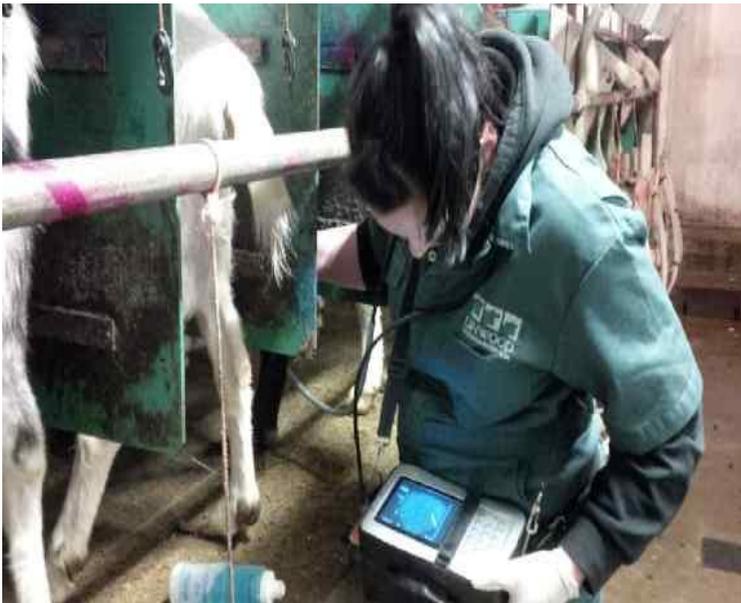




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We will provide industry-leading, reliable, knowledgeable service, in a friendly, courteous and timely manner, to benefit our clients and the communities we serve.

WINTER 2013 SMALL RUMINANT NEWSLETTER



Left: RVT Brandi Murray scanning the uterus and reading the ultrasound screen of a female at 60 days gestation.

Right: Ultrasound picture showing twins at 60 days gestation.

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Supporting Your Small Ruminant Operation

Welcome to the first edition of Linwood/Hwy 89 Veterinary Services newsletter focused on the needs and issues of small ruminants. We plan to have this newsletter out to you twice a year with relevant information and news, and welcome any feedback from you about what was helpful, or what you would like to see covered in future issues.

Dr. John Tokarz and Dr. Kelly Haelzle are our specialists for sheep and goats at the clinic and Dr. Amanda Topp also has a keen interest in small ruminants and Ultrasounding. Please feel free to call Dr. Tokarz or Dr. Haelzle to discuss your particular needs, problems, or questions, or call the office to book a herd health visit.

Brandi Murray and Krystle Alison are our Registered Veterinary Technicians and they are also here to help you. Brandi is adept and experienced with using an ultrasound for pregnancy detection and is featured in the photo on the front page.

Ultrasound used for Pregnancy Detection in Sheep and Goats

Ultrasound (U/S) optimizes feed costs and allows culling of unproductive animals to save the producer time and money. The cost of ultra-sounding an open ewe or nanny 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 or nanny will allow management groups to be formed. This grouping would provide the proper diet and avoid malnutrition situations at lambing/kidding.

U/S can be performed any time after 30 days out to 120 days. If fetal numbers need to be estimated then U/S should be delayed to 45+ days. Dry off times can be reasonably estimated.

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 identify abnormal and non-viable pregnancies as well such as mummification or pyometra.

Please call to talk to Dr. Tokarz, Dr. Haelzle or Brandi Murray, Registered Veterinary Technician, about your herd needs. Questions such as; the best time to scan, how long the U/S procedure takes, which synchronizing tools and what protocols to use can be easily addressed. You will need to be on hand to catch the animals and record results as the technician scans 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." It is important to have the proper personal to get the most accurate information to use for successful small ruminant pregnancy management.

Out-of-Season Breeding

Breed and selection

There is a large variation between breeds in the length of breeding season. The season for each breed tends to vary around the shortest day (Dec. 21). Breeds with longer breeding seasons will be more likely to breed out of season. If the season for a breed is about 100 days long the season will tend to start 50 days before the shortest day and end 50 days after the shortest day. If the season is 70 days long, it will tend to start 35 days before the shortest day and end 35 days after the shortest day. Southdown, Cheviot and Border Leicester. Hampshire and Suffolk have the shortest season while Dorset, Rambouillet, Merino and Finnsheep have a longer season. Year round breeders are Katahdin, Barbados Blackbelly and St. Croix sheep.

