

# WILLAMETTE VALLEY FARMER News and Views of Farm and Garden —By LILLIE L. MADSEN

## Many Columbia Sheep on Riddell Farm



MONMOUTH—Jimmie Riddell, Monmouth, widely-known sheep breeder, pictured here with his Columbia stud ram, doesn't think the sheep business looks too bad this winter. "I've seen lamb prices lower at this time of the year," he told the Statesman farm editor. (Statesman Farm Photo.)



MONMOUTH—"Hey, where you going with my baby, cowboy?" this Columbia ewe asks five-year-old Duane Riddell, who brought the twin into the house to show his mother, Mrs. Jimmie Riddell, who besides taking care of the house and three young sons, is a senior at Oregon College of Education. Duane attends kindergarten school but can hardly wait to get home each day to help with the sheep. (Statesman Farm Photo.)

## Three Generations of Riddell Family Find Breeding Sheep A Substantial Farm Specialty

By LILLIE L. MADSEN  
Farm Editor, The Statesman

MONMOUTH — Down through the years, on the average, the sheep business is pretty good. It has its ups and its downs, to be sure, but still, as a whole, it runs to a good substantial business. People just can't find any substitute for lamb — thank goodness!

These were among the comments made by Jimmie Riddell, as we—Mr. and Mrs. Riddell, the farm photographer and I sat in the spacious living room talking farming and drinking coffee. Five-year-old Duane, dressed in a cowboy suit, was there also, to assist. He even went out and brought in one of the twin lambs, born recently, to demonstrate how very husky a little lamb can be.

There is no doubt that Riddell knows the sheep business. He is the third generation in the work, with his three sons showing an interest for the fourth one.

**Grandfather Started It**  
"Dad, who is James Riddell of Monmouth—my name's Jimmie, not James—was born in Lebanon. His father was William. Grandfather was raising sheep even before my dad and mother were married. My father always raised sheep, and I started through 4-H work. Our three boys, Mike, 10 years, and Allan, 8, along with Duane here seemingly have inherited the interest, too," Riddell remarked.

Lincolns and Cotswolds were the first breeds raised by the Riddells. To these have been added Hampshires, Columbias and Corriedales.

In his opinion, the day of the black face sheep is here again. These are better mutton sheep, he said, as he added that the white faced sheep were the wool producers.

"But right now the meat end is better than the wool in paying out," he explained. "I think the future is in lamb and not so much in wool. However, the range breeders prefer the white-faced ewes to cross with the black-faced rams, providing a market for both types."

There are around 130 ewes kept for lambing each year on the 500-acre ranch which lies just a little to the north of Monmouth. While grains are also grown, with field peas, and grey oats in most of the diverted acres from wheat, pasture is the heavy production on the farm.

**Heavy Pasturing Used**  
"We put in a heavy pasture mixture last June. We sowed fescue, sudan, rye, subclover, red clover, alfalfa and rape. The rape, of course, was just for quick pasture. We began pasturing in August," Riddell went on in response to questions.

"We asked about the fertilization program.  
"Usually we put around 100 pounds of 16-20 on the ground in March. We'll put some on the pasture just as soon as it clears enough to let us get on it. We also fertilize our wheat and we pasture it quite heavily. We put the sheep on in February and let them pasture the wheat until April.

"You can't set a definite time for pasturing wheat because on some soils you can pasture earlier or later than on others. Seasons vary too," the sheepman continued in answer to prompting.

**California Market Good**  
Only the cull sheep find their way onto the market from the Riddell band. The better specimens are sold here in the valley, in Southern Oregon and in the California breeding markets. In fact, Riddell said, that the big California sale is one of the best markets.

A total of 30 young rams were held over by Riddell, for the 1954 ram sale in California the first week in May. Of course, he added, a few of these will be sold locally before then. There's always a spring demand for rams.

When queried on the eastern Oregon market, Riddell said he had never tried for that because there was sufficient demand in California and the Willamette Valley to take care of most of the sheep they produced.

