

# Sheep good on baaaa'd land

**YORK** — Sheep production of lands unsuitable for cultivated crops offers an opportunity for increasing income from small farms in Pennsylvania and other states of the Northeast region, according to Anthony G. Dobrosky, York County Agricultural Agent.

"On small farms a high percentage of the land has inherent restrictions to growth of cultivated crops, and throughout the region under-utilized land is common," says Dobrosky. "Growth of forage crops and their utilization through livestock offers an alternative use

for these marginal lands "

Sheep production, in particular, offers advantages over other animal enterprises because of the small size of sheep and their ability to utilize forages. Sheep can be grown from minimal amounts of grain and with minimal equipment.

Furthermore, a good market for sheep exists today. Consumer demand exceeds supply in key market areas. In the New York City area, for example, only 50 percent of the known demand for lamb is being met

"The demand is so great," notes Dobrosky, "because sheep numbers in this country have declined sharply over the years." In 1942 there were about 50 million head of sheep in the United States. By 1977 their numbers had declined to 12.4 million.

Dobrosky cautions, however, against assuming that sheep require no management and can be placed on any farm acreage. "To maintain high production and help the sheep best utilize feed, it is important to provide forages of

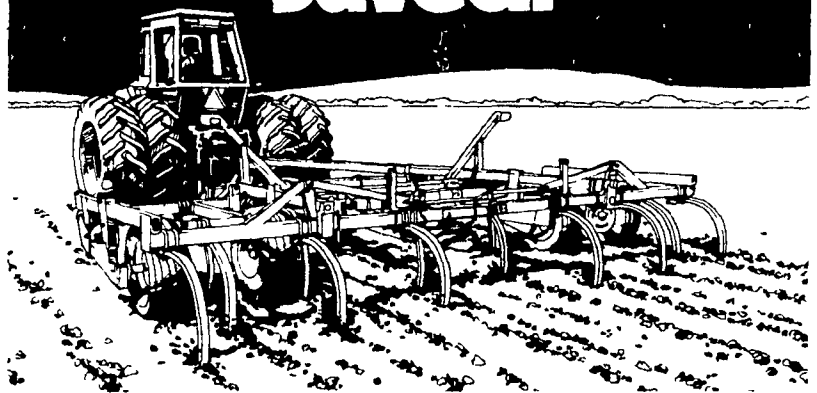
sufficiently high quality at critical times and in adequate quantities," he says.

To insure low-cost sheep production for small farmers, machinery and other crop-production costs must be kept to a

minimum. Techniques for establishing improved forage species and improving low production pastures without the use of expensive seeding equipment and large amounts of fertilizers and herbicides are needed.

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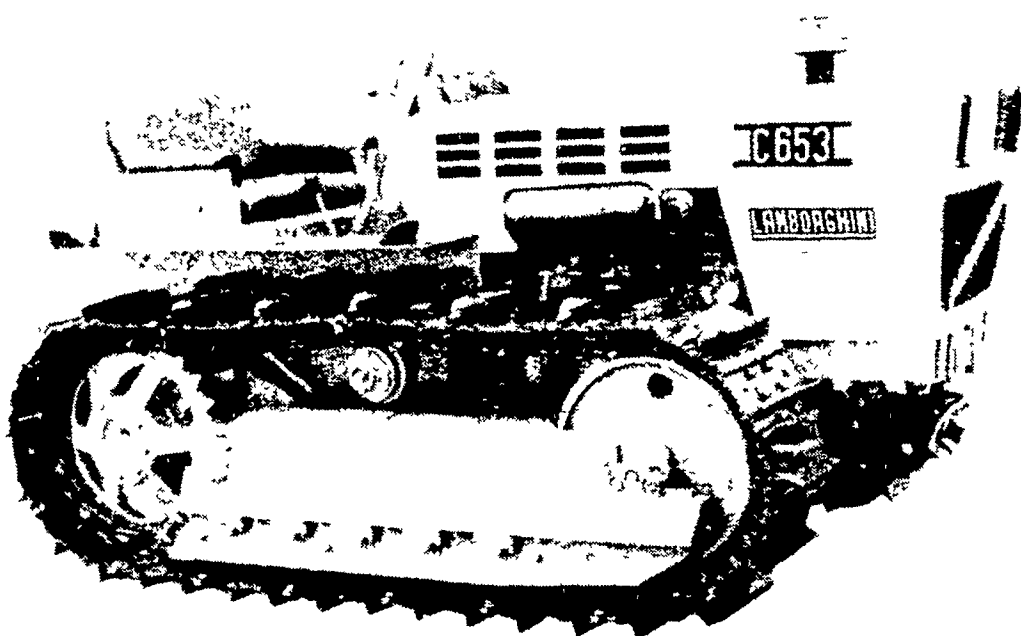
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