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**Pneumonia Deals Sheep Industry
Heavy Blow; Research Is Needed**

DAVIS, CALIF — Pneumonia causes millions of dollars in losses each year in the sheep industry, and research to help minimize the losses appears to be sadly lacking.

That was the number one disease problem highlighted at the sheep symposium on Sheep Diseases and Health at Davis, Calif., on the University of California campus there. The symposium was the third of five sponsored under the Sheep Industry Development Program, which is designed to gather, evaluate and develop new production and marketing programs from current information and research available.

The next sheep symposium will be on Nutrition at the University of Iowa at Ames on October 8 and 9 and will feature some of the nation's leading specialists on feeding and nutrition.

Pin-pointing the disease problems, Dr Clifford Beck of Michigan State University said that 14.7 percent of all lambs

born died before they reached the age of six months with the majority of deaths occurring during the first two weeks after birth.

Dr. Beck reported on a 20 year study which revealed that of all the lamb deaths, 16.3 percent were the result of pneumonia.

At the same time, Dr Guy Reynolds of Oregon State University reported on a Montana study involving 7,000 lambs in which 23 percent died before weaning and 16 percent of those that died were victims of pneumonia at an average age of 15 days. Dr Blaine McGowan of the University of California reported death rates as high as 40 percent among groups of pasture fed lambs in California.

Respiratory problems in mature range ewes resulted in a death rate of three to six percent of the ewe flock. Affected animals are very often referred to as "lungers".

In addition to the death loss on the farm and ranch, pneu-

monia and other respiratory ailments in sheep result in extensive condemnation of lamb carcasses. Dr. F. R. Thorndike, deputy director of the Western Meat Inspection District at San Francisco, said that 66,580 lamb and sheep carcasses were condemned in 1967, and of that number 9,656 or 14½ percent were condemned because of pneumonia. This disease ranked third among the major causes of lamb carcass condemnation.

Because pneumonia affects sheep in all parts of the nation, and is a constant menace from birth through the life of a sheep, it ranks as one of the most serious of sheep diseases. Despite that fact, there is less known control and methods of prevention of pneumonia than any other disease of sheep.

The dollar loss in lambs and sheep due to pneumonia in one year can run as high as \$37 million if these same sheep and lambs had been marketed instead of being lost to pneumonia.

Dr R E Pierson, professor of veterinary medicine at Colorado State University said that enterotoxemia, or over eating disease, is still a major cause of death in feedlot lambs. He said this loss persists despite the fact that there are effective vaccine programs which are not being fully utilized by lamb feeders.

Proper feeding methods and management, said Dr Aiden Killinger, associate professor of the department of pathology and hygiene at the University of Illinois, are necessary in preventing listeriosis in sheep. Spoiled and exposed silage will often promote the spread of listeriosis.

In the same area of feeding, Dr E N Bergman of Cornell University, said that prevention of stress, proper rations and good management will prevent many diseases in sheep.

Several of the speakers pointed out the high incidence of foot rot and parasites in the farm flock areas, particularly in areas of high rainfall or extensive irrigation. Parasites are becoming more of a problem in the range flocks as the sheep become confined within smaller areas.

Dr H R Crookshank with the Agricultural Research Service at Texas A & M University indicated that the technical grade of ammonium chloride has recently been cleared by the Food and Drug Administration as an additive for sheep feeds. This compound is effective in the control of urinary calculi in sheep. Dr Crookshank also said that properly formulated rations can help to lessen the incidence of this disease.

Poisonous plants cause considerable loss to sheep producers in certain areas of the country. Dr Wayne Binns, and Dr Lynn James, both of the poisonous plant research center for the USDA at Logan, Utah, emphasized the necessity for growers to learn to identify poisonous plants that affect sheep and to develop the management skills to cope with ranges infested with these plants.

Dr W W Hawkins Jr., head of the veterinary research laboratory at Montana State University, and Dr Robert E Simmons, veterinarian in charge of the Idaho Sheep Commission, spoke on diseases affecting the reproductive capacity of the ewe and ram. They indicated that improved management and proper diagnosis can greatly aid in the control of diseases affecting the reproductive capacity.

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