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*We will provide industry-leading, reliable, knowledgeable service,
in a friendly, courteous and timely manner,
to benefit our clients and the communities we serve.*

Spring Small Ruminant Newsletter 2017



Left: RVT Brandi Kent scanning a yearlings uterus.
Right: Ultrasound picture showing a 35 day pregnancy.

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How will Ultrasounding help your herd?

Ultrasound (U/S) is used in the aid of detecting pregnancies on sheep and goats. Many producers believe that the goal of ultrasounding is to find **pregnant** ewes/does but actually it is best used to find your **open** (not pregnant) ewes/does. The ultrasound is used to find the ewes/does that are costing you money in feed and time without meeting their production potential to make you money in the future. U/S optimizes feed costs by allowing for culling of the unproductive animals to save you both time and money. The cost of ultrasounding an open ewe/doe is very low compared to the cost of feeding her when she could have been rebred or been shipped. The number of lambs/kids being carried and stage of pregnancy of the ewe/doe

will allow producers to create management groups to provide the proper diet and avoid the negative consequences of malnutrition at lambing/kidding.

U/S can be performed any time after 30 days up to 120 days from first exposure. If fetal numbers need to be estimated then U/S should be delayed to 45-60 days from first exposure. Dry off times can be reasonably estimated from ultrasound results.

Tips for successful pregnancy management include tracking the dates of the ram or buck entry and removal. Book your appointment well ahead of time to coincide with the best window for scanning. Do not rely on clinical signs such as no return to estrus, enlarging abdomen and mammary gland development since these are common with false pregnancy. U/S can also be used to identify abnormal and non-viable pregnancies as well as mummification or pyometra.

Please call the clinic to talk to one of our Veterinarians or Registered Veterinary Technicians, about your herd needs. We would be happy to advise you on the best time to scan, how long the U/S procedure takes, which synchronizing tools and protocols to use to best meet the needs of your operation. You will need to be available to assist with catching, restraining and record keeping while the technician uses U/S to scan for pregnancies.

Remember, "Pregnancy diagnosis is a veterinary procedure and can only be performed by a licensed veterinarian or a qualified technician under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian." Professional service will provide the most accurate information to use for successful small ruminant pregnancy management.

Out of season Breeding Protocols for Sheep and Goats

Goat Syncing Program

CIDR Sync (Out of Season Breeding)

- Day 0- Insert CIDR
- Day 17- Remove CIDR & give 2 cc Folligon IM
- Day 18- Introduce Bucks (**1 Buck : 5-7 Does**) 18 hours after cidr pulled and given Folligon.
- Ultrasound 45 days later. Can ultrasound at 30 days, but should be rechecked, in case of loss of pregnancy.

Notes:

- Initiating a synchronization program shortly after weaning should be successful. Ideally a 10-14 day nutritional ramp up will aid with increased fertility (ie. a ration with increased energy with 14-16% CP).
- Increased doses of Folligon = increased number of multiples. 2 cc is a good starting point early in the out of season period and can be tweaked when you see how many twins, triplets, and quads you get.
- ***Having enough Bucks is key, as all Does will come into heat together.*** Housing buck(s) in separate location, to try and achieve the Buck effect, where the buck(s) are out of sight, sound, and smell will aid in the syncing program. Try to remove buck(s) when ramping up nutrition to does, and re-introduce on Day 18.
- On average, pregnancy rates for this out of season program are 50%-60%. Cidrs are an effective aid in synchronizing Does to breed out of season or to tighten kidding groups.

Sheep Syncing program

CIDR Sync (Out of Season Breeding)

- Day 0- Insert CIDR
- Day 12- Remove CIDR & give 2 cc Folligon IM

- Day 13- Introduce rams (1 Ram : 5-7 Ewes)
- Ultrasound 45 days later. Can ultrasound at 30 days, but should be rechecked, in case of loss of pregnancy.