"We have our own Oregon ram sale too at Albany in August," he reminded us.  
Besides Jimmie, his father and his grandfather, there are others of the Riddell name associated with the sheep industry. There is an uncle, William, whose importation of Romneys a few years ago gave much interest to that breed in Oregon. And this Riddell has a son, Eldon, who has added much to the Riddell name as representative of fine sheep breeding. And originally associated with James Riddell were two other brothers, Dave and Ed.

"The Riddells just run to sheep," Jimmie smiled, adding that "they've been a pretty good thing for us to like."

## Seed Growers To Hear About Merion Grass

Higher yields of cleaner seed crops at lower production costs will be discussed at a Marion county seed meeting scheduled for Waldo Hills Community Clubhouse, on the Stayton road, five miles south of Silverton, Jan. 12, 10 a.m.

A panel of local seed growers and dealers will tell of their experience in producing, cleaning and marketing seed. Included in the panel are Roy King, producer and cleaner of chewing fescue and bentgrass; Floyd Fox, producer and cleaner, E. T. Rose, a Merion Bluegrass producer; Roy Wilcox, manager of the Pratum Cooperative, and J. J. Doerfler, bentgrass grower.

A quartet of specialists from Oregon State College, including Harold Fennell, Tom Jackson, Ray Teal and Rex Warren, will be on hand to discuss soils, market news service and farm crops, certification, seed growing and the general seed outlook.

Hollis Ottaway, Marion County extension agent, reports that there will be some changes in the seed industry because of surpluses. Included in the surplus seeds now are 'Alta fescue and ladino clover. Crops that appear favorable are Merion bluegrass, chewing fescue, highland bent, common ryegrass, and crimson clover.

Merion bluegrass will have special mention at the meeting. This crop has been in very short supply. During the past year some growers in Oregon grossed over \$2,000 per acre. Other growers in the same area have grossed less than \$100 per acre.

A similar meeting will be held in Polk County the following day, Jan. 13, in the Dallas City hall, N. John Hansen, county extension agent, reports. This will start at 10:30 a.m. and the same specialists are going to speak as will appear in Marion county and a panel of Polk county producers and warehousemen, not yet named, will discuss local problems.

Anyone interested in the seed business is invited to attend either meeting.

The famed cedars of Lebanon are often employed in the Scriptures as symbols of power, prosperity and longevity.

## Farm Income Tax Changes Pointed Out

Farmers who built grain storage bins or who terraced land during 1953 may find they can benefit from income tax changes, Manning Becker, agricultural economist at the state college said Wednesday.

Becker, who is widely known in the Silverton area, his wife being the former Lois Legard of Silverton, explained that the law now provides that the cost of building corn cribs or grain bins can be written off more quickly — over 60 months. The last congress put this incentive in the law to encourage farmers to build more storage bins and cribs.

Becker said the cost may be spread over a longer time. But anyone who decides to deduct in 60 months must indicate his decision within a year after the new storage structure is built. The new policy on terracing costs is the result of a recent court decision. The economist said a court had ruled that terracing costs are deductible as operating experience in the year terraces were finished.

Now all terracing costs with the exception of the farmer's own labor can be deducted or handled like any other operating cost. Until this year, they could be deducted only when the farm was sold.

Two filing choices are open to persons who get two-thirds of their total income from farming. They may file and pay their tax on or before Jan. 31, or they may file and pay an estimate by Jan. 15. Those who choose the estimate method then have until March 15 to file their return and pay the balance.

Farm record books for keeping accurate accounts for farm income taxes are available from the county extension agents.

## Swine Growers Asked to Submit Grade Choices

Changing the grade names for slaughter hogs is being considered by the U.S. department of agriculture. Producers and marketing men who are not satisfied with the present grade may submit their views.

USDA recently announced that it is considering a proposal by a swine industry committee to change the present grades of Choice No. 1, Choice No. 2, and Choice No. 3, to Good and Overfat. Medium and cull grades would remain the same.

