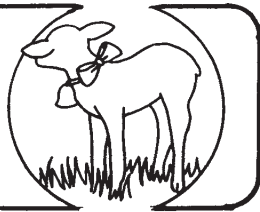


LAMB'S KORNER



by Mary Jane Lis

FOOT CARE

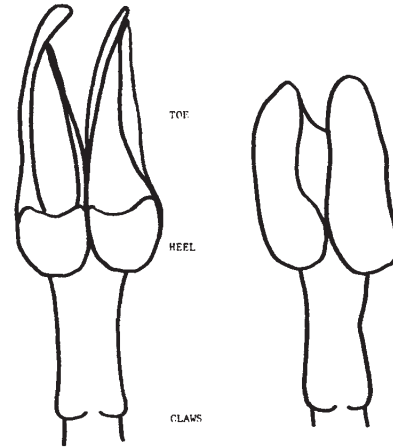
One management chore many sheep producers ignore is foot trimming. It is not the most pleasant job associated with sheep, but a very important necessity. Foot problems can keep sheep from performing at their highest level. The problem may be due to foot rot, a foot abscess or foot scald; lack of proper foot care; poor foot development caused by tissue abnormalities, nutrition, and genetics; injury from cinders, gravel or plant stubble; or lip and foot diseases, such as contagious ecthyma. With a regular trimming routine many of these problems can be detected early or prevented, which is much easier than trying to cure a roaring outbreak.

GUIDELINES

- 1) Trim the feet of all sheep twice a year. Use a sharp knife, pruning shears or foot rot shears. If foot infections exist, separate the uninfected and infected sheep and run all the sheep through a foot bath after trimming, with the uninfected ones going first. Use a solution of 20 to 25% copper sulfate (poisonous to sheep; be careful), 5 to 10% formalin or 10% quaternary ammonia. Let the sheep stand in the solution for at least 3 to 4 minutes, and treat the infected group every second or third day for four treatments. For isolated cases, a pour-on solution called Koper-Tox used for thrush in horses is handier.
- 2) Isolate all new sheep until their feet have been carefully inspected and trimmed.
- 3) Keep sheep out of deep mud and manure.
- 4) Catch the lame sheep and examine their feet as soon as you notice the lameness.

5) To minimize pasture contamination, isolate all sheep that have any type of foot infection.

6) Sell for slaughter all sheep that do not respond to treatment.



One hoof that needs trimming and one that is properly trimmed.

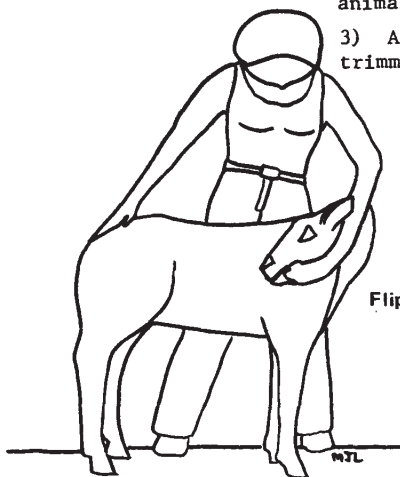
Foot Rot is a highly contagious bacterial infection causing an inflammation and a progressive necrosis of the skin and the sensitive laminae of the foot, resulting in severe lameness. There is a characteristic foul odor and discharge, but no abscesses are formed. The bacteria require an oxygen-deficient environment for growth, so over-grown, rolled-under hooves in wet, muddy, unsanitary conditions should be prevented.

Foot Abscess is a non-contagious disease of the soft structures of the foot (toe, heel). If drainage can be established, the foot will return to normal.

Foot Scald is a contagious bacterial infection causing an inflammation of the skin between the claws and progresses to the rear portion of the heels, causing separation from the hoof.

FLIPPING A SHEEP FOR FOOT TRIMMING

- 1) Place your left thumb into the side of the mouth of the sheep behind the front teeth. Right hand should be on the rump.
- 2) Twist the sheep's head to its shoulder, while pushing down on its rump. If enough momentum is obtained, the animal should be on its rump and the front legs elevated.
- 3) Adjust the sheep between your legs and commence trimming feet.



Flipping a sheep for foot trimming



Holding a sheep for foot trimming