

*A SHEEP BARN.*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE GAZETTE:

Having noticed inquiry for a description of a sheep barn, we will give the dimensions of one that we have been using for four years, and have found to be very convenient for handling, feeding and the care of the ewes while lambing; and, in fact, all through the different manipulations of the flock. We raise Cotswolds, and they require at least one-third more space than smaller breeds. Our barn is 32x30. In the center there is an alley, four feet wide, the length of the building; on either side of the alley there are small pens, say 4x5 feet, with doors to each that will reach across the alley, making a stoppage at each pen. The pens are each provided with a rack for hay and box to feed, also a movable box, hung at any desired height, for watering, by two small hooks that slip over the edge of the partition planks, which need not be nearer than three inches, so the lambs will not mix. We place the ewes in the pens before they drop their lambs, and keep them in the pens until they get old enough to take care of themselves, or until we want to use the pens for another set of ewes. We then put them in one of the divisions, which is 8x32, keeping them in nights and stormy weather, giving them the run of a warm, sunny lot in the day time. On either side of the lambing pens there are two separate apartments, 8x32, with racks and troughs in the center of each. The hay comes down from above, falling directly into the racks. The racks are made with three-inch slats, three-inch space, four feet high, and stand perpendicular in front of the sheep, which keeps the hay seed from getting into the wool. There is a trough, six inches square, at the bottom of each rack to feed grain. Each division will accommodate about twenty ewes; but they are somewhat crowded. They require about two feet space by eight, which will give the shepherd room to pass behind them while they are eating to examine their udders, thus enabling him to draw out any that should go into the lambing pens.

The outside of the building is 44 feet wide by 32 long, and inclosed with dressed boards, batted and painted. Each division has a door in each end to close up in cold or stormy weather, with a gate to confine the sheep in good weather. There is a passage way from one division to another, enabling us to feed or change the sheep from one department to any other without going out of doors. There are five slide windows in each end and four in each side. There are no partitions more than four feet high, which leaves the space all open above to the loft. There are four feet taken off one end of the lambing pens, for a feed bin. This holds four hundred bushels of shelled corn or oats, which generally feeds the ewes during lambing time. The lambs are fed separately as soon as they get old enough to nibble, and are weaned about the 1st of August. They are then separated, the buck

and ewe lambs being turned into separate pastures.

As this is spun out too long we will reserve a description of the lamb barn, with the treatment of the lambs, to some other time.

One word more and we are done for the present. Allow us to suggest that you call on all of the officers of the different county fairs of the United States to hold an annual shearing, sometime in April, of all the sheep that are to be exhibited at the different county fairs, such shearings to be under the supervision of the superintendent of the sheep department; thereby giving the judges an opportunity to examine the sheep before shearing, and afterward the quality and quantity of fleece as well as weight of carcass. We think such an exhibition would be to the flock-masters just what the fat-stock show is to the breeders of the different kinds of stock, only on a smaller scale; and would be the means of improving not only the quality and quantity of the fleece, but the size and shape of the carcass. Sheep and wool must come to the front, and that to stay, sooner or later.

Franklin, Ill.

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