

## SHEEP SCAB.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE DISEASE, FOR THE GUIDANCE OF AGRICULTURISTS AND OTHERS.

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Definition. A disease of the skin, caused by certain members of a class of small insects known as "acari."

Animals  
affected.

Scab is popularly known in animals other than sheep as "mange." The parasites which cause Mange belong to the same family as those which cause Scab, but they are a different variety. In sheep, three forms of Scab are met with. Psoroptic Scab, due to the "*Psoroptis Communis*," is the most common form found in sheep. Sarcoptic Scab, or Mange, due to the "*Sarcoptes Scabei var. Ovis*," occurs in sheep, but it is rare.

Symbiotic (Scab) Mange is also known.

The Sarcoptic parasites will live on other animals and on human beings. They cause severe symptoms. The other parasites only live on man for a few days, causing temporary irritation.

Symptoms.

Psoroptic Scab begins on the less woolly or hairy parts, but it soon spreads to other parts of the body. The first symptoms appear in about three weeks after infection. During the cold weather, however, the incubation period may be longer, as the eggs hatch out more slowly, and the symptoms in the latter case are not so marked. Still, it is a fact that in this country a greater number of scab cases occur in the cold season, possibly because less dipping takes place and the sheep are more crowded together for warmth. The animals rub themselves against fixed objects, and show signs of satisfaction when scratched with the hand. If the wool be parted, the skin underneath is seen to be red in patches. Small pimples, from which a thick fluid exudes, are found on the skin. This fluid coagulates, and forms scabs which agglutinate the wool. The constant biting at the skin and rubbing against fixed objects cause the wool to drop off, and give rise to extensive sores. If the animals are not treated, they become emaciated, and many of them die of exhaustion.

Sarcoptic Scab in sheep appears on the head and ears. Sometimes it is seen on the tails of large-tailed sheep. It gives rise to a formation of thick yellow crusts. Symbiotic Mange appears usually at the lower parts of the limbs—about the pasterns and coronets—and at the base of the tail. The symptoms are not severe, but the animals rub their legs and tails, and the wool becomes broken.

If a scraping be taken from the diseased patches and placed in the sun, the moving parasites can often be seen with a magnifying glass.

Copies of this circular may be obtained on application to any police station.

By Order.

B. E. SARGEAUNT,

Government Secretary.

Government Office,

Isle of Man,

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