

Livestock covered at part-time farmer program

By KENDACE BORRY
LANCASTER — The first educational program designed especially for part-time farmers was held last Saturday, March 18, at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center. Sponsored by the Lancaster County Cooperative Extension Service, the morning sessions were meant especially for those people who farm while also working somewhere else.

One session held for the part-time farmers dealt with livestock. Led by County Agent Max Smith, the farmers were told points and given hints to increase their efficiency in raising different types of livestock.

Speaking of hogs, Smith noted that Lancaster County is a big hog producing county. There is a good market for hogs and a ready demand.

Looking to the future, Smith doesn't expect the market to be as good in the next few years. He believes the market prices may go down because of the increasing supply of hogs.

When buying young pigs, he stated that it is very important to get health papers with them. If buying the pigs weighing 30 to 40 lbs., the animals need to be kept warm, and need protection against the cold until they weigh between 50 and 60 lbs.

Pigs should be started on a growing ration consisting of more protein and corn. As the pigs are being finished for market, less protein should be used.

One important thing to remember about pigs is not to feed them uncooked garbage, especially uncooked meat. The practice of doing so could cause hog cholera—the most dreaded hog disease, for which there is no cure.

Pigs should be wormed, Smith explained. He recommended that a veterinarian be consulted,

and added that most pigs are wormy.

To finish a pig, he can be put on a self-feeder. For best results, Smith recommended that a hog is ready for market when he weighs between 200 and 240 lbs.

Thinking of the Summer months, Smith thought that a bank barn is the best place to keep a pig. Hogs need protection from the hot sun, he stated, because they have no sweat glands.

Like all animals, pigs need minerals and they can be given free choice.

Speaking of pest control, Smith told the farmers to watch for body lice. They should be sprayed for, and a veterinarian should be consulted if they become a problem.

Mange, another pest problem, can cause a pig to lose weight. The mange should be treated as soon as possible.

Alfalfa and clover makes the best pasture if the farmer desires to put his pigs out.

Smith recommended the use of crossbreds because he believes they will gain weight faster and have a meaty carcass. When choosing a pig, he stated that the animal should be healthy, alert, have a shiny coat, be of good flesh, and be bright eyed and frisky.

Turning to the raising of sheep, Smith stated that he believes sheep can be doing better than they are presently. Lancaster County is the third highest in the state for sheep population.

The most important thing that sheep need to be healthy, he noted, is good pasture in the Summer months and good hay over the Winter. Therefore a sound hay and pasture program is needed. The best hay for sheep is clover or alfalfa legume hay.

To become involved in the sheep business, a good-sized healthy ewe flock is needed. Smith favors western ewes,



Max Smith

from the plain states, weighing about 100 to 110 lbs., and costing about \$50. These should be bred to a mutton type ram to get fast growing lambs.

If think of raising purebreds, Smith noted that a market for the sheep is needed.

Stomach worm control is a must for sheep as a good worming program is needed. Ewes should be wormed in the Spring and Fall, and lambs should be wormed every four to six weeks.

The primary market for lambs is the Easter market, Smith explained. Early lambs do best.

Speaking on pastures for sheep, he recommended a bluegrass, orchard grass, and timothy pasture. If pasturing on clover and alfalfa, he warned farmers to watch the animals for bloat when the crop is wet. Silage is okay for sheep if not frozen or moldy. Wheat bran or molasses is needed in the feed ration to make a good laxative feed.

Shearing of the sheep should take place in March or early April. The lambs will be able to milk better and the shearing makes better mothers of the ewes. The sheep will notice the weather more and come in earlier in the bad weather giving more protection to the lambs.

Mentioning the care of wool, Smith said that sheep growers should hope for approximately seven to eight pounds of wool per sheep. The wool should be dry and clean and wrapped with paper twine, with the flesh side out. Smith recommended that for the best prices the wool should be taken to a wool pool such

as those in Carlisle and Reading. Until then, it should be kept in a dry clean place.

