

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

Ranch Ramblings

By RURAL REPORTER

A six-year-old ewe on the Wakefield Walker ranch out on Route 8, Salem, looked with consternation at her offspring a couple of days ago. The lamb weighed 15 1/2 pounds at birth and was fully two inches taller than some of its cousins which were two days old at the time. Parentage was divided between the Columbia and the Lincoln breeds.

Everyone is a-dither today at the Farmers Union meeting. Charles F. Brannan, former secretary of agriculture, will speak this morning at the opening session of the 44th meeting of the Oregon State Farmers Union. His opening address is slated for 11 a.m. He will talk again this evening at the banquet. Governor Paul Patterson, too, will be on the afternoon program today, slated to appear around 2:30. With Dick Neuberger to gather them around at 2:30 Friday afternoon.

An odd sidelight on the year's agriculture index is being pointed out. Farm cash receipts from crops were 106 per cent of 1952 through August, then dropped after the wheat harvest (feed grains and hay off 32 per cent, potatoes off 50 per cent). Livestock income dropped from \$180,636,000 in 1952 to \$166,861,000 in 1953. Many livestock men welcomed the change and elimination of marginal operators, others prepared to "get" Agriculture Secretary Benson.

But then buying power of the farmer inched up. Prices received by farmers continued the climb started last November and again increased during January. This time the index rose 2 per cent over the revised December 1953 level. Costs edged higher, too, but again at a slower pace. The net result was another slight recovery in purchasing power of farm products. The parity ratios—the relationship between prices received and prices paid by farmers—stood at 92 in mid-January. That is back to the level of late summer and early fall of last year, but still 8 points below "full" parity.

Substantially higher prices for hogs, beef cattle, and commercial vegetables, together with small increases for lambs, chickens, wheat and hay were mainly responsible for the higher farm price index.

In chatting a bit with Johnny Inskip over the line in Clatsop county, he told us that pasture containing clover, particularly subterranean clover, should have a good top dressing of phosphate in one form or another now. This is, he insisted, absolutely essential procedure on at least 80 per cent of the valley farms.

Of course, he added, grasses need nitrogen also. He suggested to apply 400 pounds of 16-20 ammonophos and 100 pounds of landplaster per acre to sub clover fields during the winter months. Then he added: "If you don't believe me, just leave a little strip unfertilized for comparison."

Austin Warner, well known dairy farmer over at Carlton, says that he is using superphosphate in his dairy barn now. Austin adds he likes it very much. He used to use lime, he says, but tried phosphate and has now changed over entirely. In returns on soil tests that are made it was found that 50 per cent of the soil is either low or medium in phosphate content. If phosphate is used in the dairy barns, or poultry houses, it will save the nitrogen in the natural fertilizers and make it available to the plants when put out upon the land. Lime has a tendency to destroy the nitrogen that it comes in contact with.

You know we—along with a lot of others—have been talking trench silos for sometime. Arnold Braat in Unionvale in Yamhill county has such a one above ground and he had very little spoilage with his sweet corn and

20-Year Test Shows Value Creep-Feeding

How important can creep-feeding be to the cattleman's profit account?

Careful feeding records kept on nearly 3,000 head of cattle, some creep fed and others not, tell the story convincingly. The records and tests were conducted by cattlemen themselves on their own ranches and farms with the feed furnished by one of the larger feed companies which assisted in the tests. In each of these many experiments, creep-fed calves were compared directly with equal non-creep fed calves handled under the same conditions.

Creep-fed calves averaged 412 pounds, as compared to 373 pounds for their non-creep fed mates. This added weight and the resulting upgrading meant an extra \$8.91 per calf—over feed costs. Ten of the creep-fed calves totaled 4,120 pounds, while their ten non-creep fed mates weighed only 3,730 pounds. In this lot of ten, creep-feeding gained the equivalent of one extra calf weighing 390 pounds, without the expense of breeding, feeding and caring for another cow.

The ability to upgrade by creep-feeding was an important factor in the test. Twenty-two per cent of the creep-fed calves graded choice, as compared to only six per cent of the non-creep fed. Forty-three per cent of those creep-fed graded good, compared to 25 per cent in the non-creep lot.

Extra condition put on by the cows suckling creep-fed calves averaged 4 1/2 pounds per cow.

Cereal Meetings Slated for Valley

Dr. Wilson Foote, professor of farm crops, and Dr. Tom Jackson, soil conservation specialist, both Oregon State College, will discuss cereal grain improvement and review results of cereal fertility work carried on in 1953 as experiments, at the forthcoming cereal meetings to be held in various counties. (See Farm Calendar for dates.)

