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PREPARING FOR SHEARING

By A. INGLETON, Sheep and Wool Instructor, Sheep and Wool Branch

SHEARING is a time of concentrated and continuous activity. Under these conditions preliminary preparation of yards, sheds, machinery, quarters, and sheep is essential if the shearing is to proceed with the minimum of delays and maximum efficiency.

Work should be started well before shearing time so it can be completed before the team arrives.

Below is a check list of the main points needing attention. Many of the items, although seemingly obvious, are easily overlooked and can cause delays once shearing starts.

Sheep yards
Clean out the sheep yards, removing all rubbish, excess soil and droppings. Check for broken rails, posts, and protruding fittings that may injure sheep or men.

DRAFTING RACE—Look for broken boards, protruding nails, etc. Level floor and ensure that the gate moves freely.

GATES—Check catches and oil hinges; gates must move freely and fasten securely.

COUNTING OUT PENNS—Rake out pens, check gate catches and oil hinges.

UNDERNEATH SHED—Clean out underneath grating and if they are to be used for sheep storage also clean underneath wool room and board.

Shearing shed
SHEEP PENNS AND CATCHING PENNS—Check grating for cleanliness, protruding nails and breaks. Oil gate hinges and check catches. All doors and windows should move easily and shut securely.

SHEARING BOARD—Wipe clean overhead gear and shafting. Wash and scrub shearing board. Check board and chutes for protruding nails and broken planks.

Equipment needed—Have baskets for bellies, locks and stained pieces, one straw broom per four shearers, lamb boards, disinfectant and swabs, and a rake.

WOOL ROOM—Clean floor, bins and tables; examine for breakages that could injure staff. Check lighting is adequate. Position tables to ensure minimum walking and allow a free flow of wool from board to bins.

Equipment needed—Rolling table/s 10 ft. x 5 ft. x 3 ft. 3in. high, classing table, piece picking table, baskets (2), brooms (2), calico sheeting, sufficient wool bins, outside stain rack.

WOOL PRESS—Check working order, clean and lubricate; order spare parts if needed. Open all bales of wool packs and stack packs handy to press. Sweep pressing area clean, remove all hessian, string and jute fibres. Check scales and weights.

Equipment needed—Wool packs, bale fasteners, stencils (brand, description and number), stencil ink and brush, bale hooks, and small table.


Machinery
ENGINE—Clean engine room and bench. Check oil, water and fuel levels. Start engine and ensure belts run in correct direction before connecting overhead gear and grinder.

Supplies needed—Fuel, oil, water, spare parts, tools, first-aid kit.

GRINDER—Check grinder and pendulum. Prepare fine and coarse discs. Ensure sufficient light for accurate grinding.

Supplies needed—Emery cloth (fine and coarse), which should be stored flat in a cool dry place. Glue.
OVERHEAD GEAR—Inspect and replace faulty parts, remove any oil and grease from friction wheel and cone. Lubricate and erect down tubes.

Supplies needed—Long and short guts.

HANDPIECES—If required prepare one handpiece for each shearer plus one spare. Check stock of spare parts.

Supplies needed—Spare parts, shearing brushes, screw drivers, oil cans, oil, wash basin and soap.

Sheep

Draft sheep into separate flocks (ewes, wethers, weaners, and hoggets). Shear as consecutive mobs those animals of similar wool type and/or vegetable fault or tip colour. List flock numbers and order of shearing for the wool classer’s information.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE AGRICULTURE PROTECTION BOARD

The functions of the Agriculture Protection Board of Western Australia were set out in an article by the Board’s Chief Executive Officer, Mr. A. R. Tomlinson, in the October, 1970, Journal of Agriculture.

Terms of office have since expired and the members and deputies of the newly appointed Board, as at 15th May, 1971, are:

Chairman—Mr. E. N. Fitzpatrick, Director of Agriculture.

Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer—Mr. A. R. Tomlinson, Deputy Mr. C. D. Gooding.

Representative of the State Treasury—Mr. K. N. Birks, Deputy Mr. W. F. Rolston.

Representatives of the Country Shire Councils’ Association of W.A.—

Mr. P. McBride, South Perth and Eastern Goldfields, Deputy Mr. J. F. Cotter, Madoonia Downs Station, Widgiemooltha.

Mr. L. J. Broad, Mellenby Station, Morawa, Deputy Mr. J. Dowden, Challa Station, Mt. Magnet.

Mr. W. C. K. Pearse, C.B.E., Mingannew, Deputy Mr. A. J. Antonio, Northam.

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Mr. L. McTaggart, Bidgemia Station, Carnarvon, Deputy Mr. A. H. Robinson, Coolup.