



Sheep and Goat Management: Lambing & Kidding

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LAMBS: PRE-WEANING





Progeny Performance

- **Impact on progeny BW, greater in late pregnancy than early to mid pregnancy**
 - **Lamb BW: strongly related to lamb survival**
 - **Particularly in twins (due to their generally lower BW)**
 - **Optimum BWs are 10-13 lbs**
 - **Survival decreases rapidly if lambs are below 8.5 lbs**
 - **Increasing lamb birth weight by 1 lb, from 7.5 to 8.5 lbs**
 - **In twin lambs can mean an increased survival of 15%**

Lamb/Kid Management

- The first 48 hours of a lamb's life are critical
 - Around 70% of lamb mortality that occurs between birth and weaning
 - Lamb survival is related to lamb BW
 - Lamb BW is strongly related to the nutrition of the ewe during pregnancy, particularly late pregnancy
- The optimum BW for maximum lamb survival is between 10-13 lbs
 - But lambing environment and whether they are a single or twin affect this



Newborn Lamb/Kid Management

- **Three main causes of death:**

- Starvation/Hypothermia
- Pneumonia
- Difficult Birth

Maternal Genetics, Nutrition, some not manageable

- **Pneumonia:**

- Some management: barns, draft, ventilation
 - Can lead to chronic pneumonia



Lamb/Kid Management

- **Colostrum: milk produced up to 18 hrs after birth**
- **Newborn lambs susceptible to hypothermia:**
 - Relatively low energy reserves
 - Large body surface area: body weight
- **Colostrum within 30 to 60 minutes after birth**



Lambs

At Birth

- Normal: 102-103 F
- Hypothermic: <100 F
 - Tubing
 - Colostrum
 - Milk Replacer
- Best Option:
 - Milk from ewe/doe, Others in flock, frozen/fresh reserves



Tubing Lambs/Kids

- Lamb's head in a natural position
 - Insert the tube in the side of the lamb's mouth, following the roof of the mouth down into the throat
- Don't force the tube down
 - Allow the lamb to swallow as tube goes down the esophagus
 - Tube can be felt on the outside of the neck as it is inserted down into the stomach
 - About 12 inches
- Although it is difficult to get the tube down the trachea (windpipe), the tube can be checked to see if air is being expelled (listen or moisten end of tube to see if bubble forms)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUuNsVo_mYA

Tubing Lambs/Kids

- After inserting of the tube, give the colostrum slowly
- Lambs should receive 20 cc colostrum per pound of body weight
 - 30 cc equals approximately 1 ounce
 - A 10-pound lamb should receive 200 cc or about 7 ounces of colostrum in the first 30 minutes after birth
 - After the initial tube feeding, many lambs will respond and begin to nurse on their own
 - If not, the lamb may need to be tube fed every two to three hours after the initial feeding

Checklist

- Tagging
- Weighing
- Branding
- Docking
- Castration
- Some: vaccinate, anti-toxin

Tool Bucket

- OB sleeves
- OB lube
- thermometer
- ear tags and tagger
- vaginal retainer
- lamb warming box
- heat lamps
- scissors
- docking and castration tools
- stomach tube with 60 cc syringe
- bottle with lamb nipples
- frozen colostrum
- lamb milk replacer
- 18 and 20 gauge needles (1 inch)
- 3, 6, and 12 cc syringes
- 7% iodine solution
- fly spray

Drugs On Hand

- Excede (Antibiotic)
- NuFlor
- Penicillin
- Dexamethasone
- Dewormer (check efficacy)
- Propylene Glycol
- Electrolytes
- Calcium Solution
- injectable selenium/vitamin E
- Tetanus antitoxin
- IV tube and bag (IV saline fluids)

Creep Feeding

- **Increases weight gain**
- **90% ground shelled corn, 10% SBM, Aureomycin, ammonium chloride (0.5%), and TM salt (0.5%)**
 - Replace corn with sorghum grain, ½ wheat or barley, or oats (1.25 to 1.0)
- **12-14% CP**
- **Start with meal form, replace with cracked or rolled grain after 30 days**



LAMBS: POST-WEANING





Growing and Finishing Lambs

- Wean as early as 60 days or as late as 120 days.
- Sold for slaughter at 130 – 140 lbs.
 - 0.15 to 0.25 in. backfat and YG less than 3.0
- Diets can range from predominately forage to predominately grain
 - Adjust to grain ration over 2 – 3 wks

Growing/Finishing Lamb Rations

Period	Corn	Hay	SBM	Mollasses
Up to 70 lbs.	49	33	10.5	5
70 – 90 lbs	59	23	10.5	5
90 lbs and up	69	13	10.5	5
1% Dicalcium phosphate 1% TM salt + Selenium 0.5% Ammonium chloride				



Feed Processing

- Grind, crack, roll, or flake to allow uniform mixing
- All ingredients should be of similar size
- Cost usually dictates the amount of feed processing

Feed Additives

Animal	Additive	Reason
Lamb	Chlorotetracycline	Gain, feed efficiency, enterotoxemia
Breeding ewes	Chlorotetracycline	Vibrionic abortion
Sheep	Oxytetracycline	Gain, feed efficiency, scours prevention and treatment, enterotoxemia
Sheep	Lasalocid	Coccidiosis
Lambs	Decoquinate	Coccidiosis
Lambs	Ammonium Chl.	Urinary calculi
Sheep	Thiabendazole	Roundworms