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THE SHEPHERDS
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CALENDAR

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JANUARY

TAKE THE RAM OUT OF THE EWE FLOCK and do not allow him to run with the ewes until the next mating season. On a ration of good quality legume hay or fair quality hay plus $\frac{1}{2}$ pound of grain per day, the ram should winter very well. Exercise is necessary to his good health.

BE CAREFUL NOT TO GET CHAFF AND SEEDS INTO THE FLEECES when feeding and bedding the flock. A properly constructed feeding rack will aid in this respect, as will the exclusion of the sheep from the pen while bedding. Chaffy and seedy fleeces are of a lower grade and hence of less value.

USE SUFFICIENT BEDDING to keep all parts of the pens dry, especially around the watering troughs and near the open doors.

HAVE A SYSTEM OF MARKING OR IDENTIFYING THE INDIVIDUAL SHEEP through the use of metal ear tags or tattoos. An example of such would be a tag marked "C 10A" where "C" would represent either the breed of the lamb or the sire of the lamb, if only one breed is kept. The "A" would represent the year of birth and the "10" would indicate that the lamb was the tenth one born that year. The succeeding year the "A" would be replaced with "B" to show that a "B" lamb would be one year younger than an "A" lamb. January is a good time to set up such a system, to decide on the number and kinds of tags needed, and to order them.



USE SUFFICIENT BEDDING

FEBRUARY

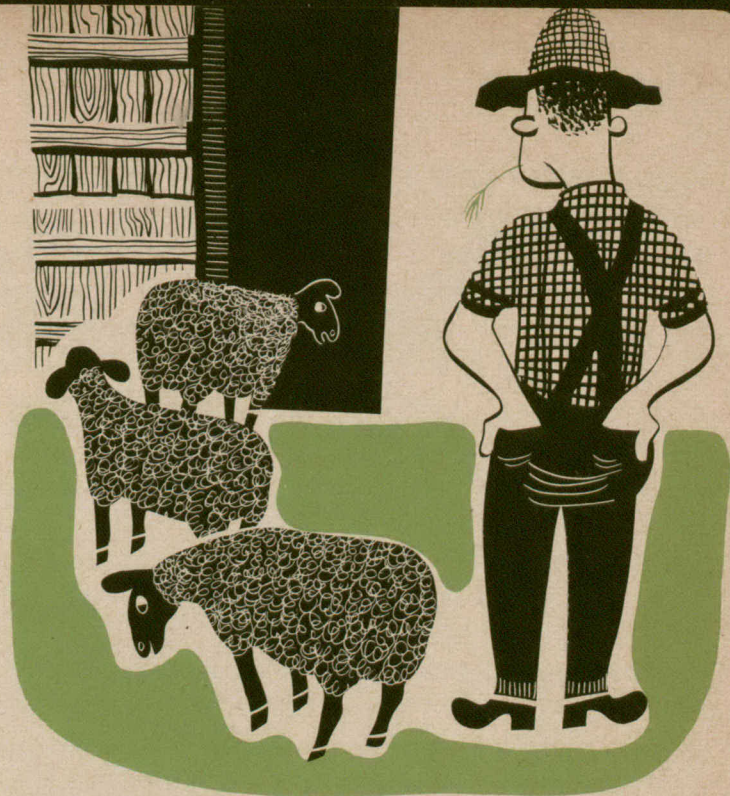
START TO FEED GRAIN TO THE PREGNANT EWES 6 weeks before the lambing period begins. Feed them a grain ration of two parts of crushed oats to one part of bran at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ pound of the mixture per head per day. Gradually increase the daily grain ration to $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds each by lambing time. If top quality legume hay is fed, the rate of grain feeding may be greatly reduced.

GRADUALLY DISCONTINUE THE FEEDING OF SUCCULENTS (that is, roots or silage) to the bred ewes if lambs are expected in March.

WATCH FOR CROWDING AND JAMMING BY THE EWES at the doors, or gates, and at the feed troughs. When ewes are heavy in lamb injury from crowding can result in death to the unborn lamb.

WATCH FOR PREGNANCY DISEASE IN EWES. The symptoms are, unthriftiness, sluggishness, unsteadiness of gait, and later paralysis. The ewe often makes a trotting motion when down on her side. Adequate exercise and a balanced ration will help to prevent the disease. Call a veterinarian if the disease appears.

