

attempt to quantify expected success of any recommended treatment with recorded data. For example, when presenting a protocol for the emergency treatment of wounds resulting in prolapse of internal organs, the author states that “the animal might still die but it definitely will if no action is taken”. Readers are left with no quantitative measure of their chance of success with which to assess the welfare benefit to the patient when considering using this protocol. This approach should be borne in mind when following the techniques presented.

The excellent and comprehensive coverage of nursing and rehabilitation techniques, however, far outweighs any drawbacks. This book contains a wealth of practical and innovative techniques and deserves a place on the shelf of every rehabilitator and veterinary surgery where wildlife is treated.

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Sheep Ailments: Recognition and Treatment

E Straiton (2001). Published by The Crowood Press Ltd, The Stable Block, Crowood Lane, Ramsbury, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 2HR, UK; <http://www.crowood.com>. 192 pp. Hardback (ISBN 1 86126 397 X). Price £18.99.

First published in 1972, this is the seventh edition of the book previously entitled *The TV Vet Book for Sheep Farmers*. In the Preface, Mr Straiton contrasts the paucity of veterinary treatments available to him as a veterinary student in 1938 with “the veritable armoury of preventative drugs [available now], so comprehensive that it should be a disgrace to lose a single ewe or lamb”. It is, therefore, somewhat surprising that currently perinatal lamb mortality averages 15 per cent, frequently exceeding 25 per cent, and annual ewe mortality ranges from five to seven per cent. Neither statistic has improved over the past four decades; indeed, there is evidence that with a greatly increased flock size per shepherd, husbandry standards are falling and mortality rates increasing. In the Foreword, Dr J A Watt highlights the most critical step in addressing this problem: the dissemination and application of veterinary knowledge based upon sound scientific principles. Does this book’s popular format of concise practical information accompanied by a large number of sequential photographs of common conditions succeed, or has it been surpassed by digital computer imagery presented on CD-ROM or on Internet sites?

There are numerous errors throughout the text. For example, treacle is glucogenic not ketogenic; ewes suffering from ovine pregnancy ketosis are often hyperglycaemic such that glucose test strips would not be diagnostic. Mention should be made of flock testing for 3-OH-butyrate four to six weeks prior to lambing and the influence of dam nutrition upon lamb birthweight. Numerous treatments such as anabolic steroids for ovine pregnancy toxæmia and chloramphenicol for listeriosis have not been available for many years. Under swayback, one preventative regimen recommends feeding a 0.5 per cent copper lick; the accompanying illustration features Texel sheep — a breed known to be highly susceptible to copper toxicity. In the section dealing with bacterial polyarthritis, no mention is made of *Streptococcus dysgalactiae*, the most common cause of joint ill, and its prevention by means of metaphylactic penicillin injection. Surprisingly, antibiotic aerosol is preferred to strong veterinary iodine for navel dressing; most bacteraemias arise via the oropharynx and gastrointestinal tract. The site used for intraperitoneal glucose injection (Figure 3, p 61) is incorrect. The section entitled “How long should ewes be kept?” could be developed to

incorporate recent developments in biosecurity, as few farms can operate a closed-flock breeding policy.

With particular reference to animal welfare, the section on obstetrics, including uterine prolapse replacement, fails to mention the advantages offered by sacrococcygeal extradural lignocaine/xylazine injection; instead, it recommends hauling the ewe up by its hindlegs during dystocia correction. Few veterinary practitioners now use soap flakes in preference to obstetrical lubricant; the absence of disposable plastic arm-length gloves during obstetrical manipulation is surprising. Colour photographs are essential, as much detail is lost in the black and white reproductions detailing caesarean operation in the ewe.

Mr Straiton is to be complimented on his continued enthusiasm to share his considerable practical experience with farmers and undergraduate students but I believe that new technologies offer more effective methods of conveying the essential information contained in this book. Regularly updated web sites featuring high-quality digital images detailing immediate problems are the future in information transfer, and such facilities are presently available. Agricultural economics change monthly, but the lack of discussion of veterinary fee structure in relation to individual sheep market value in this book ignores important welfare concerns. For example, few ovine dystocias are corrected by caesarean operation — farmers frequently leave such sheep to die without veterinary attendance. Why? While it may not be within the remit of this book to tackle such contentious issues, the current foot-and-mouth disease crisis in the United Kingdom has highlighted the veterinary profession's ignorance of repeated unnecessary auction and long-distance transport of sheep. There are many other welfare concerns in the UK sheep industry but few veterinary practitioners appear to be concerned. Although this book may contain some inaccuracies, Mr Straiton cares about sheep and has an enviable reputation as a man of sound practical advice.

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Practical Goat Keeping

A Mowlem (2001). Published by The Crowood Press Ltd, The Stable Block, Crowood Lane, Ramsbury, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 2HR, UK; <http://www.crowood.com>. 160 pp. Hardback (ISBN 1 86126 389 9). Price £16.99.

Goats are inquisitive, friendly and intelligent animals that tend to evoke tremendous enthusiasm in their keepers. This passion has spawned a number of highly anecdotal goat texts, written by authors whose enthusiasm is perhaps not matched by their in-depth knowledge or breadth of experience. Written by a goat keeper of some 30 years experience (which includes the running of a large commercial dairy herd), Alan Mowlem's book *Practical Goat Keeping* breaks this mould. Providing a comprehensive and accurate guide to all aspects of modern goat keeping, it covers commercial dairy farming and meat production, as well as the keeping of one or two goats as pets.

The book is split into 11 chapters, starting with the characteristics of the various breeds and leading through housing, nutrition, reproduction, health and disease. Each chapter concludes with key points that reinforce the crucial issues. There is a chapter by Hilary Matthews, a highly respected breeder of pedigree British Saanen goats, covering goat-showing. The first chapter describes various breeds and the requirements and pitfalls of goat-keeping, including essential questions for would-be goat-keepers such as "have I got the