

October 31, 1941

Dear Peters,

Thanks for your letter of October 28th. I imagine from what you say that on this question of water content we have probably a large component of the sheep-day interaction, which is the main source of error in the counts you have reported so far. If so, and if in your present test the water content is more than usually variable, it will, I am afraid, cut the precision of the experiment rather low.

In the circumstances you mention it is, of course, impossible, as so much of the work has been done, to carry out the procedure in the way I had in mind. I should like, and I think this should be practicable, that the entries on the sheets should always be actual counts of eggs seen in the chambers, and that these sheets should be supplemented, so far as is possible, with dry weight determinations on the samples. This is on the assumption that, as you say, the dry weight determinations cannot be made before the samples are counted. The use which can be made of these dry matter determinations will, I am afraid, be very complicated, and in some other ways unsatisfactory; but when the variation in water content is large and the consequent disturbance most troublesome, there is

one resource which occurs to me, which I hope may be thought practicable, in what remains to be done, namely the use of some roughly estimated multiple, e.g. two or three times what one would use for a standard sample, in order that the actual counts made, though not exact and requiring further correction, shall be roughly of the right order of magnitude.

Perhaps you have already considered this possibility.

Yours sincerely,