

to the lamb-improvement work and a little more attention given to effecting an orderly movement of lambs to market, the widely fluctuating markets at Jersey City will soon be a memory of the past.

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LAMBS To-day Show Forty years ago the housewife bought
 Much Improvement very little lamb because little was
 Over Past Quality offered for sale. Most of the sheep
 slaughtered then were from 4 to 8 years
 of age and were mostly of merino or fine-wool breeds. Total whole-
 sale slaughter at that time was less than half that of the present day
 even though flock numbers were probably as large or larger. Sheep
 were then raised almost wholly for their wool, whereas now they are
 kept primarily for raising market lambs.

Instead of buying heavy mutton of uncertain age and flavor which carries excessive fat, the modern housewife buys lamb chops and leg and breast of lamb, obtained from the tender carcasses of lambs ranging from 4 to 12 months of age. Lambs of this age now constitute at least 80 per cent of the market supply of all sheep. These market lambs come mostly from the mutton-type breeds or crosses between the wool and mutton types. When in good flesh condition these lambs yield meat that is considered a real luxury by meat connoisseurs.

Under the modern system of sheep raising the consumer is assured a steady supply of fresh lamb throughout the year even though 75 per cent of the annual lamb crop is born in March, April, and May. Lambs born in the late fall and early winter reach market in the early spring, but they represent only a small part of the market supply at that time. Some of these extremely early lambs are given special care and attention and are marketed as "hothouse" lambs.

Spring Lambs Marketed May and June

The bulk of the so-called spring lambs, those marketed direct from their mothers, reach market during May and June. Lambs reaching market in the summer and fall are usually marketed off grass. Almost half of the yearly market receipts arrive during the four months, August to November, inclusive. Fortunately for both producer and consumer, not all of the lambs reaching market during that period are slaughtered immediately. Many of them are taken back to the country to be fattened on grain, alfalfa, and other feed and returned to market for slaughter during the winter and early spring, thus giving the consumer a year-round supply of lamb.

About 65 per cent of the Nation's lamb crop is raised in 13 Western States. Such lambs are raised under open-range conditions and are known in the trade as "westerns." Those raised in California are the first to reach market in the spring, but the bulk of the western lambs are marketed in the summer and fall. From them are selected most of the lambs which are returned to feed lots for fattening for the winter and early spring markets.

Lambs raised from small farm flocks in the Corn Belt and eastern half of the country are known generally as "natives," and because they usually are unsatisfactory for feeding purposes most of them are sold for slaughter as soon as they reach desirable market weights.

The first native lambs to reach market arrive in May from Tennessee, Virginia, and Kentucky, and usually they are in great demand as spring lambs. Practically all the native lambs are marketed by the end of October although scattering shipments are made in November and December.

In the late fall and early winter, market receipts include a large number of "come-backs." These represent lambs which were bought earlier as feeders and sent out to clean up stubble fields and farm roughage. Supplies from January to early April consist mostly of fed lambs from the Corn Belt and the commercial feeding areas of Colorado and western Nebraska. These fed lambs are older and heavier than those marketed at other seasons and sometimes are in less demand because of their weight although they rank high in quality and finish.

One Hundred Million Dollars Yearly for Slaughter Lambs

Lambs sold for slaughter bring producers more than \$100,000,000 annually. At least 50 per cent of the inspected slaughter is consumed in the industrial East, comprising the region east of Ohio and north of the Potomac River. New York City alone takes almost one-third of the supply. Fifteen per cent of the slaughter is consumed in the three Pacific Coast States. The remaining 35 per cent is consumed in the other 34 States. If per capita consumption in these States equaled that in the East and on the Pacific coast a great many more lambs would have to be raised to meet the demand.

C. A. BURMEISTER.

LAND-USE Changes Point to Lessening Need of Expansion The nine years since the World War constitute one of the most extraordinary periods in the history of American agriculture. Never before have statistics shown a contraction in the agricultural area. Yet, despite the decrease of 13 million acres of crop land between 1919 and 1924 indicated by the census, it appears that at no time since 1900 has agricultural production increased at so rapid a rate as in these years since the World War. This is the more extraordinary in view also of the decrease in the number of farm animals, in the number of farms, in the farm population, and in the prices of many farm products.

Apparently, the introduction of the automobile and the tractor, with associated machinery, and the influences exerted by the various agencies for the promotion of agriculture—the agricultural press, the farm organizations, the agricultural colleges, extension services and experiment stations, the State departments of agriculture, the United States Department of Agriculture, and other organizations—supported by stern economic necessity, have led to the adoption of improved agricultural practices more rapidly than in any previous period.

These years since the World War may be characterized briefly as a period of accelerated mechanization of agriculture, with a resultant release for other uses of 15 to 20 million acres of crop land formerly required to feed the horses and mules which have been replaced by tractors and automobiles, and of increasing efficiency of production,