PREPARE THE LAMBING PENS for use. Select a dry, warm place which is free from draughts for the pens. Bed the pens with clean straw. Check and repair all hurdles and gates in the lambing pens. Folding hurdles (each wing $2\frac{1}{2}'$ x $4'$) are very handy for individual lambing pens. Check the heat lamps and electrical cords. Replace or repair frayed or worn wires. Have sufficient heat lamps on hand if the weather is likely to be cold.



WATCH FOR CROWDING AND JAMMING

ORDER MEDICAL SUPPLIES FOR LAMBING:

- (a) Tincture of Iodine — to disinfect navels of new born lambs.
- (b) Mineral or Castor Oil — to be used as a lubricant and a laxative.
- (c) Creolin — to disinfect pens.

MARCH

ALLOW EXTRA TIME FOR THE CARE OF THE EWES AND LAMBS during the lambing period.

MOVE THE EWE INTO A LAMBING PEN when she shows definite signs of lambing.

BE PREPARED TO GIVE ASSISTANCE TO THE LAMBING EWE if she needs it, but let her lamb by herself if possible.

DISINFECT THE NAVEL OF THE NEW BORN LAMB with iodine immediately after birth.

BE SURE THE NEW LAMB NURSES as soon as it is strong enough, usually within the first half hour.

ASSIST THE LAMB TO NURSE if it is weak, then place it under a heat lamp. Adjust the height of the lamp to prevent it burning the bedding, the lamb, or the ewe.

TAG NEW LAMBS with the metal ear tags bearing the numbers and letters of the identification system you decided on earlier.

MARK EACH EWE AND HER LAMBS with a similar mark for easy identification of each, using a special marking fluid that will not damage the wool.

CHECK THE UDDER OF THE EWE periodically to be sure there is sufficient milk available for the lamb and watch the lambs to see that they are getting the milk.

If "MASTITIS" OR "CAKED UDDER" APPEARS in the udder of the ewe, treatment similar to that used for the same infection in cattle may be followed.

DOCK ALL LAMBS and castrate all males when approximately 2 weeks old. Disinfect open wounds with iodine.

BEWARE OF STIFF LAMB DISEASE. The symptoms, which appear when the lamb is 1 to 8 weeks old, are, reluctance to stand, stiffness, staggering, and a humped appearance. Paralysis appears in severe or advanced cases. There is no fever or loss of appetite. Adequate exercise and the addition of $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ pounds of wheat germ meal to the daily grain ration of the ewe before she lambs will tend to prevent the appearance of this condition in the lambs. Call a veterinarian if the disease appears.

IF A LAMB DIES IN A LAMBING PEN clean out old bedding and disinfect the floors and walls of the pen with creolin before using it again.

DISPOSE OF DEAD LAMBS BY BURNING OR BURIAL. Do not feed to animals or throw on the manure pile.

WHEN LAMBS ARE STRONG AND NURSING WELL the ewe and her lambs can be put back in the main flock pen. It is wise to keep the unlambed ewes separate from those that have lambed.

PICK UP BAG STRINGS, WOOL TAGS, AND OTHER BITS OF REFUSE around the pens. This debris may cause wool balls in the stomach of the lambs if they are allowed to eat it.

PREPARE A CREEP in the pen corner by fencing off a small area where the lambs can be fed grain, but where the ewe cannot reach it.

PERIODICALLY SCRAPE MANURE, STRAW, AND SNOW FROM THE EXERCISE YARDS to allow the yards to dry more rapidly and thus provide a dry place for the ewes to lie on warm sunny days.

ORDER PHENOTHIAZINE or other worming material to be used later.

TRIM AROUND THE TAIL, BREECH, AND UDDER of each pregnant ewe shortly before she lambs.

MOVE THE EWE INTO THE LAMBING PEN



APRIL

CONTINUE THE SAME CAREFUL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES in attending the late lambs as you did for the early ones. Although the weather may moderate the new born lambs need just as much care and attention as did the March lambs.