Hormone Control with CIDRs

Insert progesterone impregnated CIDRs for 12-14 days.

Upon removal, treat the ewes/nannies with:

- Folligon, Pregnant Mare Serum Gonadotrophin (PMSG).

Introduce the ram/buck to the females 24 hours after CIDR removal. Observe all in heat after 48 hours.

The fallout rate of the CIDR varies between farms and seasons. And can be minimized with proper placement.

There is a risk of vaginal infection or injury if the operator is not gentle and with poor sanitation of equipment.

CIDRs are not recommended for first time breeders, due to the risk of injury.

Using CIDRs is the best method of synchronization because the time of ovulation can be more accurately predicted.

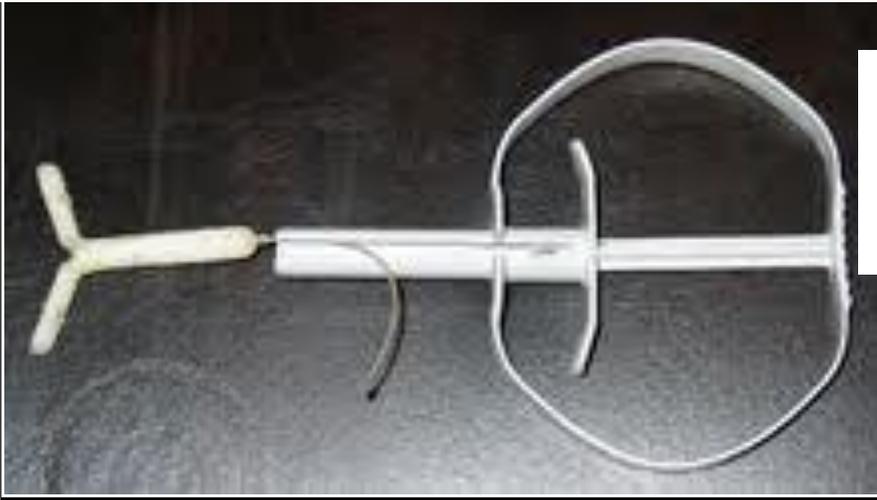
These products must be obtained from your veterinarian along with the proper protocols including dosage.

Typical pregnancy rate results are 50 per cent to 60 per cent of the ewes treated having lambs out of season. CIDRs are an effective aid in synchronizing ewes to breed out-of-season or to tighten lambing seasons.

Cautions.

- Do not use an insert more than once.
- 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.
- Contact a veterinarian if abnormal bloody discharge is observed during treatment.
- Care must be taken when using the CIDR 330 applicator so as not to damage the vagina.
- Animals in poor condition resulting from illness or nutritional stress may not respond to this drug.

Our staff can assist with CIDR applications, your breeding program, or train you or your staff to properly use CIDR's.



Managing Your Lambing Flock

Nutrition

The birth weight of lambs/kids and colostrum production in the dam are influenced by the nutrition plane of the pregnant ewe/doe. It is essential to correctly manage the body conditions of your flock throughout the breeding season. Ovulation and pregnancy rates can be reduced in animals that are too thin or too fat during breeding. Thin ewes/does in late gestation are at risk for developing metabolic diseases such as pregnancy toxemia and giving birth to weak, low birth weight lambs. Fatter ewes/does often experience dystocia (problems lambing/kidding).

Managing Lambing

- All newborns receive colostrum or a colostrum substitute preferably within the 1st hour of life. Healthy lambs/kids are born with limited energy reserves. About 10% of the newborns' body weight of colostrum is needed in the first feeding as soon as possible then repeat in 8 hours.
- Dip all kids'/lambs' navels at birth with a strong iodine solution (>7%).
- Try to keep the lambing/kidding period short. This limits disease build up in the environment.
- Housed adults should not be stocked greater than 1 animal/1.1 m²

Abortions

Producers should be aiming to keep their abortion rate at <2%. In Canada, the most important causes of infectious abortions include: Chlamydia, Campylobacter, Toxoplasma, Coxiella (Q Fever) and Salmonella.

Some general steps to managing abortions:

- 1) **ISOLATE** the aborting dam from the rest of the pregnant animals
- 2) Dispose of any abortion products
- 3) Pay close attention to personal hygiene as some of these diseases can be passed to humans!
- 4) Reduce the stocking density of your pregnant animals if possible
- 5) Investigate the abortion by submitting samples