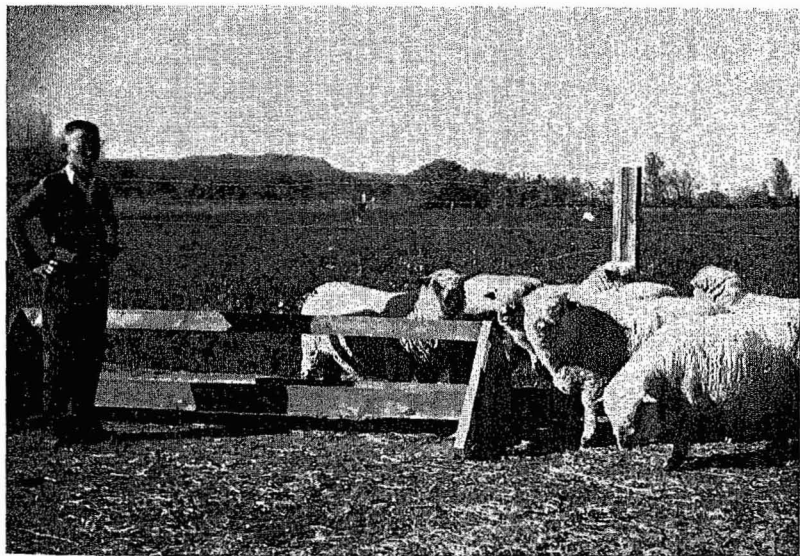


Fig. 1.—A 4-H Club member in Stillwater county and his purebred ewes.

The age of sheep is generally determined by the teeth. The milk or lamb teeth are replaced by permanent teeth in the following order: The center pair of permanent teeth appear in the center of the front part of the lower jaw at one year (Sheep have no teeth in the front part of the upper jaw). At two years the second pair of permanent teeth appear, one on

each side of the first pair. At three, the third pair appears and at four the sheep has a full mouth of eight permanent teeth. After five years the teeth commence to spread and drop out. These are called "spreaders," "broken mouth," or "gummers." These terms all apply to sheep that have passed their prime and are considered of doubtful value as breeders. Remember: A pair of teeth each year for the first four years.

Breed to The best breed of sheep is the one liked best. Ordinarily,
Select. the breed in the majority in a community is the one best adapted to conditions in that community, therefore, that particular breed will be the one to select. It is best if all club members in one club have the same breed of sheep.

Unless the club members' parents are breeding purebred sheep, it will be best to start with good grade sheep. These grade ewes bred to a purebred sire will produce nearly as much lamb and mutton as the purebreds. Purebreds require more detailed attention than most inexperienced 4-H club members are able to give them. Raising purebred breeding stock is a highly specialized business.

Time of The average gestation period of a ewe is 145 to 150 days.
Breeding. Knowing this, the breeding time should be arranged to bring the lambs at the most convenient time possible for a given locality. Lambs dropped after the grass has a good start many times catch up with lambs born while the mothers are on dry feed, unless the ewes and early lambs are given special care and grain to supplement the hay or pasture.

GESTATION TABLE

Date of Service	Lambs will be dropped	Date of Service	Lambs will be dropped
Aug. 1	Dec. 24	Nov. 7	Apr. 1
Aug. 9	Jan. 1	Nov. 17	Apr. 11
Aug. 19	Jan. 11	Nov. 27	Apr. 21
Aug. 29	Jan. 21	Dec. 7	May 1
Sept. 8	Feb. 1	Dec. 17	May 11
Sept. 18	Feb. 10	Dec. 27	May 21
Sept. 28	Feb. 20	Jan. 1	May 26
Oct. 8	Mar. 2	Jan. 11	June 5
Oct. 18	Mar. 12	Jan. 21	June 15
Oct. 28	Mar. 22	Jan. 31	June 25

Flushing About a week before the ewes are to be bred they should
the Ewes. be turned on fresh, green pasture, if possible. This fresh pasture starts the ewes to gaining and assures a better lamb crop. If the green pasture is not available, good pasture supplemented with one-half pound of grain per ewe per day will answer the purpose.

Breeding Management

Make sure your ram is in good condition and is serving the ewes. If you have a small number of ewes, it is best to keep track of breeding dates on each individual ewe to know when to expect the lambs. If a ewe does not breed at the first service, she will come in heat in 14 to 18 days later. If a large percentage of the ewes do not breed at the first service, it is a good plan to get another ram. The one you have may be sterile.

The ram to be used should be a purebred and the best individual you are able to buy. If all ewes of a club can be assembled in one pasture or in 40-head bunches at breeding time, the cost of ram service per ewe can be materially reduced. The ram may be cooperatively owned by the club and each member pay his share of the expense or each member pay a service fee. A thrifty yearling ram will breed 35 to 45 ewes during the breeding season. A ram lamb if well grown may be used on 10 to 20 ewes but it is best not to use him until he is a year old.

Selecting Ram. The lambs will carry 50 per cent of the blood of the ram, therefore, it is important to get a good one. He should be straight and strong in his legs and of excellent conformation. The fleece should be dense, fine, of good length for the breed, bright in color and free from black fibers and hair. The head should show masculinity with a strong muzzle and jaw. The body should be symmetrical with plenty of depth; straight top and bottom lines; strong, broad back; good spring of ribs, well covered with flesh and finished with a square rump and heavy leg of mutton. Color markings and wool should be characteristic of the breed. Your county agent can help you in selecting the ram.