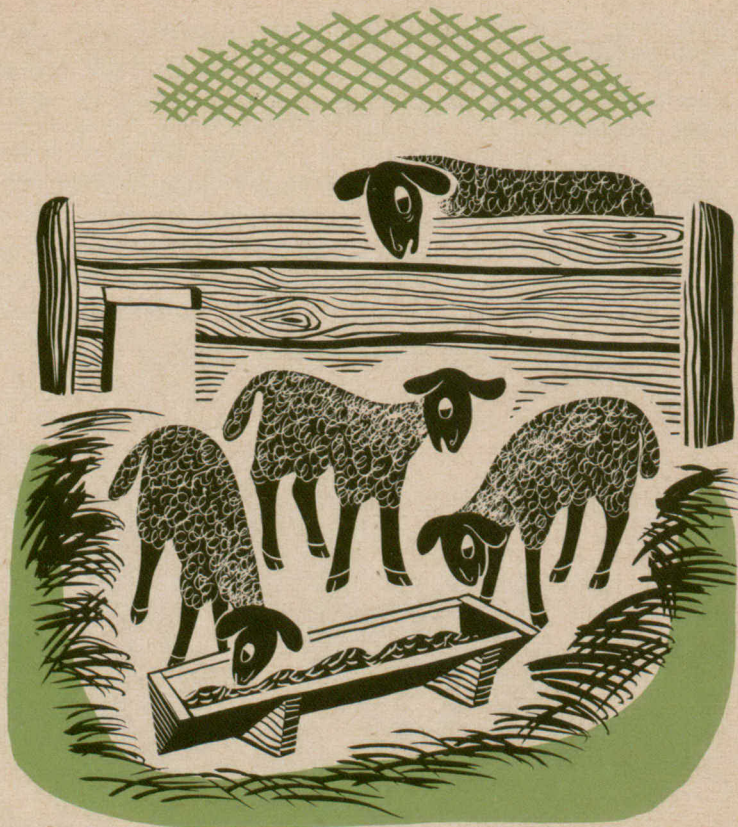
WHEN THE LAMBS ARE TWO TO THREE WEEKS OLD start to feed them a mixture of 20 pounds crushed oats, 5 pounds wheat bran, and 5 pounds linseed oilmeal, in the creep. Feed it free choice but guard against the accumulation of stale feed in the trough.

ORDER YOUR REQUIREMENTS FOR WOOL BAGS AND FLEECE TWINE. Use only paper twine — 1 per fleece — and allow one wool bag for 20 or 22 fleeces.

CHECK AND ASSEMBLE THE SHEARING MACHINES. Have a supply of sharp combs on hand as well as necessary spare parts.

PREPARE A CLEAN, DRY FLOORED AND COVERED PLACE in which to shear and a dry place to store the fleeces.

REPAIR FENCES. Sheep are much easier to keep fenced if they are not allowed to develop the habit of wandering.



CREEP FEED THE LAMBS

MAY

WORM ALL THE ADULT SHEEP 24 hours before they go on pasture to control internal parasites. Give 3 or 4 phenothiazine tablets per sheep depending on their size. It is not necessary to starve the sheep, but they must be kept off pasture for at least 24 hours after pilling. Do not pill unlambed ewes within one month of lambing. For details of treatment for internal parasites see Dept. of Agriculture Pub. 904.

PUT SHEEP OUT TO PASTURE the day after pilling. Pastures should have adequate shade and fresh water. No grain is needed on pasture. If high, dry pasture is available the rams and yearling ewes can go out a little earlier than the nursing flock. Have sufficient supplies of cobaltized, iodized block salt in all pastures at all times. No mineral mix is necessary.

SHEAR THE SHEEP as soon as the weather is warm enough and preferably after all ewes have lambed. If the weather is hot, do not hurry the sheep. Do not shear if the fleeces are wet.

AFTER SHEARING SPREAD THE FLEECE OUT — skin side down — on a wire-topped skirting table. Shake out as much chaff, seeds, and debris as possible. Separate chaffy, burry, and manure-caked locks and tags from the fleece. Roll the fleece into a square bundle — skin side out — and tie with paper twine. Store in a dry place till all sheep have been shorn.

PACK FLEECES in large wool bags and send to market.

DULL SHEARING CLIPPERS AND COMBS should be sharpened.

TRIM THE FEET OF ALL SHEEP. After they have pastured for



WORM ALL ADULT SHEEP

a week or so the feet become soft and are easily pared with a sharp knife. A secatur will be useful in this operation.