Interested persons will have until Feb. 14 to submit views and comments on the proposal. Letters may be sent to the director, Livestock Branch, Production and Marketing Administration, USDA, Washington 25, D.C.

## Farm Calendar

Jan. 7—Final day of Oregon Livestock Conference, OSC.

Jan. 7-8—Oregon Dairyman's Association convention, Ontario.

Jan. 8—Oregon Hop Growers Conference, OSC.

Jan. 11—Yamhill County Winter Seed meeting, Fair Building, McMinnville, 10 a.m.

Jan. 12—Polk County Livestock Association meeting, Rickreall.

Jan. 12 — Marion County Seed Meeting, Waldo Hills Club House, 10 a.m.

Jan. 12-14—Landscape construction and maintenance short course, Withycombe hall, OSC.

Jan. 13—Polk County Seed Growers meeting, Dallas City Hall, 10:30 a.m.

Jan. 15—Yamhill Livestock Association meeting, city library, McMinnville, 1:30 p.m.

Jan. 19—Linn County Livestock Association meeting, Lebanon.

Jan. 19—Polk County 4-H officers training school, Rickreall Grade School, 7:30 p.m.

Jan. 23—Willamette Production Credit Association, annual stockholders meeting, Marion Hotel, Salem.

Jan. 25-27—Western Oregon Livestock Association convention, Senator Hotel.

Jan. 25—Soil Fertility meeting, Middle Grove.

Jan. 26-28—Annual 4-H Club leaders conference, OSC.

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Jan. 28-29—Oregon Essential Oil Growers League, OSC.

Feb. 1—Soil Fertility meeting, Middle Grove.

Feb. 2—Fruit tree and nut information meeting, Fair Building, McMinnville, 8 p.m.

Feb. 4-5—Annual animal nutrition conference, OSC.

Feb. 6—Mt. Angel Creamery business meeting, Mt. Angel, 10 a.m.

Feb. 6—Oregon Swine Growers Bred Gilt sale, Salem, 12 noon.

Feb. 8-10—Fruit and vegetable handlers short course, Multnomah Hotel.

Feb. 8—Soil fertility meeting, Middle Grove School.

Feb. 10—Blue Lake, Packers, Inc., annual business session.

Feb. 11-13—Oregon State Farmers Union, VFW hall, Salem.

Feb. 11—Yamhill Dairy Day, Fair building, McMinnville, 10 a.m.

Feb. 16—Linn County Agricultural outlook conference, City Hall, Lebanon, 10 a.m.

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## Light Pruning Advised for Sweet Cherry

Light annual pruning of sweet cherry trees is recommended by D. L. Rasmussen, Marion County extension agent. Since the cherries are produced on permanent spurs, excessive pruning reduces the crop by removing fruiting spurs.

Pruning the bearing sweet cherry tree is really pruning for convenience, Rasmussen continues, as he explains that as the scaffold branches have already been selected, the grower's main job is to remove wood that hinders farm operations.

If the orchard is clean-cultivated during the summer, the grower must remove enough low hanging wood so that equipment can be moved through the orchard. An occasional side limb can be pruned out so that the tree will be easier to pick. Dead and weak wood can be removed. Stubs left from previous pruning jobs or broken limbs should be sawed or lopped off close to the branches that remain.

Height of topping a sweet cherry tree depends upon the grower's preference. In general, a sweet cherry tree should be topped to a convenient height for picking. Remove any limbs that cannot be reached from ladders or stepladders.

In certain crowded sweet cherry orchards, tree thinning is needed more than tree pruning. Whenever any orchard becomes so crowded that most of the crop is produced in the upper limbs, tree thinning is necessary. Removing some of the trees will give better light penetration to the remaining trees. It will also lessen competition among trees for available moisture. Orchard management practices are easier in thinned orchards. The remaining trees soon spread out and the lower limbs resume production within a few years.