Notes:

- Initiating a synchronization program shortly after weaning should be successful. Ideally a 10-14 day nutritional ramp up will aid with increased fertility (ie. a ration with increased energy with 14-16% CP).
- Increased doses of Folligon = increased number of multiples. 2 cc is a good starting point early in the out of season period and can be tweaked when you see how many twins, triplets, and quads you get.
- ***Having enough rams is key, as all ewes will come into heat together.*** Housing ram(s) in separate location, to try and achieve the Ram effect, where the ram(s) are out of sight, sound, and smell will aid in the syncing program. Try to remove ram(s) when ramping up nutrition to ewes, and re-introduce on Day 13.
- On average, pregnancy rates for this out of season program are 50%-60%. Cidrs are an effective aid in synchronizing ewes to breed out of season or to tighten lambing seasons.

Cautions When using CIDRS:

- There is a risk of vaginal infections or injury if the operator is not gentle and with poor sanitation of equipment
- CIDRS are not recommended for first time breeders, due to risk of injury.
- To prevent the potential transmission of venereal and blood borne diseases, the CIDR 330 intravaginal insert should be disposed of after a **single use.**
- If loss rates are high, re-evaluate insertion technique, and if finding ewes/does pulling CIDRS out, producer can cut string shorter, but still allow some string to be able to pull CIDR out.
- Care must be taken when using the CIDR 330 applicator to insure no damage to vagina.
- Animals in poor condition resulting from illness or nutritional stress may not respond to this program.

If you have any questions or would like assistance with the CIDR synch programs, please call the clinic and our Veterinarians or Registered Veterinary Technicians will gladly help you!



Pasture Parasite Control

With summer just around the corner and sheep and goats out on pasture, it is important to evaluate deworming programs for your flock or herd. One parasite that is of particular importance in the summer is the roundworm *Haemonchus contortus*, also known as the **Barberpole worm**. This worm feeds on blood from the abomasum of small ruminants and has a tremendous ability to lay eggs. In affected animals, severe blood loss resulting in anemia can occur. Sheep and goats can appear depressed, weak, have very pale mucous membranes

(gums or under eyelids), lose body condition and can even seem to die suddenly if the burden of worms is high enough. Severe disease is typically seen in July and August due to the life cycle of the parasite. Other intestinal parasites can contribute to loss of body condition and cause ill-thrift, but generally do not kill animals as is seen with the Barberpole worm. Resistance to de-worming products is becoming a serious concern for sheep and goat producers, especially in regard to the Barberpole worm. Some reasons we are seeing this resistance develop include:

- Frequent treatments (>3/year) or over treatment
- Treating animals and moving them immediately to clean pasture
- Under-dosing on dewormer
- Treating too early in the grazing season
- Treating all animals in the herd at the same time

Parasite burdens are not equally distributed among all animals. In any given flock or herd, approximately 20-30% of animals carry 70-80% of the worm burden. Therefore, selective treatment of the heavy shedders is preferable to whole flock treatment. To determine the level of infection in a flock, fecal samples should be taken 2-3 weeks after lambing, at pasture turn-out or when relocating onto contaminated pasture. Unless the size of the flock/herd is small, however, it is not economical to perform individual fecal egg counts on all animals to determine which animals are heavy shedders. Instead, producers are encouraged to use **FAMACHA**.

FAMACHA- What is it?

FAMACHA is a method of detecting anemia (blood loss) caused by *Haemonchus* in sheep and goats based on the colour of their mucous membranes. A colour guided chart allows producers to assess the colour inside the lower eyelid and rate it a 1-5. Animals that are assigned a “4” or “5” rating are those that require treatment immediately and other animals may be monitored. It is important to keep records of treatments for *Haemonchus*. Those animals that require more frequent treatments should be culled. Be sure to ask your herd veterinarian for information and training on how to use the FAMACHA chart to make treatment decisions for your sheep and goats on pasture.

