Guide Shows How To Make Profit From Sheep

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Farmers often attempt to raise sheep as a sideline to their other farming endeavors, but many do not have enough breeding ewes to maintain good sheep husbandry without a great expense per head.

Thirty-five to 40 ewes is the minimum number likely to return enough income to make a flock worthwhile. "Sheep Husbandry," a non-credit correspondence course taught through the Pennsylvania State University, teaches farmers how to make sheep a pro-fitable acquisition.

There are several advantages to raising sheep. Sheep make excellent use of forage: six to seven ewes eat the same amount of food as one beef cow. Also cattle and sheep can graze side-by-side because of the similarities in their physical makeup. Sheep can also be used for different types of production, from commercial uses to pure breeding, and they require a minimum amount of labor and inexpensive housing.

There are also disadvantages to the sheep industry. A lack of prop-er feed and care, poor management, and damage by parasites have all contributed to the discouragement of sheep production. "Sheep Husbandry" teaches an interested sheepherder how to cope with and conquer each one of these problems.

Dr. Thomas L. Merritt, an associate professor of animal industry at Penn State's main campus, has been teaching for more than 30 years. He breaks his course down into several workable sections, each one giving a synopsis of sheep care, equipment, or market-ing possibilities.

"Sheep Husbandry" discusses all the ins and outs of mating rams and ewes as well as follow-up care of pregnant ewes and newborn lambs. For instance, during the first 12 to 15 weeks of pregnancy, ewes consume approximately 2½ percent of their weight in air-dry feed daily. If the ewes are on pasture, the sheepherder must make sure that the pasture is providing ample feed. In late fall, too often the pasture becomes rundown or dormant and the ewes have a difficult time just maintaining their body weight. They must have good access to salt and minerals.

If you would like to learn more about raising your own sheep and the possibility of profit, send $16.00 to: "Sheep Husbandry." Course #42, 128 AG-Mitchell Bldg., University Park, PA 16802. Make checks payable to the Pennsylvania State University.
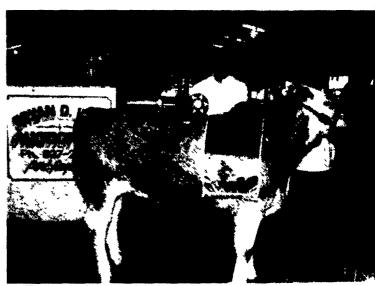
Union County Fair

Awards Champions

Grand champion market swine for the Union Co. West End Fair is exhibited here by owner Jason Christ, Mifflinburg FFA, right. On the left is Robert Hamm of the Country Cupboard in Lewisburg, buyer.

The grand champion market steer at the Union County livestock sale was exhibited by Heidi Keefer, Cowan Ag 4-H Club, right. Buyer was Robert Hamm for Country Cupboard in Lewisburg.

Bob Valentine, left, was the buyer for the Mifflinburg Bank and Trust of the grand champion market lamb at the Union Co. West End livestock stock. Matthew Houpt, Mifflingburg FFA, was the owner.