Care of the Ram. The ram should be well conditioned before he is used. Yearling or older rams should be started on a light feed of grain (oats, barley, corn or wheat; or a mixture of these grains) and worked up to one pound per day through the breeding season. After the breeding season, the ram should be separated from the ewes. Yearlings or older rams, if in good condition, can be wintered on about four to five pounds of hay per day. Their summer care consists of good pasture with plenty of shade and water. They should be watched carefully during fly time to see that they are not infested with maggots.

Wintering Ewes

Feeding and Management.

Ewes that are in good condition when winter starts will do very well on a ration of three to four pounds of good alfalfa, blue joint or clover hay per day.

Straw is not considered a good sheep feed, but may be fed in limited amounts with good hay or with a supplement of linseed oil cake or cottonseed oil cake. Oat or beardless wheat straw is better than rye or barley straw. The beards are bad to get into the sheep's eyes and wool. Silage in small amounts is good for ewes, but spoiled, frozen or moldy silage should not be fed. Ewes should have access to salt and water at all times. Many sheep are wintered with snow as the only water supply but they do better if they have plenty of clean water. About a month before lambing time the ewes should receive some grain. Commence by feeding one-fourth pound per day and gradually increase to one-half pound per head just before lambing.

A good shepherd will see that his ewes have plenty of exercise during the winter months. This may be accomplished by scattering the hay on the ground some distance from the bed-ground so they will have to do some traveling to get it. They should not be chased by dogs, driven through deep snow, forced through narrow doors, nor jumped over boards. Such tactics will cause the loss of some lambs.

After the ewes lamb, they should have all the hay they will clean up and one-half to one pound of grain per day, depending upon their condition. The thin ewes should receive the large amount of grain. The grain may be straight oats, or a combination of oats and barley, 50-50, or oats and dry beet pulp, 50-50.

Ewes that lamb after the new grass is good should not need supplemental feed.

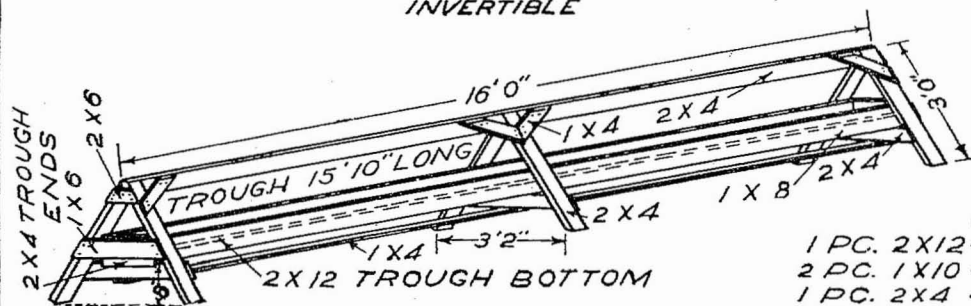
Equipment.

Grain should be fed in troughs that are easily kept clean, such as the "Montana grain feeding trough" Fig. 2. This same type of trough without the frame may be used by placing it on a frame made in the following manner:

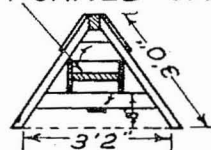
Drive two pair of stakes in the ground ten feet apart. The stakes in each pair should be twenty inches apart connected by a cross piece (2" x 4") nailed with the top side six inches from the ground. The reversible trough is set on these cross pieces. A 1" x 6" or pole nailed to the stakes lengthwise of the trough, 8 inches above the top of it, will keep the sheep from jumping into the trough.

Hay may be fed on the clean snow or in panels of a design shown in Fig. 2. These panels may form one side of your sheep pen or hay pen. The hay is placed on the opposite side of the panel from the sheep and they feed through the 8" opening at the bottom of the panel.

MONTANA GRAIN FEEDING TROUGH INVERTIBLE



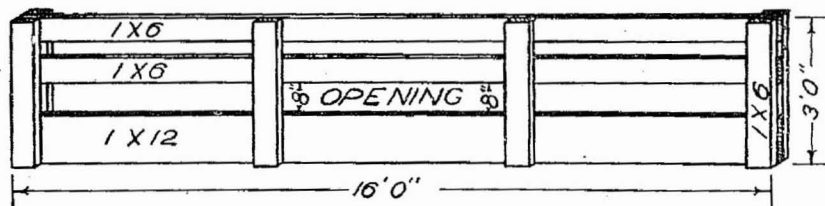
DOUBLE TROUGH
WHICH CAN BE
TURNED OVER



MATERIAL

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1 PC. 2X12-16' | 2 PC. 2X4-16' |
| 2 PC. 1X10-16' | 1 PC. 1X6-6' |
| 1 PC. 2X4-16' | 1 PC. 2X6-2' |
| 2 PC. 1X4-16' | |

PANEL FOR FEEDING HAY OR PULP



MATERIAL

- | |
|----------------|
| 1 PC. 1X12-16' |
| 2 PC. 1X6-16' |
| 1 PC. 1X6-18' |

Fig. 2.—A feature of special importance in this piece of necessary equipment for the sheep feeder is the trough. It is made so that either side may be used. When ice, snow and litter accumulate in one side the trough may be turned over so that on thawing the refuse will drop out while the other side is being used. 4-H club members who have tried to kick frozen litter out of the ordinary feed trough will appreciate the practical value of the invertible trough.

