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COYOTE AND DOG DEPREDACTIONS
IN SOUTHERN IOWA

by

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The objective of this study is to determine the impact of coyote and dog depredation on the sheep industry in southern Iowa and to evaluate the livestock husbandry practices associated with these losses. In order to obtain background information on sheep management practices and the number of alleged livestock losses caused by coyotes and dogs in southern Iowa, a questionnaire was sent to 3,173 sheep producers. Sixty-nine percent of the 1,260 respondents indicated that they did not have any problem with coyote depredations during 1975. However, the major cause of mortality was reported to have been coyote predation which accounted for 3,003 sheep losses or 31.6 percent of the total number of losses from all causes. The number of sheep allegedly killed by dogs was 949 or 10 percent of the total number of losses. The credibility of reports concerning livestock losses due to coyote and dog predation and the impact of these two predators within a two county area in southern Iowa is being studied by field necropsy methods during the summers of 1976 and 1977. Ninety-two percent of 142 carcasses examined in 1976 were assessed correctly by sheep producers. Coyote predation accounted for 44 percent of the predator-caused losses and dog predation accounted for the remainder. Coyote damage was also more widespread and affected 25 sheep operations, whereas, dog predation affected only 12 operations. As of July 20, 1977, 92 percent of 48 losses have been attributed to coyote predation by the author.