Of interest too at these meetings will be talks by Aren Kellef, who will discuss quality malting barley, and Rex Warren who will make suggestions on weed control in grain crops.

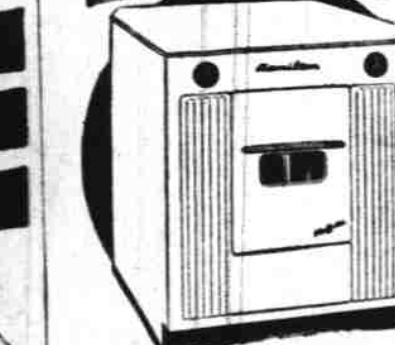
At the Marion County meeting, reports will be made on the two Marion County trials: Barley on the Albert Schmidt & Sons farm near Parkersville, and spring oats on the Ray Hagg farm near Victor Point.

silage. There was some side-spoilage, he said, on the grass silage.

These trench silos, the farmers who have tried them tell us, must have a slope of at least one foot in each 10. This allows for the silage to shrink into a smaller area as it settles and causes it to become tighter, keeping air out of the silage.

Louie H. Gross, McMinnville, tells us that he has seen trench silage where paper was laid on top with very slight amount of weight, and that there was practically no spoilage in the silage. Then again he has seen silage that has had as much as a foot of spoilage on top, and he believes this is all due to the packing. He recommends packing again a few days after filling the silo. This, he says, seems to firm the silage down, and keeps air from getting into it. Air contributes to the spoilage. He is very strong for buying some paper and putting on top of the trench silage rather than letting nature take its course. This is particularly necessary, he adds, in grass silage. Corn silage will keep a bit better than grass.

HEY!

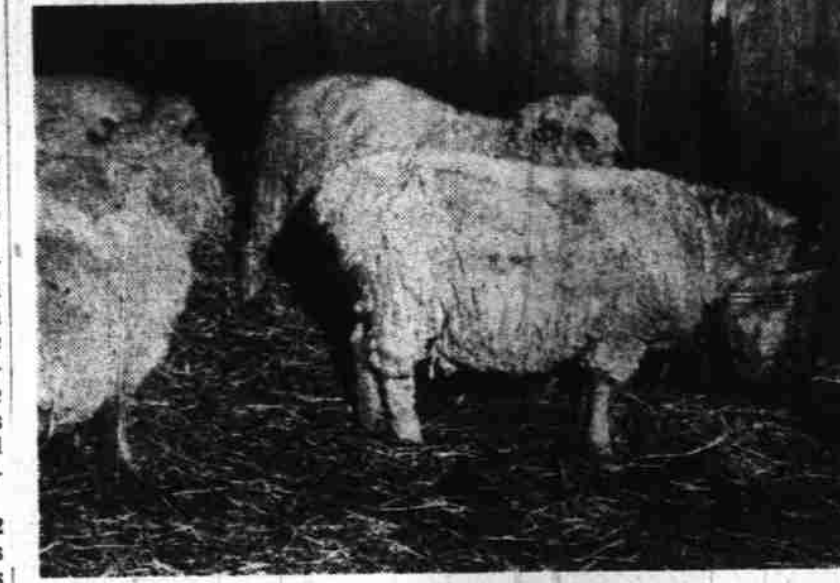


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Improving Shropshire Breed Goal on Forest Martin Ranch in Polk County



DALLAS — The line forms to the left—when molasses is on the menu, the sheep aren't too polite about waiting for the first to get done before the second starts. One gallon feed 20 ewes at a little over a cent a head a day. (Statesman Farm Photo.)

By LILLIE L. MADSEN Farm Editor, The Statesman

DALLAS—Running the ranch you grew up on and loved as a youngster, is a pleasure all in itself. Improving a standard production is another pleasure. And topping the whole thing is doing all of this with a grown son as a partner.

Unless you have these privileges you just don't know how very fine they are. Forrest Martin told me as we stood atop his ranch west of Dallas at the end of the Ellendale Road. Way out in the sunshine to the east we could glimpse Salem and some of the farm country which lay between. At night, Martin said, one can see the Pioneer on the Capitol from this spot.

To the left of us lay the sheep barn and a little below and to the right, lay the house, which was home to Mr. and Mrs. Martin and their son, Kenneth, for a number of years, and which is now home to Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Martin. There were still banks of snow in the shady spots on the ranch, although the snow had been gone from Salem for several days. But this day (Tuesday) the sun was bright and warm on the hill and the first few lambs were beginning to play.