## Questions---Answers

**Question** — You helped us nicely once in a seed deal now we want some other kind of help. You may think we ought to know these things, but we don't, and because we ought to know them we hate to ask our friends. We are leaving for a month's vacation in California. We want to know: How do you figure tipping? 2. Do you tip motel people? 3. Do you have to have reservations for motels? Someone said something once about travel agencies making reservations. How much do they charge? Is it advisable? It's all right to answer on this page because we are — Farmers.

**Answer** — I think most folk still figure tipping at 10 per cent. Some claim that everywhere has gone up and so should tipping. Well, 10 per cent now is a lot higher than 10 per cent some years ago.

2. I believe the rule in tipping motel folk lies in what type of a motel. If the owner shows you the room, you don't tip. He gets the profit. If he has bell boys, the tipping is the same as in a hotel. Many of the larger motels, particularly in California do have bell boys or other help who shows you to your accommodations.

3. If you want to be sure to stay in a certain place at a certain night, it would be well to telephone or write, if there is time, ahead for reservations to motels.

Travel agencies usually do a pretty good job of making and holding reservations for you. Very few make any charge as the motels, hotels and transportation companies pay for this. We have two very good travel agencies at Salem where reservations for most hotels and many motels may be made. Have fun.

**Question** — You mentioned a seed meeting in Yamhill County a week ago. Could you tell us if there are any in Polk or Marion Counties, too? F.W.E.

**Answer** — See farm calendar, also story elsewhere on this page for further information.

**Question** — Saw something in a magazine or paper about a new bluegrass lawn grass suitable for this country. Lost clipping. Can you tell us the name? And if it is obtainable? B.O.A.

**Answer** — Likely Merion Bluegrass, a comparatively new grass which is said to make a lovely turf. I understand it is now available in small quantities. Not very plentiful yet.

**ROMNEY TO BE AWARDED**

L. E. McCaleb, Monmouth has promised a Romney ewe lamb as an award at the 1954 Polk County fair to some eligible 4-H club member. To be eligible the member must show a grade sheep at the fair, as well as a record book, and prove he had learned to feed and prepare an animal for a show.

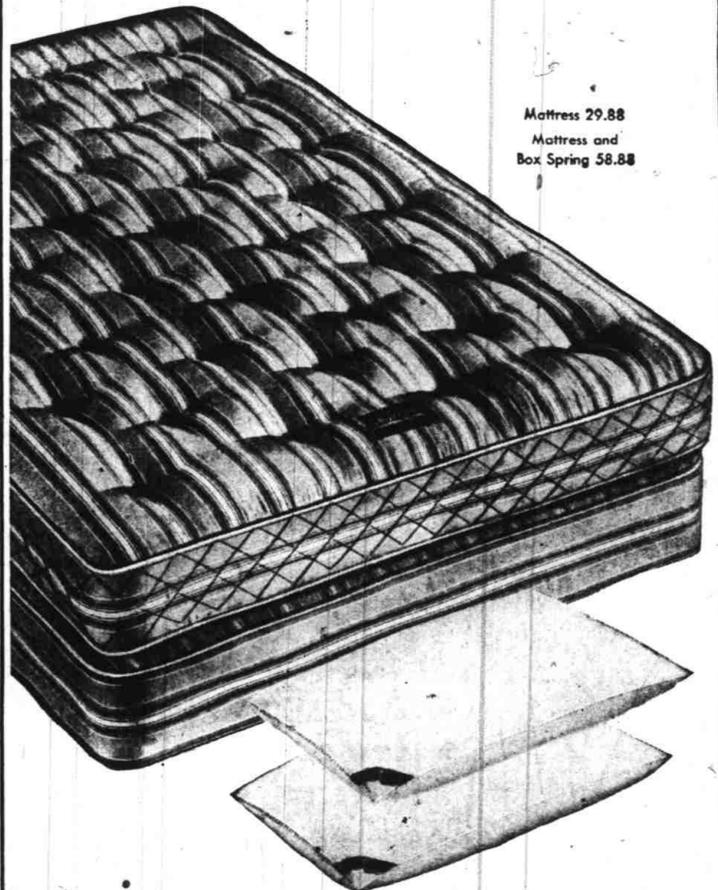
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