Figure 3 gives dimensions of a feed-rack for sheep, which is being used at the Montana Experiment Station. The rack shown is used where the feeding is done twice a day; where it is done only once a day the rack should be made $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide instead of 2 feet 2 inches. This will provide sufficient room for the hay and the sheep will eat it up clean without getting seeds and chaff in the wool on their necks. The rack may be mounted on skids or supported by corner posts as shown. For the average range sheep the top of the board marked 1x8 inches should not be more than about 12 to 14 inches above the ground level, as wool will be rubbed from their necks if the board

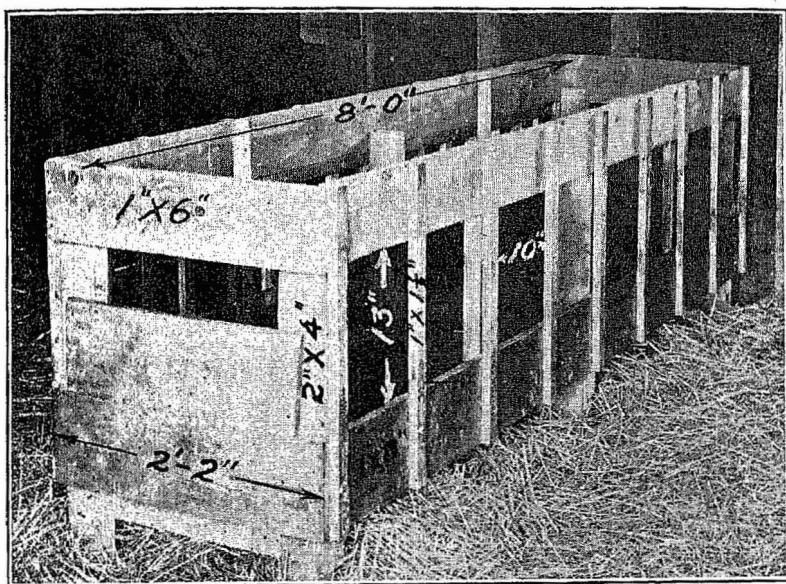


Fig. 3.—A feed-rack for sheep.

is too high. Instead of using 1x8 inch board at the bottom, it would be better to use 1x10 inch material in order to increase the hay capacity of the rack. The height of the opening for the sheep's heads should usually be made 16 to 18 inches instead of 13 inches as marked. The upright slats are spaced 1 foot from center to center, thus giving a capacity of two sheep for each foot of length of the rack.

This rack is of simpler and cheaper construction than the V-shaped rack.

Lambing Time

Care. This is the most critical season of the year for the sheep owner.

A few hours' neglect at this time may be the cause of the loss of both ewe and her lamb.

The lamb is a full year's work for the ewe. Try to save him. If the lambs come when the weather is cold, provision should be made to have them arrive in a warm place. Individual pens, four feet square, well-bedded with fresh straw, makes an ideal place for the ewe to lamb. Cleanliness is important. These pens should be in the same shed where the main flock is used to bedding and should be made of panels so the ewe can see the rest of the flock. This will prevent her from becoming nervous. Ewes should be tagged (clipping wool from flanks, hind parts and around the udder) two to four weeks before lambing so that the new lambs will have less trouble locating the teats.

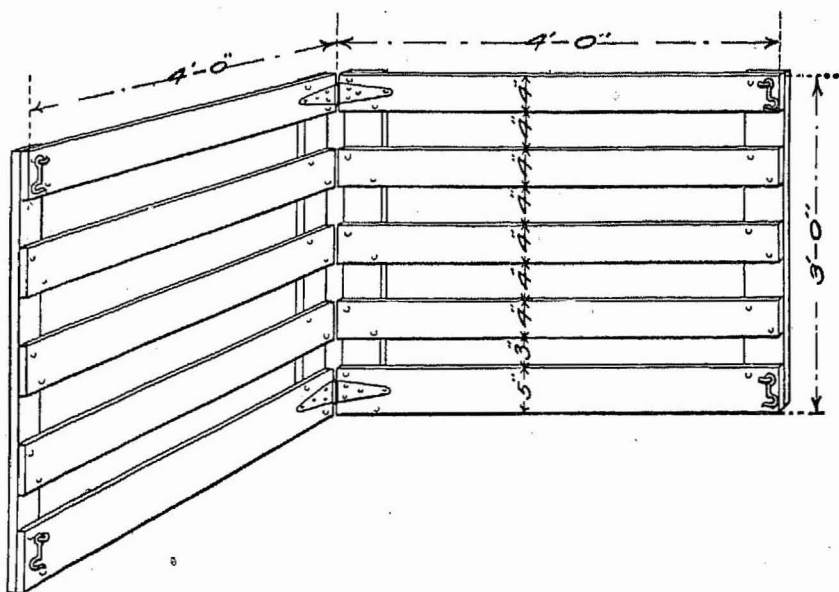


Fig. 4.—Hinged Panels.

When the shepherd sees a ewe about to drop a lamb, she should be placed in an individual pen. The pens may be made with hinged panels as shown in Figure 4, set in the corner of the sheep shed. Ewes with strong single lambs may be moved out with other ewes and lambs after 24 to 48 hours. Twins should remain in the individual pens two to three days, then gradually worked into bunches of 10 to 20 ewes.

