

Adaptability of Breeds of Rams and Breed-Types of Range Ewes to Market Lamb Production in Kansas.

PROJECT 347

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Western ewes of the three predominant types (Texas ewes or fine wools, Blackface crossbreds, and Northwestern Whiteface crossbreds) commonly found in Kansas were obtained as ewe lambs in the fall of 1951 and bred to Hampshire, Suffolk, Shropshire, and Southdown rams two seasons. A different set of yearling rams has been used each year, and the ewes are being rotated so that no ewes are bred to the same breed of ram each year. Lamb production and wool production records are being obtained from the different types of ewes, and lamb production figures are being obtained for the four sire groups.

Results

Lamb production figures for the 1953-54 lamb crop are presented in Table 14 and the preliminary lambing data and lamb production for 1954-55 are shown in Table 16 on page 19.

Table 14.—Lamb production by ewes of different types and from sires of different breeds in 1954.

Ewe types	Number ewes bred	Number lambs weaned	% lambs weaned	Average weaning weight	Pounds lamb weaned per ewe bred
Finewools	50	44	88	93	82
Northwest Whiteface	42	38	93	86	78
Northwest Blackface	52	47	90	87	79
Sire groups					
Hampshire	36	35	97	90	88
Suffolk	35	28	80	95	76
Southdown	37	32	86	89	77
Shropshire	36	34	94	82	78

The lambs were separated by sire groups following lambing and the ewes in each group were fed similar rations consisting of approximately 6 pounds of sorghum silage, 1 ½ pounds of alfalfa hay, and 1 ½ pounds of grain per head daily.

The lambs in each group were creep-fed and a record was kept of the concentrates eaten. The creep concentrate mixture was made up of 1 part oats, 2 parts milo, 1 part corn, 1 part bran, 1 part dehydrated alfalfa pellets (including 35 percent corn), and ½ part soybean oil meal. The gains and feed consumption of the different groups of lambs are shown in Table 15.

Table 15.—Feed consumption and rate of gain of lambs of different breeding—March 3, 1955, to March 29, 1955.

Sire group	Number of lambs	Daily concentrate consumption in creeps, lbs.	Average daily gain, lb.	Gain per pound of creep feed consumed
Hampshire	45	1.62	.72	.395
Suffolk	44	1.95	.70	.334
Southdown	10	1.73	.55	.313
Shropshire	40	1.32	.64	.482
Ewe group				
Finewools	49		.61	
Northwest Whiteface	34		.76	
Northwest Blackface	56		.74	

Table 16.—1955 lambing data and lamb production from ewes of different types and from sires of different breeds.

Ewe types	Number ewes bred	Average lambing date	Birth weight— Singles	Twins	% lambs born	Number of lambs alive 3-29-55	Average weights 3-29-55
Finewools	50	11-30-54	10.7	8.3	106	49	82.6
Northwest Whiteface	41	1-3-55	11.7	9.8	90	35	67.9
Northwest Blackface	50	1-6-55	10.5	9.6	116	58	64.0
Sire groups							
Hampshire	35	12-24-54	10.3	9.4	132	46	66.1
Suffolk	35	12-18-54	11.5	9.0	131	46	80.0
Southdown	35	12-10-54	9.4	7.9	28	10	74.3
Shropshire	36	12-30-54	11.4	9.5	122	40	65.8

Table 17 gives the average body weights following lambing in 1955 and the grease wool production for 1955.

Table 17.—Body weights of and wool production from ewes of different types.

	1955 grease wool production, pounds per head	Body weight in pounds per head following lambing, 1954-55
Finewools	10.68	129
Northwest Whiteface	12.07	157
Northwest Blackface	9.05	166

Discussion and Conclusions

The Texas ewes have bred and lambed earlier than the other two types of ewes in the three years that the tests have been conducted. The difference was greatest in the 1954-55 tests when the fine-wool ewes had an average lambing date more than a month earlier than the other two groups. Because of earlier lambing dates, lambs from fine-wool ewes reach market weights earlier than lambs from the other groups. This early lambing characteristic of fine-wool ewes is of considerable practical importance in the fall lambing program that is popular in Kansas.

The Whiteface crossbred ewes generally produced the heaviest fleeces, followed by the Finewools. There have been no consistent differences among the three types of ewes in lambing or weaning percentages. Lambs from Blackface crossbred ewes have graded a little higher when slaughtered than the other two groups.

Lambing and weaning data for the lambs sired by Hampshire, Suffolk, Southdown, and Shropshire rams have not been consistent. Additional information is needed before any definite conclusions can be drawn. The limited information indicates that Hampshire- and Suffolk-sired lambs gain faster than Southdown- or Shropshire-sired lambs. Shropshire-sired lambs, however, have put on gains with less feed than lambs in the other sire groups. The carcasses of Southdown-sired lambs graded highest in 1954 but were no better than those of Hampshire-sired lambs in 1953. Lambing and weaning percentages have varied in the previous tests with no consistent advantage shown by Hampshire-, Suffolk-, Shropshire-, or Southdown-sired groups. The Southdown ram failed to settle a large proportion of the ewes allotted to him the fall of 1954.

Swine

Swine Feeding Investigations

The Comparative Value of Greenleaf Sudangrass and Common Sudangrass as Pasture for Fattening Spring Pigs.

PROJECT 110, Test I

C. E. Aubel

This experiment in the summer of 1954 used spring pigs on pasture. It was to compare the quality of the two varieties of sudangrass.

Two lots were fed shelled corn and a mixed animal and plant protein supplement composed of 5 parts tankage, 4 parts soybean meal, and 1 part cottonseed meal. Both were self-fed, free choice. Lot 1 was pastured on Greenleaf sudangrass; Lot 2, on Common sudangrass.

The pastures were the same quality and stand. Both furnished ample green forage throughout the test. It was necessary to clip the pastures during the summer to get rid of headed-out stalks and provide good, leafy forage. Both stood the dry weather equally well and were relished equally by the pigs, as well as could be determined by observations.

Results of the experiment are given in Table 18.

Table 18.—Comparative value of Greenleaf sudangrass and Common sudangrass as forage for fattening spring pigs.

(June 12, 1954-September 9, 1954—89 days)

Ration fed	Shelled corn and protein mixed suppl.	
	Greenleaf sudangrass pasture	Common sudangrass pasture
Lot number	1	2
No. pigs in lot	10	9
Av. initial wt. per pig, lbs.	54.70	58.11
Av. final wt. per pig, lbs.	185.80	192.55
Av. total gain per pig, lbs.	131.10	134.44
Av. daily gain per pig, lbs.	1.47	1.51
Av. daily ration per pig:		
Shelled corn, lbs.	3.94	4.33
Protein suppl., lb.	.60	.50
Feed per 100 lbs. gain per pig:		
Shelled corn, lbs.	267.50	286.78
Protein suppl., lbs.	40.80	33.47

Observations

1. The pigs on the Greenleaf sudangrass made about the same daily gains as those on the Common sudangrass.
2. The pigs on the Greenleaf sudangrass required 19 pounds of corn less per 100 pounds gain than those on Common sudangrass. They, however, consumed 7 more pounds protein supplement per 100 pounds gain than the pigs pasturing on Common sudangrass.
3. It appeared that either variety of sudangrass is a satisfactory forage for fattening spring pigs.