The Forrest Martins now live on a smaller place about a mile below the ranch—half-way between the ranch and Dallas. Here, I picked up Martin to go to the sheep ranch. He was working among his shrubs, making good use of the sun.

Botanist at Heart

"I always liked botany and plants," he explained. "We go hunting a lot in the mountains and I fear that while the others look for game on foot or wing, I spend more time looking for my

40-Year Trees Bear

Prunes and apples were planted on the ranch in 1912. Some of the old prune trees are slipping, but the orchard as a whole still is bearing well. Having gone through all the phases of marketing—drying, fresh and canning—the Martins have settled for canning as the most profitable.

However, the object of my Tuesday visit was sheep... and we found the 100 registered Shropshire ewes grazing over the hillsides. The Martins, I had been told, now own one of the largest bands of registered Shrops in the valley.

"We've nearly always had some sheep," Martin said. "We've tried different breeds and crossbreeds, but in 1946 we settled on the



DALLAS—Forrest Martin is shown here with his registered Shropshire ram of English blood. The ram was brought to the Dallas band of sheep to help the improvement program toward open-faced sheep. (Statesman Farm Photo.)

Shrops because they rustle for themselves on the hillsides better than some of the other breeds. They are large and produce a good wool crop along with early-marketable lambs. The lambs grow and fatten at the same time, a very nice feature.

Kenneth and his father are breeding toward open faces (the Shrops have been frowned upon a little in recent years because of their wool-blindness). Martin explained that "the English have for many years bred toward open-faced Shrops but sometimes we think they have forgotten some of the other fine qualities of this breed. We are trying to help bring back the best in the Shrop as we see it."

Likes Chopped Hay

While baled hay was being fed this year, Martin said, he much preferred the chopped hay. The latter was more economical and more palatable to the sheep.

"For our sheep we have found no better hay than chopped fescue and sub-clover, with a little rye grass thrown in," he remarked as he said this mixture was also used for pasture seeding.

"The extra cost of chopping the hay pays for itself two and three times a season in saving from waste. Oat and vetch hay is excellent too, and in a pinch we feed alfalfa. Other than the alfalfa, we grow our own hay," he explained.

Just as I was leaving, Martin said that "if I were young man just starting, I'd go into dairying. I know a little about it, so I'm not just day-dreaming. We ran a string of 40 Guernseys up to 1942 when we sold them because it became impossible to get hired help. It's confining; it's work, and profits aren't too high, but there's a living in it: it's good for the land, and there's something very satisfying about it, too," he said.

Bought Loar's Sheep

The Shrop project started when the Martins bought the registered band of 66 head from Dr. P. A. Loar at Silverton. To this was added one of the fine open-faced rams from the Angus Lefler ranch. Wool has been averaging eight pounds per head but even this is to be improved, and is gradually gaining. I was told, as we stood admiring the well-formed stocky sheep, including the ram which came from the Shultz farm in Ohio. Another one will arrive before the 1954 breeding season from McKerron's in Illinois.

We entered the sheep barn, where hay was stored in the center, permitting the sheep to feed all around it.

In the east end of the barn were a number of lambing pens, four by four feet. Here the lambs are placed when born and here they remain for three or four days, depending upon weather and strength of lamb. Then they are turned into a larger pen where six to eight ewes and their offspring are together. This, Mr. Martin explained, gives them a

Big Beef Cattle Sale Set Feb. 12

Some of the Northwest's most outstanding purebred Hereford and Shorthorn cattle breeders will make their first 1954 sale offerings at Ontario on Feb. 12 and 13. The Double M. Hereford Ranch, Chandler Herefords and many other equally famous names from Oregon, Washington and Idaho have consigned to the Oregon Cattleman's Association fifth annual spring range bull sale.

The show and sale will be held at the fairgrounds in the eastern Oregon city and will feature 92 Herefords, five Polled Herefords and 13 Shorthorns.

A social hour and entertainment have been scheduled for visitors on the evening of Feb. 12.

A number of Willamette Valley folk plan to attend the sale and show.

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State Board Sets March 1 Milk Hearing

The Oregon State Board of Agriculture has set March 1 as the date for another hearing on the touchy problem of milk prices.

The hearing will cover Zone 2, of which Salem is a member.

The board also has ordered price hearings to cover all milk markets in the state in the final two weeks of March, with the dates to be set by Administrator William S. Weidel.

The plants to be studied which have been prepared by the milk administration staff, include: (1) a 1/2-cent boost in retail prices and no change in producer prices; (2) leaving retail and producer prices unchanged by reducing the butterfat content of 3.8 per cent standard milk down to 3.5 per cent; (3) reducing the producer price 31 cents a hundredweight.