Assistance. Well-fed, mature ewes seldom have trouble at lambing time. If the ewe strains for half an hour without making progress, aid may then be given. The normal presentation of the lamb at birth is either with the front legs extended and the head lying between them, or hind feet foremost. If the presentment is not normal, then it is up to the shepherd to correct it by inserting the hand into the vulva. Before this is done the hand and arm should be washed, finger nails trimmed and the hand and arm rubbed with vaseline or oil. As soon as the lamb is in the proper position, delivery is generally easy, but may require some help. The pull on the feet and head should be outward and downward as the ewe strains. Rest when she rests and continue until delivery is complete.

Iodine Treatment. Sever the navel cord about two inches from the body and cover it thoroughly with iodine. This iodine treatment may best be applied by putting a tablespoonful in a clean cold cream jar about one and one-half inches in diameter. Place the mouth of the jar against the body and over the severed navel cord and tip the lamb backward so the iodine will thoroughly saturate the navel and surrounding skin.

The lamb should be promptly returned to the ewe. If it is strong, it will find the teat and suckle within 30 minutes. If weak, it should be helped with the first nursing.

Disowned Lambs. Sometimes a ewe will refuse to let her lamb nurse or it may be desirable to replace a dead lamb with one of a pair of twins from another ewe. If the ewe is cross, tie her short to one side of the pen by placing a rope around her body just behind the front legs. The rope should be tied low on the panel so she will not hang herself. Where the ewe's own lamb has died, the hide of the dead lamb may be placed on the lamb to be adopted before it is placed with the foster mother. This hide should be removed within three days. Other methods used are:

Smear some of the ewe's milk on her own nose and on the head and rump of the lamb to be adopted. Smear some of the phlegm or membrane in which the dead lamb was born over the lamb to be adopted. Keep a dog or cat near the pen to attract the ewe's attention. Be patient and persistent. Each healthy ewe that has milk should raise a lamb.

Chilled Lambs Lambs that have been chilled soon after birth may be revived by putting them in water at about 95 degrees or water that feels warm to the elbow. They should be immersed in this water and the nose held up so they will not strangle. After a few minutes they will commence to kick around and as soon as they get active they may be removed from the water and dried off with a gunny sack or some other rough cloth. Vigorous rubbing stimulates the circulation and also encourages the lamb to action. After he has been thoroughly thawed out he should be fed one teaspoonful of his mother's milk, or milk from another ewe that has recently lambled. Without this colostrum milk you have very little hopes of raising the lambs. If the ewe claims her lamb and is in a good dry place sheltered from the wind, there is usually very little trouble after the lamb once has a fill of milk. If he is still weak, he may have to be helped to nurse for the first few times.

Raising Bum Lambs

Lambs that cannot be raised on their mother or another ewe that has lost her lamb may be raised by hand. It is best that the lambs get ewes' milk for at least the first day, if possible, after which they may be changed to whole milk from cows. Lambs that are strong and have had a good drink of milk soon after birth usually are very little trouble to raise. However, particular care must be taken to see that all utensils are clean and the milk is always fed at about 90 to 95 degrees F. and not fed in too great quantities at one time. With the best care, one can figure that he will lose approximately fifty per cent of his bum lambs. Occasionally the loss would be very light. If it is impossible to get the mother's milk, the first feeding of cow's milk (2 tablespoonfuls) should have a quarter of a tablespoonful of castor oil mixed with it. One intending to raise bum lambs should have a copy of Farmers' Bulletin Number 1155, U. S. D. A. "Diseases of Sheep," which recommends treatment for various troubles that may arise in young lambs.

Some individuals have had excellent results raising lambs by hand that could not be raised on their mothers' milk. Experienced bum lamb feeders generally start the lambs by giving them about two tablespoonsful of milk fed every two hours for the first twenty-four hours. This amount can be gradually increased and the number of feeds decreased until the lambs are being fed about two ounces each feeding every four hours. The amount of feed may be increased as the lambs grow older until you have the number of feeds decreased to three per day when the lambs are two weeks old. At about two weeks they should be started carefully on grain as described in the next section.

Creep Feeding Lambs

Winter or early spring lambs that are to be marketed as "spring lambs" or in the early summer need some supplemental feeding. This is sometimes known as creep feeding, that is, a separate pen is made and grain troughs placed in the pens. The openings are just large enough to permit the lambs to enter but restraining the ewes. This type of feeding is practical for the small flock owner especially where there is a surplus of grains and a shortage of pasture.

The thing that really makes the lambs fat is the mother's milk. Therefore first thing of importance is to try to feed the ewes so that they will give as much milk as possible. This may be accomplished by feeding good, bright alfalfa hay and about a pound of oats per ewe per day. If oats are not available or if too high in price, mill feed may be substituted. A mixture of grains such as mill run, oats, and wheat, in equal amounts by weight will be a good ration for the ewes where they are getting all the alfalfa hay

they will consume. This can be supplemented with beet pulp, silage or some root crop, if available. As soon as good pasture is provided the extra feeding of the ewes may be stopped.

The supplemental feed for the lambs would be as follows:

Start on wheat bran or mill run fed in a creep where the lambs can get at it. If the ewes are being fed grain, the lambs will soon learn to eat by feeding with the ewes, but their special grain ration should be where they can get at it at all times. After they have been eating bran for two or three weeks, gradually mix in ground wheat, crushed oats and linseed oil meal. About two weeks' time should be used in changing the lambs from straight wheat bran to your mixed feed ration. Your mixed feed ration would be prepared in the following proportions:

Ground wheat	2 parts by weight
Crushed oats	2 parts by weight
Linseed oil meal	1 part by weight
Wheat bran	1 part by weight

This feed should be before the lambs at all times. However, it is best to feed just enough so that they will clean it up twice a day; or perhaps a better way would be to clean the trough twice each day and feed what the lambs leave to the ewes. They should also have access to fresh hay and not be required to compete with the old ewes for any of their feed.

