

The Sheep Industry In Arizona

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Arizona Practices Unique Sheep Management, Approaches the Ideal for Spring Lamb Production, and Exhibits Possibilities in Lamb Fattening—Range Sheep Industry is Permanent

MOST of Arizona's claim to economic fame is based upon her three "C's," copper, cattle and cotton, but she can rightly feel proud of her sheep industry. In 1924, approximately \$2,200,000 worth of Arizona sheep found their way to the markets. Add to this the value of last year's wool clip, or \$2,000,000, and you can get an idea of the value of the industry to the State. It is probable that the dollar value of this industry will become greater during the next few years. Increase in farm sheep, improved methods of range management, grading up of sheep, culling for wool production, and systematic, orderly marketing of standardized, quality products, both mutton and wool, will accomplish this without any increase in the number of animals on the ranges. The ranges of the State will not be interfered with to any great extent by dry-farming and intensified agriculture. There is perhaps no other State in the range area where sheep seem to fit so economically into the system of agriculture. Northern Arizona has long been recognized as excellent sheep range country. The central or desert type of range returns a greater profit from sheep than any other class of livestock. It would seem that the range sheep industry is here to stay.



RAMBOUILLET AND RAMBOUILLET-HAMPSHIRE CROSSBRED LAMBS ON ALFALFA-BARLEY PASTURE IN THE SALT RIVER VALLEY, 1923

Rambouillets Predominate

Most of the sheep grazing on Arizona ranges are of the fine wool type. Insufficient feed for fat lamb production, and the brushy type of range, necessitating a system of close herding, has caused the Rambouillet to be the most popular breed of sheep. Of these Rambouillets, both native and improved, about 650,000 head are owned by white people, and almost as many by Indians. The Indian sheep are mostly native or unimproved, and are held on the reservations the year round. Good breeding and selection have resulted

in a great improvement in the type of sheep owned by white people.

"Winter Tourists"

These sheep, over a half million of them, graze largely on the high plateau of the northern half of the State during the summer months. Half of these remain permanently in the northern sections and drop their lambs in May and June. After a summer's grazing, they are moved to shipping points, where old ewes and marketable lambs are sorted out, a large portion of the cull ewes finding their way into the Salt River Valley at the hands of spring lamb producers, many of the lambs going to the west coast or to Kansas City, and others to Denver to enter Colorado feed lots. The other half of the ewes are subjected to a system of management peculiar to Arizona. They "go south for the winter," and constitute a significant part of the winter tourists in the southern valleys. These ewes are either driven over stock driveways set aside for this purpose by the Government, or shipped by rail, according to the season. When grass is good on the driveways, many are driven, while in poor seasons the rail movements are heavy. This annual movement of from 150 to 200 miles gives them a change of climate, according to Mr. R. Wells, of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, equal to a move



SALT RIVER VALLEY LAMBS ON JOURNEY TO THE NORTHERN RANGE



A TYPICAL GROUP OF NORTHERN ARIZONA LAMBS IN A DRY-LOT FEEDING TEST

from New York to Miami, Florida. It is a move from a cold, snowy range to a mild, warm valley among the citrus groves. Green winter feed, a saving to the home ranges, and a uniform, moderate temperature for lambing and shearing, are among the advantages that author lists for such management. These ewes are held in this "Sheep's Paradise" until sheared and both ewes and lambs are strong enough to move back to the cool summer plateau range, where, after a few months' grazing, they are herded to the nearest shipping point. Here the annual cycle begins again.

Spring Lambs

Many broken-mouthed and gummer ewes are culled out and either sent south by the owners or sold to early lamb producers who handle them in the same way. Some prime ewes are managed so that they will contribute their quota to the spring lamb industry. Ewes handled for spring lambs are bucked up early so their lambs will be dropped in November, December and January. These females are usually bred to mutton type rams. Hampshire bucks used for this purpose have been gaining in popularity and at present they are used almost to the exclusion of the other mutton breeds. Lambs dropped in November and December suckle their mothers and nibble on alfalfa pasture until they reach good finish and can compete with the hot-house lambs for Easter trade. Later lambs may be turned on the desert after rains, where brouse, Indian wheat and alfalaria furnish green nourishment. In April and May conditioned lambs are marketed and the remainder trailed

northward with the ewes and disposed of in the fall either as "summer fat" or feeder lambs. Lambs born in January during unusually good seasons, and young cut-backs from northern fall feeder sales help to swell the total number of lambs marketed in early spring. Some idea of the extent of this early lamb production can be gained from the fact that in 1924, 60,000 such lambs turned close to \$600,000 to their owners. There is every reason to believe that the number of spring lambs produced in Arizona may pass the 100,000 mark. The increase in number of farm sheep, selection of early breeding ewes, special care in feeding and in bucking up the ewes will contribute to a substantial increase in the spring lamb industry.

