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BULLETIN ROOM
UNIVERSITY FARM

Your Sheep Business

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DOCUMENTS

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Letter No. 18
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University Farm, St. Paul, Minnesota

PARASITES - Internal--External

We have just completed a tour of the state during which we held demonstrations on parasite control in 62 counties. No doubt, many of the readers of this letter were in attendance. I wish that every sheep man could have been present to talk over the parasite problem. Parasites will cause losses in practically all flocks in the state unless some means of control is practiced.

The purpose of this letter is to call attention to this fact again and to urge that the flock be drenched immediately. Lambs are big enough now in most cases so that they, as well as the older sheep, can be dosed. Starve them overnight - that is, keep them from feed and water - and the next forenoon drench the entire lot. Use the copper sulfate-nicotine sulfate combination as described in Extension Folder 42. You can obtain this folder from the county agent's office or by writing to the Bulletin Room, University Farm. For those who have not drenched before this spring, I would urge that a second drenching be given about three weeks following the first. If you will follow the directions given in Folder 42, you will have no difficulty. Give the size of dose recommended after mixing the drench according to directions. Do not underdose.

I recall a flock that we visited last spring, badly infested with the stomach worm. In 1939 this man marketed only 25% of his lambs as No. 1 lambs. He drenched three times in 1940 with the copper sulfate-nicotine sulfate drench. In 1940 he marketed better than 80% of his lambs as No. 1. That is what drenching does.

The bluestone and nicotine-sulfate combination costs less than a cent a head for material. The labor is very small. So protect your lambs this summer by drenching as soon as you can, and it would be a good idea to repeat in three weeks. Then if the lambs are not showing the thrift that you would like to see, repeat the drenching three weeks later.

Lamb prices are going to be good, so let's not let any of our lambs go to market thin. We have it on reliable authority that 35 to 40 per cent of the native lambs come to market lacking in weight and finish to satisfy the packer demands. I hope that we can change this situation this year and have the bulk of our lambs come in at a weight and finish that will bring top prices. We can do this if we control the parasites and supply the feed.

The question each sheep raiser should ask himself right now is: Am I going to have good enough pasture to carry the flock and keep it gaining rapidly? If not, perhaps there is a piece of land you can put into Sudan grass or rape at this time - or even a grain mixture with fall rye to supplement the regular pastures. A good feed supply should make it possible to put the lambs onto market off grass without having to grain them in the fall.

Now a word about the external parasites - the tick and the louse. If you have ticks around, you have probably observed them on the lambs or at shearing time. If you see your sheep rubbing, wearing off the wool along the sides and the shoulders, this is a pretty good indication of lice. Dipping will mean a saving of a pound to a pound and a half of wool per sheep, plus a saving of 25 to 50 cents on each lamb raised.