When the lambs are put on grass their creeps should be located where the ewes would come close to them several times a day.

If dried beet pulp is available, it is a very good feed for the ewes and also to start the lambs to eating some concentrates. This could be fed the same as bran if not too high in price. Dry pulp is generally considered about equal to barley when fed at not more than fifty per cent of the concentrated ration. If no bran is available, crushed oats could be used to start the lambs on grain.

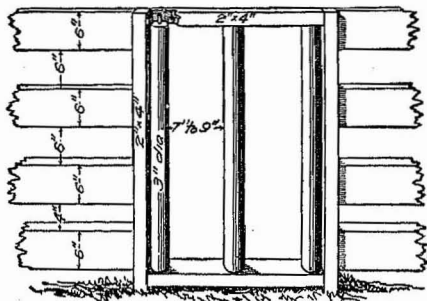


Fig. 5.—Lamb Creep.

Sometimes lambs are allowed to go through creeps to fresh pasture ahead of the ewes. This may be done by making holes in the fence (Fig. 5) large enough for the lambs to pass through but too small for the ewes. If it is desired to feed grain in addition to the extra pasture, the lambs' grain troughs may be placed in their pasture, close to the creep.

Docking Lambs

All lambs should have their tails removed before they are two weeks old. This may be done any time after birth, but at 5 to 10 days old is best. No 4-H club member will be allowed to exhibit a lamb with a long tail. When correctly done, docking adds much to the appearance and cleanliness of the sheep and adds to the market value. Various tools have been successfully used for this purpose, such as knives both sharp and dull, chisels, patented docking irons, hot pinchers, ecraseurs, emasculators and axes. These are all effective and the one at hand when docking time comes is the one to use. A sharp knife probably causes the least pain to the lamb but may cause the loss of blood. Regardless of the method or tools used, get the tail off. The cut should be made about one inch from the body measured on the under side of the tail. The lamb should be held with the rump resting on a flat board or the top of a panel. The assistant grasps the hind legs above the hock and front legs below the knees, a hind and a front leg in each hand, the lamb's back being toward the holder. When docking, the operator should hold the tail with the left hand and push it toward the body as the cut is made. This will leave loose skin above the cut to close over the end of the dock. Douse a little sheep dip on the wound, see that the blood has stopped and turn the lamb loose. Set the lamb down on his feet so that the dock will not touch the ground. The fresh cut tail may be the source of infection.

Occasionally a lamb will bleed badly regardless of the method used. If left without attention, some lambs may die from the loss of blood or will be so weakened that it will take several days for them to recover. When the tail is cut off, if the blood spurts out rapidly, it may be necessary to tie a string around the stump of tail to stop the blood. If the string is used, it should be removed an hour or so later. Sometimes pressure applied over the artery with the thumb and finger for a few seconds will allow the blood to clot sufficiently to stop bleeding. Touching the several ends of the arteries with a hot iron will also stop bleeding. Care should be used so that the flesh will not be burned. A touch of the artery is sufficient.

Castration

All ram lambs, except the best of the purebreds, should be castrated at the time they are docked. The lamb is held the same as for docking. (See docking). Unless both testicles can be felt, the operation should be delayed. It is well to delay docking until the job of castrating can be done, as the long tail is a constant reminder that you still have a buck lamb. If both testicles are down, the lower end of the scrotum is cut off with a sharp knife or shears. The testicles are now exposed and may be pulled straight out. Some shepherds pull the testicles with their teeth as it is very difficult to hold them with the fingers. Wrapping the first two fingers with coarse cloth is an aid in this operation. After the testicles are removed, cut off the tail, see that the blood is stopped, douse the scrotum and tail stump with sheep dip and turn the lamb loose. The less they are disturbed for a few hours after docking, the better.

Summer Care of the Flock

The summer care of the flock depends on local conditions. In some sections small farm flocks are pooled into a band and sent to distant range or the National forest for summer grazing. This is a good way to handle farm flocks to keep them healthy. A sheep club with enough sheep might form one of these pools or the club members may pool with adults to form a band. If any of the above practices are followed each individual member should have his own brand, ear tag or mark so that the club sheep can be identified in the fall.

Irrigated Pastures. Irrigated pastures furnish profitable feed for sheep if properly managed. They are also fertile breeding grounds for parasites. Proper management of irrigated pastures requires rotation so that the sheep are moved from one to the other every two to four weeks during the season. The shorter period is better. Shade, salt and abundant clean water are necessary.

Weaning the Lambs

Commercial milk fat lambs are weaned when they are ready for market, ordinarily when they weigh 70 to 80 pounds. Mutton bred lambs that have had plenty to eat from birth should reach market condition at four to five months old.

Lambs kept for breeding purposes should be weaned at four to five months old. The ewe and buck lambs should be separated at this time to prevent the possibility of the ewes being bred. The purebred buck lambs should be started on grain and continued on a liberal feed of grain until sold. This means following the schedule as outlined for fattening lambs except that well-grown ram lambs will eat more grain than 50 to 60 pound feeder lambs. Club members should sell their rams as lambs unless they have special pastures for growing them out to yearlings. If the ewes are turned on dry feed immediately after the lambs are taken away, they will have very little if any udder trouble. Ewes that are heavy milkers may have to be milked out a few times until the milk flow has stopped. Farm flock ewes that have to rustle for their feed from the time their lambs are weaned until breeding time will be in better breeding condition than those allowed to become too fat.

