

Keeps Urging Farmers to Try Sheep

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got 37 cents a pound for a small group of 85 pound lambs at the Lancaster Stock Yards. Herr thinks more producers should aim for the Christmas market.

The Herr flock drops lambs in September, May and December.

The September lambs are kept for breeding stock, and show and sale prospects.

The May lambs are ready for market as wethers for 4-H and FFA members as fattening projects.

The December and January lambs are geared to the Easter market.

Herr noted that a larger operator could have two flocks going simultaneously, with lambing every four months. But this would take much more planning and labor to manage.

Commercial Prospects?
Can sheep be produced on a large scale economically? Herr thinks they can be. He has a friend in New York who has 500 ewes. But he notes that a one-ram flock is about 40 ewes.

For the producer going com-

mercial, Herr would recommend a purebred Dorset ram and a different breed of ewe to develop a Dorset cross. The crossbred offspring has proven to be the fastest grower for the commercial flock, he notes. He also believes the Dorset, Rambouillet or Merino blood is necessary for out of season breeding and intensive lambing which is necessary for best returns.

As for the type of ewes, he said he thinks there's "more difference within the breeds than between them." The main thing is to get good foundation stock.

Feeding Program

Herr stresses a controlled feeding program.

He believes that a feeding program known as "flushing" for three weeks before breeding is vital in achieving high lambing averages. He feeds one half pound of oats per day per animal for three weeks before putting in the ram.

While Herr feels that this oats program is more important than heritability in obtaining

multiple births, he also picks both rams and ewes which are from multiple lambings.

Herr noted that swine producers also have long been aware of the importance of flushing and have been doing it for years to increase litter size.

For the 60 days that his lambs are nursing, Herr feeds them one and a half pounds per day of 12 per cent grain mixture. After 60 days, they are weaned and fed only pasture or hay.

He notes that after 70 days there's "no use putting feed into the ewe, because she's giving very little milk. You might as well divert the feed into the lamb."

Except when ewes are giving milk to lambs or at flushing time, his ewes are on strictly a pasture and hay diet. Herr be-

lieves that keeping his ewes off grain between lambings keeps them in better condition for lambing, because they don't get too fat.

Herr presently has 40 ewes and 15 ewe lambs which will go back into the flock. He creep feeds — all they'll eat — his ewes 14 per cent protein ration.

He notes that many of his animals will weigh over 60 pounds at 60 days of age, some will go

over 90 pounds in 90 days and some better than 120 pounds in 120 days.

Health Care

His health program places heavy emphasis on worming every month during the summer.

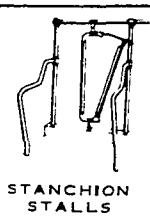
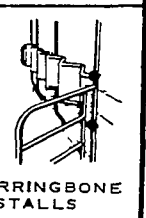

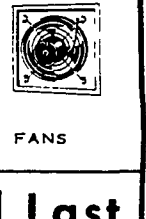
One of his reasons for rotating pasture is to cut down on the worm problem.

For worming, he alternates

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