In November, after a series of hearings, the board ordered a 1-cent increase in milk prices, half of which was to go to the distributor, the rest to the store-keeper and producer. This stirred up a controversy, and the board first postponed and later rescinded its action.

At this week's meeting, board members were given tables showing Oregon producer prices were considerably higher than in major California and Washington markets.

A letter from Governor Paul L. Patterson, referring to protests from a number of producers objecting to being put in the Portland milk marketing pool, was read at the meeting.

"Again let me emphasize," the Governor wrote Weidel, "that I am not attempting to administer the milk marketing act. I am passing on to you that which comes to me for such assistance as it may be to the board and yourself, and in order that I might be kept some at abreast of what is going on through your replies."

The board, acting on advice of the state attorney general, and its own attorney, decided it would

Cherry Growers To Meet Friday In Dairy Co-op

Robert Shinn, manager of the Willamette Cherry Growers Co-operative, and one of the state's most widely known cherry men, will discuss the future of the sweet cherry industry at the Marion-Polk County Growers meeting Friday at 1:30 p.m. at the Dairy Co-op building, Salem.

Also included on the program for the day are two Polk County cherry growers, Fred Gibson and Jim Smart, together with a group of Oregon State College men. Gibson and Smart will relate some of their experiences in establishing new sweet cherry plantings during recent years.

not object to a proposed advertising scheme Fred Meyer, Inc., has for the promotion of milk, including a children's coloring contest, see: use it did not appear to be any price reduction program, the chief concern of the board.

Milk price hearings will be held twice a year for all Oregon markets, whether producers want them or not, the board decided.

A producer request for a milk price increase in central Oregon was denied.

Weidel told the board that State Finance Director Harry Dorman's office will support the milk administration's request for a \$12,000 budget increase before the state emergency board Thursday. The emergency board at its last meeting referred the request to Dorman for investigation.

The board voted to give quota in the zone 2 market zone to Stanley Malott, McMinnville, who was in the process of qualifying as a grade A shipper for his local market when the new zone-wide pooling order went into effect Nov. 1.

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Linn Growers Told to Plant More Berries

Some increases will be profitable in planting of strawberries, red raspberries, boysenberries, and sweet cherries, the Linn County Agricultural Planning Council reported this week.

The committee emphasized that all new plantings should be made on deep, mellow soils that are high in natural fertility. Only the very best planting stock should be used if the plantings are to be profitable, according to recommendations. One of the biggest mistakes made by growers, said Clifton Plagmann, vice chairman of the group, was to plant poor-stock horticultural crops on wornout land.

If a mature filbert orchard doesn't consistently produce nearly 1,000 pounds of nuts per acre, the committee believed that it should come out of production. The use of cover crops and rather heavy applications of nitrogen fertilizers are ways of increasing production.

Members of the committee in addition to Plagmann, are Roy Fitzwater, Lebanon; Ray Cunningham, Brownsville; Glenn McKibben, Harrisburg; William Comings, Lacomb; Robert Groshong, Albany; and L. T. Carrick, Corvallis, who was recently elected chairman.

WATER RESOURCES STUDIED The Linn County Land Use Committee is making preparations to present facts concerning the county's water resources at a public hearing to be held in Albany, March 17. On the committee are George Koss, Ben Christensen, Raymond Meyer, Terry Elder and O. E. Mikesell.

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Farm Calendar

- Feb. 11—Oregon State Farmers Union Convention opens at 9 a.m. at VFW Hall.
- Feb. 11—Yamhill Dairy Day, Fair building, McMinnville, 10 a.m.
- Feb. 11—Farmers meeting Silverton Armory, Dr. G. Burton Wood, Corvallis, speaker, 8 p.m.
- Feb. 12-13—Range bull sale, Ontario, sponsored by Oregon Cattleman's Association.
- Feb. 12—Polk-Marion Cherry Growers meeting, Dairy Co-op building, Salem, 1:30 p.m.
- Feb. 13—Pedee Farmers Union, Pedee school.
- Feb. 15—Linn County Seed Growers meeting, Fairgrounds, Albany, 10 a.m.
- Feb. 15—Polk County Farm Bureau, Ricksall Grange hall, 8 p.m.
- Feb. 16—Linn County agricultural outlook conference, city hall, Lebanon, 10 a.m.
- Feb. 16-18—Oregon Dairy Industries 43rd annual convention, OSC.
- Feb. 16—Yamhill Cereal Growers information meeting, Fair building, McMinnville, 10 a.m.
- Feb. 17—Polk County Cereal Producers meeting, Dallas City hall, 10 a.m.
- Feb. 18—Willamette Valley

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