Care of Ewe Lambs

Only the best ewe lambs, whether purebred or grade, should be kept for breeding purposes. Small, off-type, or runty lambs should be sold for mutton. The lambs selected to keep for breeding should be turned into good pasture or allowed to run in the fields after the crops have been removed. They should be kept separated from the ewe flock until after breeding

season so there will be no danger of their being bred. After the ram is removed, they may be turned with the bred ewes for the rest of the winter and following summer. They will be bred with the rest of the flock the fall after they are one year old. These coming two-year-old ewes carrying their first lambs will need a little more care than older ewes. They should have one-fourth pound of grain per head per day as soon as the bad weather starts. About one month before lambing, this should be increased to one-half pound per day. They will also require more attention at lambing time.

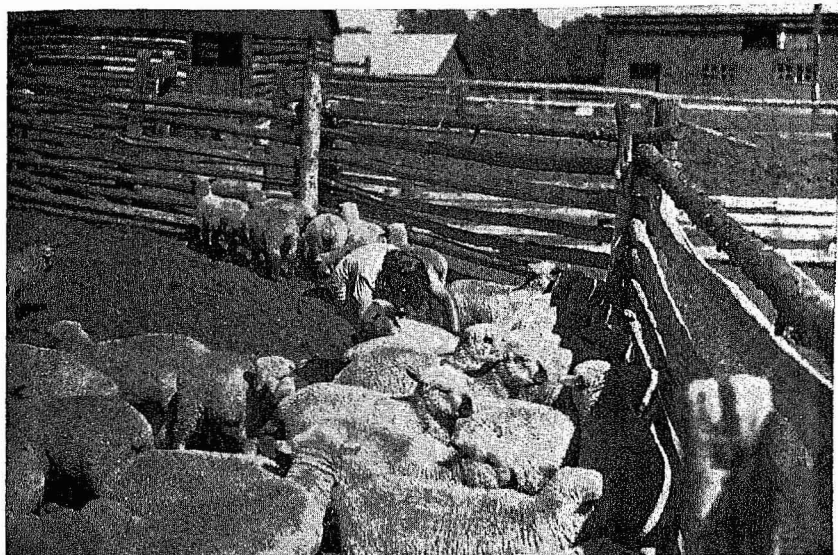


Fig. 6.—Picking out good, typy lambs is important and is also practical judging.

Lamb Feeding

Selection. Each 4-H club member should have five or more lambs weighing from 60 to 65 pounds to start the feeder project.

These lambs may be of the club member's own raising or they may be purchased. The feeder lamb should be of good type. The better conformation a lamb has to start with the better feeder he will be. The good type feeder is low, blocky, has a short neck, straight top and bottom lines, well-sprung ribs, deep body, good leg of mutton, and is well covered with natural flesh. He should be in good condition, alert and thrifty. Beware of the lamb that is long-legged, thin and shows that he has had the scours for some time. This is a sign of an unhealthy condition and may mean he has worms, especially if he has been raised on irrigated pasture. After selecting the lambs, weighing from 60 to 65 pounds, they should be placed in the feed lot by October first if they are to be fat by January first.

Starting on Feed. The following schedule is a good way to start lambs on feed:

	Kind of Grain	Feed Per Lamb Per Day	
		Night	Morning
First week	Oats	1/10 pound	1/10 pound
Second week	½ oats—½ wheat	2/10 "	2/10 "
Third week	¼ oats—¼ barley—½ wheat	3/10 "	3/10 "
Fourth week	½ barley—½ wheat	4/10 "	4/10 "
Fifth week	½ barley—½ wheat	5/10 "	5/10 "
Sixth week	½ barley—½ wheat	6/10 "	6/10 "
Seventh week	½ barley—½ wheat	7/10 "	7/10 "

Or measure your feed as follows:

	Kind of Grain	Feed for 10 lambs	Feed for 5 lambs
		Feed twice per day	Feed twice per day
First week	Oats	1 quart	½ quart
Second week	½ oats—½ wheat	1 ½ quarts	¾ quart
Third week	¼ oats—¼ barley—½ wheat	2 quarts	1 quart
Fourth week	½ barley—½ wheat	2 ½ quarts	1 1/6 quarts
Fifth week	½ barley—½ wheat	3 quarts	1 ½ quarts
Sixth week	½ barley—½ wheat	3 ½ quarts	1 ¾ quarts
Seventh week	½ barley—½ wheat	4 ½ quarts	2 1/6 quarts

After lambs have gotten to the eighth week, increases in the amount of feed per day should be made very slowly until they are finished.

The feed tables shown are to be used only as a guide. Variations from this schedule may be made to suit the lambs' taste and feeding ability. Good quality alfalfa hay should be in front of the lambs at all times. The hay should be fed in racks and the grain in separate troughs (Fig. 2). The grain troughs should be removed and cleaned as soon as the lambs have finished eating. Whenever the grain is refused by one or more lambs, that is a danger signal. The lambs are going "off feed." If only one lamb refuses to eat, reduce the feed the amount of his share until he starts eating again. If two or more lambs are "off feed," skip a feed, then start with a reduced amount of grain and gradually work back to the schedule.