CLEAN THE PENS on wet days when it is not possible to shear.

TRY TO SEE ALL YOUR SHEEP EVERY DAY. This helps to prevent losses from injury, disease, mismothering and the possibility of sheep dying while on their backs in a hollow.

JUNE

SPRAY OR DIP ALL SHEEP soon after shearing for control of external parasites. Use 4 pounds of 50 per cent wettable D.D.T. powder per 100 gallons of water. If dipping, be certain the animal is completely immersed for a few seconds. If spraying, use high pressure and a 3 or 4-nozzle spraying broom. Soak all sheep thoroughly.

PLAN THE STORAGE OF HAY in the barn. Arrange the storage so that your best legume hay can be saved until March and April when the pregnant and nursing ewes need a better quality roughage. Each mature sheep will require 700 to 800 pounds of hay and 85 pounds of bedding for the winter housing period.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR SCOURS, SORE EYES, AND SORE FEET. **SCOURS** may be treated by moving the sheep to less succulent pasture, or by giving a tablespoon of castor oil to each affected animal. If the feces-soiled breeches of scouring lambs become maggot infested, the application of a mixture of linseed oil 45 parts (by measure, not weight), benzine 40 parts, oil of pine tar 10 parts, and carbolic acid 5 parts, will kill the maggots. **SORE EYES** will usually respond to daily treatment with a mild argyrol solution. **SORE FEET** can be treated by paring the feet and dressing them with a mixture of pine tar and copper sulphate. It is well to keep affected or suspected animals from areas around creeks, ponds, or watering troughs.

DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL A VETERINARIAN to treat any infection which does not readily respond to home remedies.

ROTATE PASTURES. Sheep have a strong preference for short, young pasture. Every 2 or 3 weeks move the sheep to new pasture. This will make for better utilization of pasture, will help to control weeds, and will tend to reduce internal parasites.



SPRAY OR DIP ALL SHEEP

JULY

PLANT RAPE. If good quality aftermath will not be available for pasture during late August and September some succulent crop such as rape or kale should be planted in early July. The pasture will serve as a finishing or fattening feed for market lambs and as a flushing feed for breeding ewes.

WATCH FOR "PINK-EYE" (KERATITIS). It is characterized by copious watering of the eye, followed by a white scum forming over the eye ball. This is a contagious disease and a veterinarian should be called if the symptoms appear.

CUT WEEDS such as burdocks, stick burrs, and wild raspberries which grow in fence corners and on pastures. The presence of burrs and other vegetative matter in the fleeces reduces their grade and value.

REPAIR feed racks, troughs, doors, and walls of pens.

PREPARE STRAW STORAGE SPACE to permit of easy access during winter. Have chutes so located that straw does not fall on the sheep when they are being bedded.

SWEEP walls and ceilings of pens and have them white-washed.



CUT WEEDS

AUGUST

LOOK FOR THE RAM TO BE USED THIS FALL. Plan to buy a ram with excellent type and conformation.

WEAN THE LAMBS and move the nursing ewes on to dry, rather sparse pasture. This poorer pasture will help dry up the ewes.

SEPARATE AND MARK THE EWE LAMBS which you wish to retain for breeding. It is well to retain for breeding a number of ewe lambs equal to one-fifth the total flock number. In this way you will have your flock completely replaced every 5 years.

SEPARATE AND SELL ANY MARKET LAMBS which weigh over 80 pounds and are fat, that is, have a deep uniform covering of fat over the shoulder, back, loin, and tail.

EITHER AFTERMATH OR RAPE CAN BE USED AS LAMB FATTENING PASTURE. If rape is used, a "run-off" or area of grass pasture adjacent to the rape should be provided. Start to feed a ration of 40 parts crushed oats, 40 parts crushed barley, 10 parts linseed oilmeal to the lambs on pasture. The daily ration per head should start at $\frac{1}{4}$ pound and gradually be increased to $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 pound.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR SCOURS in the lambs, and check the under side of the eyelids for signs of anaemia. The presence of the above symptoms may indicate internal parasite infestation, which can be controlled by phenothiazine treatment similar to that recommended in May.

