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MANAGEMENT FOR INCREASED LAMBING PERCENTAGES
IN THE WAIRARAPA HILL-COUNTRY

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Agricultural Science in
Farm Management at Massey University

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ABSTRACT

This thesis reports on a survey conducted in the hill-country of the Wairarapa in May-June 1972. The object of the survey was to provide information on the management practices that farmers were using in relation to the aim of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of increasing lambing percentages in the area.

In Chapter Four, an extensive review of literature is presented on factors affecting lambing percentages. This review is divided into two sections, the first relating to the management of the flock throughout the year, and the second relating to breeding management, in particular, selection, culling and crossbreeding.

Data collected in the survey is presented in Chapters Five and Six. Chapter Five presents physical data on the survey farms, and Chapter Six presents data on management policies and practices employed on the survey farms.

In Chapter Seven, some analysis is attempted of the relationships between the data presented in Chapters Five and Six, and lambing percentages. The small numbers of survey farms (20) and the wide range of factors affecting lambing percentage, precludes any precise statistical analysis, but trends are observed and discussed.

Chapter Eight presents an in-depth study of two case farms, based on two of the survey farms. Physical data, present production and present management practices of these two farms are presented, followed by recommendations for management changes which could increase lambing percentages. These recommendations are made on the basis of the literature review, the results achieved on other survey farms, and the resources available on the case farms. The effects of an increased lambing percentage are also discussed.

In Chapter Nine, general recommendations are made for the improvement of lambing percentages in the area, and conclusions drawn as to the effectiveness of the study. Possible areas of further research are also indicated.