Kinds of Grain. Montana Experiment Station tests show that wheat and corn have about the same feeding value for sheep. Frosted or shrunk wheat has given just as good results as good market wheat. Barley ranks next to wheat but has a larger hull and is "bulky." It is better fed with an equal amount of wheat. Oats and alfalfa are the safest feed combination and will produce fat lambs if the oats are heavy and the alfalfa high quality. Lambs may be finished on wheat and hay or barley and hay, but better results are obtained with a mixed ration. Linseed or cottonseed cake fed as a supplement, not more than one-fifth of a pound per lamb per day, will increase the daily gain, but is not necessary. Molasses has about the same feeding value as wheat but should be fed in limited amounts, (not more than one-third of a pound per day, fed in the grain trough with the grain poured over it).

Dried molasses beet pulp is a very satisfactory lamb feed and is about equal, pound for pound, to barley in feeding value, mixed with grain, when it constitutes up to one-half of the total concentrate feed. Dried beet pulp is a "safe" feed and it is recommended for beginners.

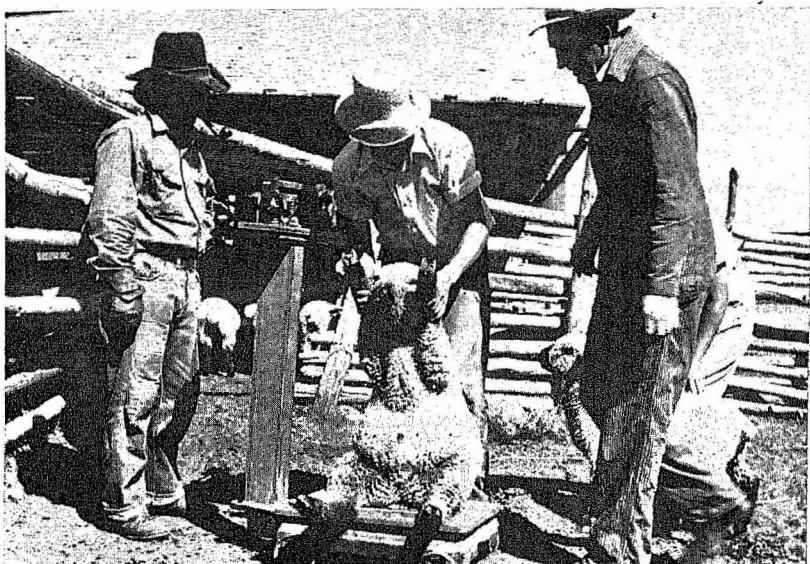


Fig. 7.—Periodic weighing is necessary if costs and economy are to be controlled.

Feeding Pointers

Feed twice per day at a regular hour.

Keep troughs clean.

Keep fresh water available at all times.

Keep coarse ground salt before your lambs at all times.

Weigh your lambs periodically.

Care of the Wool

The wool is a valuable part of the annual income from sheep. It will prove profitable to the 4-H club member to prepare his clip for market in the best possible way. The market value of wool can be seriously reduced by allowing it to become contaminated with burrs, straw, dung locks, dirt, or any other foreign matter. Many good fleeces are damaged at shearing time by taking them off the sheep while wet or having the shearing operation done on a floor covered with straw, dirt, or manure. Sheep should never be allowed to run to straw stacks or under hay racks where the chaff and leaves will work into the wool. The actual job of shearing is learned by practice. Each sheep club member should learn to do his own shearing either with the hand shears or a machine. A few things to remember in producing good wool are:

Poor sheep produce poor wool.

Keep brand marks small.

Shear sheep only when the fleece is dry.

Shear on warm days and protect shorn sheep from storms.

Remove all dirty locks by tagging.

Remove the fleeces from the sheep in an unbroken condition.

Roll fleeces with flesh side out and tie with paper twine. Never use sisal, rough jute, or hemp twine for tying fleeces.

Place the prepared fleeces in a regulation wool sack and pile them in a dry place. Be sure that the sacks are clean on the inside. Wool should never be stored in a damp place and should never be placed directly on the ground.

Read "Preparing Wool For Market" leaflet No. 92 U. S. D. A.

Marketing Wool

Club members should market their wool through the local marketing association or wool pool.

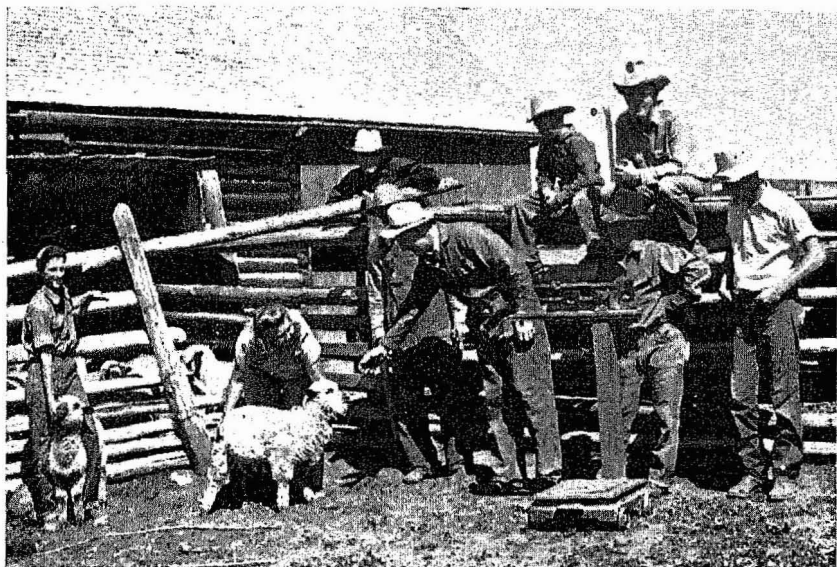


Fig. 8.—Training the lamb to lead is not difficult.