BEWARE OF BLOAT in the lambs on the aftermath. Do not put the lambs on alfalfa or clover aftermath when they are empty and hungry.



BEWARE OF BLOAT

SEPTEMBER

SELECT FAT MARKET LAMBS over 80 pounds from the feeder lamb flock.

CULL YOUR BREEDING EWES. Discard ewes that are overly thin, have broken mouths, or bad udders. If sufficient replacements are available, cull ewes that have not done a good job of rearing their lambs. Watch when culling for condition since some ewes will be thin because they are excellent milkers. Also cull ewes which have been dry for two successive years.

MOVE THE BREEDING FLOCK TO GOOD PASTURE, either rape or aftermath. Provide a "run-off" area if rape is used. This will put the ewes in a "rising" condition for the breeding season.

DO NOT BREED EWE LAMBS unless they are well grown and weigh at least 110 pounds at breeding time.

SELECT THE BEST BREEDING RAM POSSIBLE. A vigorous ram will serve 40 to 50 ewes per season. A well grown ram lamb should only be allowed to serve 15 or 18 ewes.

FEED THE RAMS up to 1 or 1½ pounds each of a ration of half oats and half barley. Allow plenty of exercise.

ORDER YELLOW AND RED OCHRE AND LAMP BLACK for marking the rams.



**SELECT BREEDING RAMS HAVING
EXCELLENT TYPE AND CONFORMATION**

OCTOBER

SELL the cull ewes.

SELL fat market lambs.

TRIM around the eyes of close-faced sheep and about the breech and tail.

IF LAMBS ARE WANTED IN MARCH put the ram with the breeding flock now. The average length of the gestation period for sheep is 150 days. The average date of lambing should be calculated from the average date of breeding, that is 10 days after the ram is put in with the breeding flock.

DUST THE BRISKET AND CHEST OF THE RAM with yellow ochre. Repeat the dusting every two or three days. Daily breeding records can be kept by noting the ewes marked each day. After 16 days change the colour of the ram marker to red. If many ewes are being marked twice, it would be well to change the ram. After the second 16-day period, change the colour marking to black. If many ewes are still being re-marked, it is imperative that the ram be changed if a lamb crop is to be obtained.

CHECK WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM. Ewes need 1 gallon per head daily during the winter and 1½ gallons or more daily when nursing a lamb. Where electricity is available a water heater will eliminate the need for daily ice chopping during cold weather.



SELL THE CULL EWES

NOVEMBER

FOR APRIL LAMBS put the ram out in mid-November.

FEED OFF ALL MARKET LAMBS before freeze-up if possible.

ANY LAMBS NOT FAT ENOUGH FOR MARKET SHOULD BE BROUGHT IN and put on feed before pastures become too short. Lambs on full feed should eat one to two pounds of grain and about one pound of good quality alfalfa hay per day. A suitable grain mix is oats and barley, half and half, plus ten per cent oilmeal. Any feed increases or ration changes must be made gradually to avoid putting the lambs "off" feed.

ARRANGE WINTER QUARTERS FOR THE FLOCK. Allow separate pens for ewe lambs, bred ewes, and rams. Have at least 15 inches of feed rack space per ewe. Do not crowd the ewes, allow up to 15 square feet of pen space each. Each pen must be well drained, well ventilated, and free from draughts. Put a 3-inch layer of straw or shavings in each pen and just add enough during the winter to keep the pen dry. It is usually not necessary to clean the pens until spring.

DUST THE SHEEP with a 5 per cent D.D.T. powder if external parasites are present.

OBTAIN AND START TO TRAIN A SHEEP DOG. A good working dog will prove invaluable when inspecting, handling, or moving the flock.



PUT THE RAM OUT

DECEMBER

MOVE THE FLOCK INTO THE WINTER QUARTERS when snow covering prevents grazing.

COLD DOES NOT HARM SHEEP so long as they have adequate feed and shelter from storms.

ALLOW ACCESS TO AN EXERCISE YARD at all times except during storms or at night if the dog menace is prevalent.

FEED THE BETTER QUALITY HAY to the bred ewes and the poorer hay to the rams and the lambs.

