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SHEEP DIPPING

Contributed by THE VETERINARY BRANCH.

A CAMPAIGN against keds and lice has been in operation for the past five years, and as a result the incidence of infestation with these parasites has been greatly reduced. Some evidence of infestation is, however, still being detected at markets, and wool clips, damaged and reduced in value by keds or lice, have occasionally come under notice on the show floors.

It is, therefore, essential that flocks throughout the agricultural areas and, where possible, in the pastoral areas should continue to be dipped regularly, and that the methods employed should be efficient.

Under the Stock Diseases Act regulations, all sheep in the South-West Land Division, in the Dundas, Esperance, Westonia and Yilgarn Road Districts, and in those portions of the Merredin, Narembeen, Lake Grace and Phillips River Road Districts east of the No. 1 Rabbit Proof Fence are required to be dipped within six weeks of the date of shearing each year, and in addition, any sheep intended for sale off-shears must be dipped before they may be removed from the property of the owner.

Dipping is not compulsory in the pastoral areas, but sheep from these areas are required to be dipped before entering the compulsory dipping area.

WHEN TO DIP.

To obtain the best results, dipping should be carried out as soon after shearing as possible, since shearing will remove the majority of the parasites present in the wool, and any that remain will be exposed and more readily destroyed by the dipping fluid.

All sheep on the property, including rams and lambs, should be dipped at the same time, and it is important that a clean muster be obtained.

Careful dipping is essential. The capacity of the dip should be accurately measured, and the dipping fluid should always be maintained at the correct strength. The dip should be of sufficient length to ensure that all sheep are com-

pletely immersed and thoroughly saturated, and each animal should be ducked twice as it swims through the bath.

THE DIPS TO USE.

For the control of body lice, arsenical dips are strongly recommended, and a single thorough dipping can usually be relied upon to eradicate these parasites from a flock. Arsenical dips are not, however, effective for the control of keds, and for this it is necessary to employ one of the gammexane or benzene hexachloride (B.H.C.) preparations. These dips tend to "strip", and to become reduced in strength during use, and it is essential that they be kept "topped up" strictly in accordance with the manufacturer's directions if they are to be maintained at an effective concentration.

The B.H.C. dips will also control lice, but here again precautions must be taken to ensure that they are maintained at an effective strength during use.

A single dipping is usually sufficient, but a second dipping carried out three weeks after the first will ensure complete eradication.

To offer sheep infested with vermin, or undipped sheep, for sale, is an offence under the Stock Diseases Act, and any such sheep found in markets will be required to be withdrawn until they have been dipped to the satisfaction of any inspector.

Keds and lice represent a serious source of loss to the woolgrower, and every endeavour must be made to keep these parasites under control in order to prevent their further spread.

Further information is contained in Leaflet No. 981, copies of which may be obtained upon application.

