

Abstract

Wool production is an important output of sheep production. This research on wool production from the Awassi sheep in the Badia programme area was carried out to:-

- obtain information about wool production
- obtain information about wool marketing
- obtain information about shearers and buyers

The information was collected by interviewing flock owners, shearers and buyers. They discussed different points which gave us, at the end, a clear picture of wool production, quality and marketing, and of the problems faced by the shearers and buyers. During the interviews the researcher carried out some measurements on wool quality: weight of fleeces, staple length, cleanliness, roughness, greasiness and others.

The shearing season starts at the beginning of April and lasts to mid-May. However 94% of owners start before the end of April.

The main preparations that owners undertake before the arrival of the shearers are:

Providing a fence to help in controlling the sheep and providing a tent so the shearers will be protected from the sun and dust, and fetching the sheep from the range.

The family plays a big role during shearing, including fetching sheep from the range, tying the wool and treating wounds caused by shearing.

Most of the shearers are Syrian. The main problems they face are:

- Hot, dusty and windy weather
- Infectious diseases resulting from inhalation of dust during shearing.

Flock owners sell the wool to the buyers in two ways:

- The buyers come to them to buy the wool, or
- they take the wool to market

The main problems in wool marketing are:

- Low prices for wool,
- No special market.

Most flock owners sell by individual fleece.

The mean weight of a fleece was 2.5kg (range 1.4 - 3.7). The mean staple length of fleece was 22.8cm (range 13 - 32cm).