Farm Flocks

The farm flock is the one phase of the sheep industry in Arizona which has been most neglected. A

few progressive farmers have come to realize a cash income from farm sheep. The early spring lamb, the wool clip in the fall and the constant demand for good breeding stock make sheep on the farm an attractive proposition. Those farmers who keep sheep appreciate certain advantages resulting from the flock, such as the consumption of unmarketable roughages and scrubby and weedy types of vegetation— forage that is little relished by the other classes of livestock. Notice these farms and you will see that the fence corners, waste areas and ditch banks are always clean. Our southern irrigated valleys offer excellent opportunities for the development of the farm flock enterprise and with little expenditure many farmers could equip to handle sheep. At the present time there is a general increase of interest in the farm flock, especially in the southern half of the State.

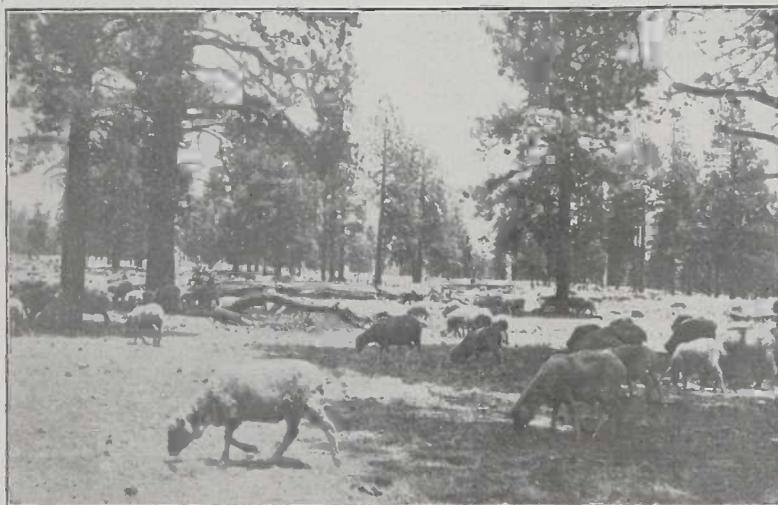
No Premium for Finish

Arizona meat consumers will pay no premium for finished mutton or beef. If local market quotations can be used as an index, the consuming public actually prefers an under or moderately finished animal. The high cost of grain and prohibitive freight rates to eastern markets, together with insufficiently stimulated California markets, has served to impede the progress of lamb fattening in the State.

Fattening Arizona Lambs

Having studied sheep movements and reviewed briefly the feed situation, the question at once presents itself as to whether or not Arizona grown feeds can be used to advantage in fattening these range lambs,

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SHEEP ON SUMMER RANGE IN COCONINO COUNTY

THE SHEEP INDUSTRY IN ARIZONA

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and whether these finished lambs can be marketed to advantage either within the State or on the larger markets.

The Arizona Agricultural Experiment Station in 1923 began some investigational work for the purpose of determining the potential possibilities of utilizing our irrigated pasture and locally grown feeds for fattening purposes. Two years' work with 108 lambs divided into four groups and turned into alfalfa-barley pasture supplemented with a little hay and some grain, has produced results which are convincing that this type of fattening will pay if properly managed. During 72 and 76-day feeding tests, these groups made an average daily gain of from .228 to .328 pounds. The necessary buying margin was almost negligible in each case. In fact, the results indicate that one can pay for feeder lambs within a quarter of a cent of what he expects to get for fat ones and still "break even" under this system of management. The Station also started some dry lot feeding this year. Hegari silage, Arizona's premier silage crop, was found to have practically the same feeding value as locally grown corn silage when fed with rolled barley and cottonseed meal. At local current prices, cottonseed meal proved a more economical protein supplement to rolled barley and corn silage than either alfalfa hay or cold pressed cottonseed cake.

In the Salt River Valley, where cottonseed products, silage crops, alfalfa hay, and green pastures are abundant and grain is extremely high priced, it is possible that a short feeding period with a high protein ration offers the best solution to the lamb feeding problem in Arizona. It will give all of the finish necessary for local market demands. As other markets become more inviting, some grain can be fed economically in order to meet their demand for greater finish.

PASTEURIZING MILK

IN THE HOME

To pasteurize milk in the home, use a small pail with a perforated false bottom. This may be provided

by inverting a pie pan which has a few holes punched in the bottom. This will prevent bumping of the bottles. Insert a thermometer through the cap of one of the bottles. Place the bottles of milk in the pail and fill the pail with water nearly to the level of the milk. Heat pail on stove or over gas flame until the thermometer shows a temperature of 150 degrees Fahrenheit. Add

cold water to pail until temperature of water in pail shows a temperature of 145 degrees. Let stand at this temperature for 30 minutes, then cool milk promptly by running cold water into pail. A wire basket to hold the bottles upright in the water is very convenient. After the milk has been cooled to the temperature of the water, it should be removed and packed in ice.



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