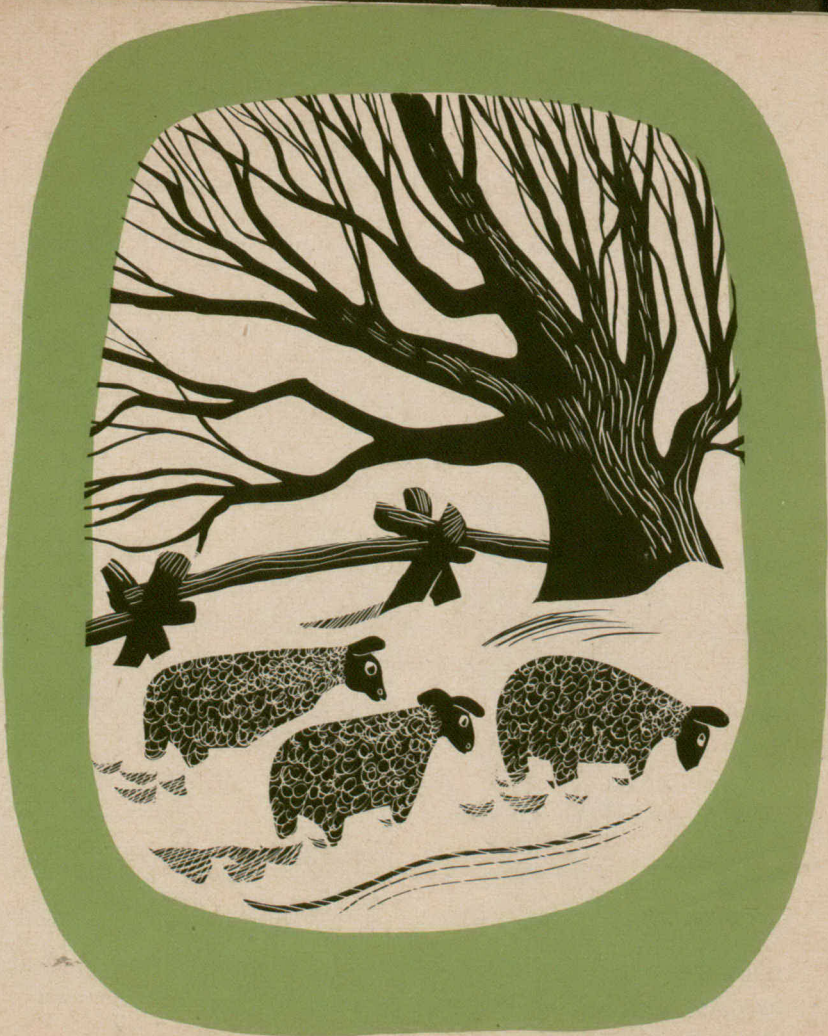
IF HAY IS OF POOR QUALITY feed a mix of half oats and half barley at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ pound of the mixture per head per day, to the bred ewes.

ALL SHEEP SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO A SALT AND MINERAL MIX. A mixture of equal parts of feeding bone-meal and iodized salt is adequate in most areas. If specific deficiencies exist, the missing minerals can be added to this basic mixture.

FEED THE KEEP-OVER LAMBS a grain ration of half oats and half barley at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ pound of the mixture per head per day.

DON'T FORGET TO SAVE THE BEST QUALITY LEGUME HAY for feeding to the pregnant and nursing ewes in February, March, and April.

IF AVAILABLE, FEED GOOD QUALITY GRASS OR CORN SILAGE, free from frozen or moldy lumps, at the rate of 3 pounds per head per day. Roots can be substituted for silage.



MOVE THE FLOCK INTO WINTER QUARTERS

THE SHEPHERD'S CALENDAR

This pamphlet outlines the operations throughout the year that are necessary in the care and management of a flock of sheep. The practices are recommended for all but the range areas where differences in climate, management, and breed necessitate a different yearly routine.

The variations in climate across Canada for any given month of the year make it difficult to recommend definite dates for specific operations such as time of lambing, or date of shearing. However, the sequence of practices and operations remains unaltered. Local climatic conditions govern each individual area with regard to dates of spring pasturing and fall housing.

The number of breeds of sheep in Canada is quite large, but excepting the fact that some breeds have excessive face cover which necessitates periodic trimming about the eyes, there are few, if any, differences in management practices between breeds.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY DIVISION

Central Experimental Farm

OTTAWA, ONT.

