



# Your Sheep Business

W. E. MORRIS

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
EXTENSION ANIMAL HUSBANDMAN

OCT 12 1940

Letter No. 13  
September 25, 1940

ST. PAUL CAMPUS LIBRARIES

University Farm, St. Paul, Minnesota

Now is the time to think and talk rams--purebred rams. I say purebreds because we know that the use of purebred mutton rams will bring more profits from both the lamb and wool crop. Improvement in both lambs and wool must come thru the sire.

Consider this: During six or seven years of usefulness an average ewe will produce five to eight lambs. A good ram bred to 35 ewes each year over a period of five years should sire 150 or more lambs. That is why we have a right to say that the sire is half the flock.

The Kentucky Experiment Station conducted recently tests to show the difference in value of purebred and scrub sires. These experiments show that the lambs out of the scrub ewes sired by scrub bucks weighed only 56 pounds at the age of four months, while the lambs of the same age sired by a purebred Southdown ram weighed 72 pounds. The lambs sired by the Southdown ram sold for a cent a pound more than did the scrub lambs--the difference was at that time \$2.96 per head in favor of the lambs sired by the purebred ram. In the fleeces the same thing was evident. The average fleece produced by scrub ewes weighed five pounds. A purebred Hampshire ram increased this weight to 6.2 pounds in the next generation and produced a better grade of wool. This wool was worth three cents a pound more than that of the scrub ewes. The difference in the value of the wool from the sheep sired by the purebred sire, as compared to those from the scrubs, was 79 cents per head. A purebred Rambouillet sire increased the weight of the fleece to 7.5 pounds.

I do not care what breed of purebred rams a man may use. I do believe, however, that to get a big return on his investment, he should select a good purebred ram of any of the mutton breeds to use on a grade flock.

To summarize:

## WHY PUREBRED RAMS?

- (1) They transmit their characteristics to their lambs more uniformly than do scrub bucks.
- (2) They have better mutton form.
- (3) They are more thickly fleshed and they will shear more wool of a better quality.

## WHY LAMBS Sired BY PUREBRED RAMS?

- (1) They are more uniform in appearance than lambs sired by scrub bucks.
- (2) They are easier feeders.
- (3) They are ready for market at an earlier age.
- (4) They will weigh from 10 to 15 pounds more per head at four to five months of age.
- (5) They will yield a higher percentage of dressed carcass; therefore they are worth more per pound on the market.

## WHY EWES Sired BY PUREBRED RAMS?

- (1) They make a more uniform flock than those sired by scrub bucks.
- (2) They will shear from 20 to 50 per cent more wool per head.
- (3) The wool they produce will be worth more per pound.
- (4) They fatten easier.
- (5) They sell for more on the market when their breeding days are over.

Purebred ram sales are to be held in 35 counties during October. There will be ample opportunity at these sales to get good rams.