Market lambs should have a creep feeder. Extra cracked corn, bran, and oats should be put in their ration so that they gain weight faster. Lambs should be weaned when three to four

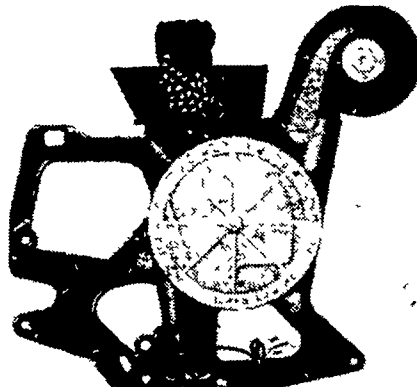
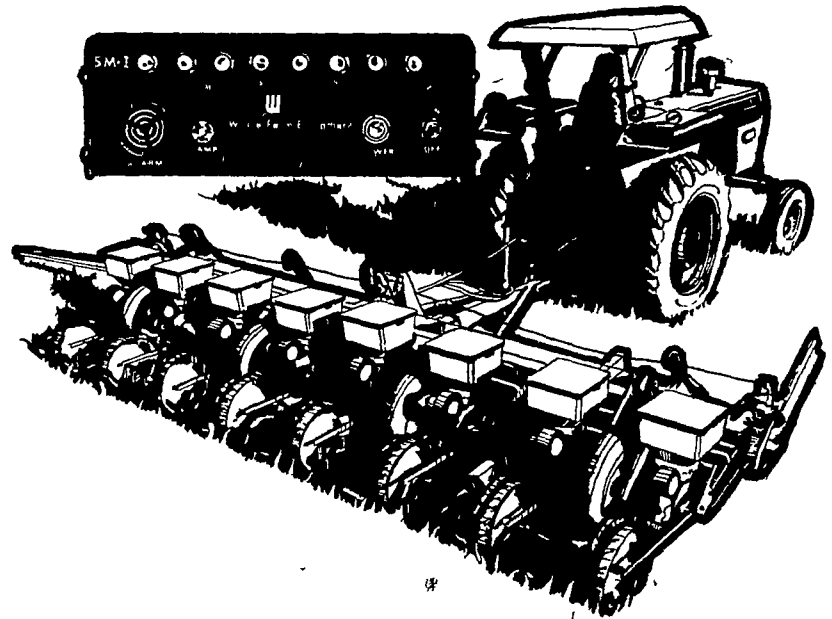
months old and weighing 60 to 80 lbs.

Sheep farmers should buy the best ram they can find, Smith stated. He added that a good ram has size, is straight in the legs, and has good muscle. A yearling ram, he noted, can service 35 to 40 ewes.

Smith favors rams (Turn to Page 23)

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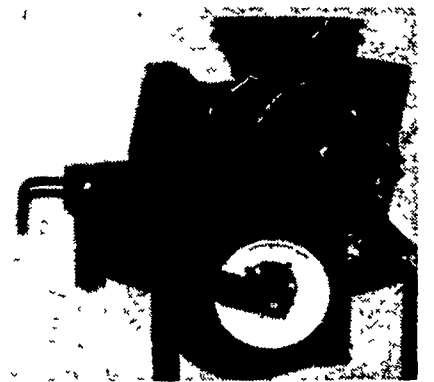
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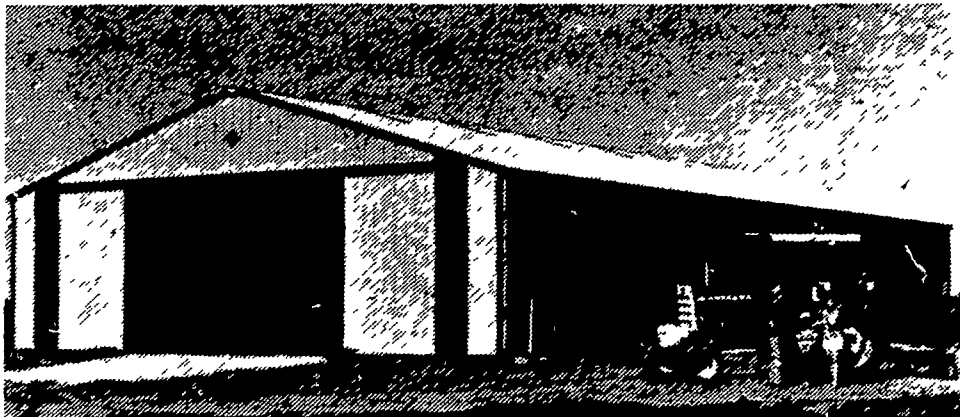
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