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*Summary only*

EFFECTS OF LEVEL OF STOCKING RATE ON  
CONVERSION EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY  
OF DAIRY BEEF CATTLE AND BREEDING EWES

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ANIMAL and pasture production per acre have been measured on a number of self-contained farmlets in an all grassland system comparing dairy beef cattle and breeding ewes. The three sheep units comprised 5- and 6-year-old Romney breeding ewes mated to Southdown rams for fat lamb production stocked at rates of 8, 10 and 12 per acre. The remaining three units carried Friesian dairy beef steers brought in as weaners (170 lb average live-weight) and slaughtered at 18 to 20 months of age stocked at rates of 1½, 2, and 2½ per acre. Neither the 12 ewes per acre nor 2½ cattle per acre system was self-supporting in terms of feed supply.

No significant differences were found in pasture DM production per acre between classes of stock or level of stocking (average 11,800 lb DM/ac/year). With both classes of stock the level of apparent pasture utilization increased with increasing stocking rate, and the level of utilization was greater for the sheep systems.

Net carcass meat production per acre for the 2½, 2 and 1½ cattle/acre was 700, 632 and 529 lb/acre, respectively. Production from the three farmlets carrying 12, 10 and 8 ewes per acre was 386, 333 and 256 lb lamb carcass meat and 114, 98 and 76 lb wool per acre.

This experiment is being continued to cover a 5-year period and the results quoted refer to the first year only.