Fitting Your Lambs for Show

Of course, the fitting of lambs includes feeding, as well as the trimming of the fleece. If you are going to make a success of showing your lambs, they should be well trained. This may be accomplished by placing your individuals in small pens before you start to catch them and then handling them very gently. In catching a lamb, never grab him by the fleece. Get him in a corner and catch him firmly by one hind leg or in the flank, then jump to the head and hold him by the skin under the chin. One hand may be placed on top of the head and the other under the lower jaw and in this way he can be prevented from going forward by lifting the head or pulling the head to keep him from going backwards. After he finds out that you are not going to hurt him you can then commence to teach him

to stand squarely on all four legs. Always stand on the left side of the lamb or directly in front of him. If you are holding him for the judge to examine, always keep the lamb between you and the judge, showing to the best advantage possible. In shifting from one side of the lamb to the other step around in front of him rather than over or around to the rear. Lambs may be halter broke but they are not shown with a halter. In leading them without the halter, the left hand is placed under the chin and the right hand on the dock (stub of the tail). Pinching the end of the dock will cause the lamb to go forward and you can guide him by shifting the left hand.

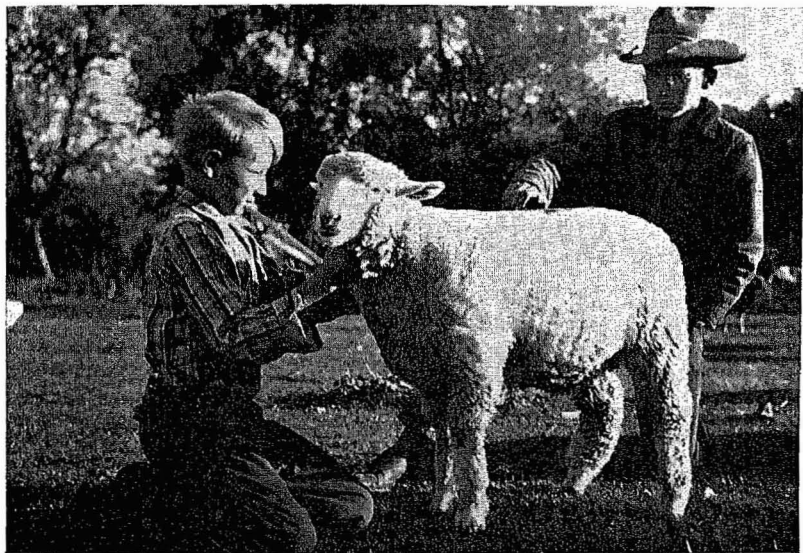


Fig. 9.—Blocking the lamb for showing will greatly improve his appearance but should not be too extreme.

Trimming the Fleece

The trimming of the fleece is an art that is only accomplished by persistent trying. The first thing in trimming is to size up the lamb to see just where you can improve his looks by cutting down the fleece. One generally starts by trimming off the taggy locks of wool that are sticking up above the main part of the fleece. The first step is to card out these locks with a wool card or a round curry comb. The cards should be slapped against the fleece and lifted out with a slight rotary motion and not pulled against the wool. Grasp the card handle so that the end of the handle comes out past the thumb and the card is under the heel of the hand. The technique of this can soon be learned by a little practice. If you are using a round curry comb, this may be dragged lightly across the fleece from front to rear and from bottom to top along the sides. After the fleece has been thoroughly carded out, the trimming may commence. This start is generally made at the shoulders and trimmed toward the rear, making the top line as level as possible. By gradually pulling up and cutting down the wool on the back you can make the back look broader and more nearly level. This

first operation is generally called "cutting down the back" or "backing down." For the beginner this should take several days, that is, working a few minutes each day for several days and not attempting to do too much at once, the idea being that the lamb will be accustomed to your working with him and will be more apt to stand naturally. If you cut too deep in one spot, this is going to look bad because wool once cut off cannot be replaced. After a lamb has been "backed down," the sides are trimmed in a like manner, following the general contour of the sheep.

Remember to cut off only the locks that were previously carded up. The trimming operation is all done with sheep shears. It is a good plan to practice trimming on one of your lambs that you are not intending to enter in the individual or pen class. It is quite likely that you will have a little bit of difficulty in learning to handle your shears so that you will not cut "cat ladders" all over the sheep's back. The actual details of this operation can be best learned from observation and persistent practice. Extreme fitting is not desired. It is not the aim to make the lamb look unnatural.



Fig. 10.—Teaching the lamb to stand squarely is a showmanship fundamental.

Selecting Your Lamb for Individual Show

Only your good feeders that have good mutton type should be selected to show as individuals. An individual fat lamb should be set on short legs, the body short and thick, with a well-covered back and a good leg of mutton. Pick out your four or five best looking individuals and trim them for show in the individual and pen classes. The individual must not weigh more than 100 pounds when weighed the day before the show. The pen of three lambs must not weigh over 300 pounds. Your individual may or may not be one of your pen of three. The pen of three should be uniform as to size and type.