

EASTERN NEBRASKA LAMBING & KIDDING SCHOOL

## HEALTH CONCERNS DURING LAMBING & KIDDING

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### KNOW THE SIGNS

- Appearance
- Behavior
- Appetite
- Temperature
- Age



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PRENATAL CONCERNS

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### CONCERNS AFFECTING REPRODUCTION

- Pregnancy Toxemia (Ketosis)
  - Chlamydiosis
  - Vibriosis (Vibrio Campylobacteriosis)
  - Toxoplasmosis
  - Dystocia (Ring Womb)
  - Retained Placenta
  - Rectal/Vaginal Prolapse
  - Mastitis
  - Milk Fever
  - Navel/Joint Ill
- Mid-Late Gestation
- Parturition
- Lactation Period



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### PREGNANCY TOXEMIA

Ketosis, Twin Lamb Disease

- Causes?
  - Nutritional Imbalance
    - Excessive Caloric Intake/Increased BCS
    - Restricted Caloric Intake/Reduced BCS
  - Metabolic Disease
    - Increased Energy Demand
      - Last 50 days of gestation

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### PREGNANCY TOXEMIA

Ketosis, Twin Lamb Disease

- What to look for?
  - Dull & Lethargic Appearance
  - Loss of Appetite/ Off Feed
  - Signs of Pain
    - Grinding of Teeth
    - Walking in Circles
    - Arched Back & Head Down
  - Unable to Walk or Stand
  - Acetone Smell on Breath



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### PREGNANCY TOXEMIA

Ketosis, Twin Lamb Disease

- Treatment Options
  - Mild Cases
    - 4-8oz Daily of Propylene Glycol (Oral Drench)
  - Severe Cases
    - Early in Last Trimester
      - 500ml Dextrose (IV or SQ)
    - Near Term
      - Induce Birth
      - C-Section
    - Cull Female



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### PREGNANCY TOXEMIA

Ketosis, Twin Lamb Disease

- Prevention
  - Ultrasound
    - Sort Ewes by Fetal #
    - Adjust Plane of Nutrition
    - Multiple Fetuses = Increased Energy Demand
  - Nutrition Management
    - Target Appropriate BCS
      - Open/Late Lactation: 2
      - Breeding/Early Gestation/Early Lactation: 2.5-3
      - Late Gestation: 3.5



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### CHLAMYDIOSIS

Enzootic Abortion in Ewes: EAE

- Highly Infectious :
  - ~30% Infection Rate Among Unexposed Herds/Flocks
  - ~1-5% Infection Rate Among Exposed Herds/Flocks
- Causes?
  - Chlamydia psittaci
    - Gram Negative Bacteria
    - Excreted from Infected Tissue
      - Transmittable for up to 3 weeks
  - Transmission Via Ingestion
    - Membrane or Fluid from Aborted Fetus
    - Bird Droppings



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### CHLAMYDIOSIS

Enzootic Abortion in Ewes: EAE

- What to look for?
  - Diagnosis is Difficult
    - No Symptoms Present = Non-Treatable
  - Abortion ~60-90 days after Exposure
- Prevention\*\* NO Treatment Options
  - Medicated Feed (Tetracyclines)
  - Bird Control
  - Interrupt the Infection Cycle
    - Isolate Aborting Females
    - Dispose of Placental Membranes & Fetus



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### TOXOPLASMOSIS

- Sporadic
- Highly Infectious & Zoonotic
- Targets & Attacks Placental Nutrient Transport
- Causes?
  - Ingestion of Coccidial Organisms
    - Carried by cats



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### TOXOPLASMOSIS

- What to look for?
  - Dependent on Stage of Gestation
    - <60 days: fetal reabsorption
    - 60-120 days: late-term abortion
    - >120 days: weak newborns
  - Stillborn Offspring
  - "Mummified" Fetuses
  - Encephalitis Symptoms
  - White Granules on Placentomes



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### TOXOPLASMOSIS

- **Prevention\*\*NO Treatment Options**
  - Control Cat Population
  - Cover all Feed/Hay
  - Feed in Bunks
  - Monensin Medicated Feed
    - Caution: High Concentration=Toxicity



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### VIBRIOSIS

- Highly Infectious
  - Affects 40-60% of Herd/Flock
- **Causes?**
  - Carriers
    - New Females in a Population
    - First-time Lambers
    - Older Immune Ewes
    - Guard Dogs
  - Transmission by Ingestion

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### VIBRIOSIS

- **What to look for? \*\* NO Treatment Options**
  - Little to no symptoms
  - Late-term abortions or weak lambs
    - ~14 days following exposure
    - Lambs typically won't survive
  - Persistent Vaginal Discharge
    - Brown
    - Foul Smell

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### VIBRIOSIS

- **Prevention\*\* NO Treatment Options**
  - Clean & Disinfect Facilities
  - Isolate Aborting Females
    - ~7-10 days
  - Disposal of Placental Membranes & Fetus
  - Vaccination Program (Tetracycline)
    - 2-4 weeks prior to breeding (2 doses)
    - Yearly Booster
  - Medicated Feed Additives (Antibiotics)
    - Late Gestation

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### DIAGNOSTICS

#### When to Utilize Lab Testing

- Unsure of Cause of Abortion
- Retain Expelled Tissue
- Collect Blood Samples
- No Apparent Reason For Animal Loss



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### WHITE MUSCLE DISEASE

Stiff Lamb Disease

- **Causes? (Not Very Common)**
  - Vitamin E/Selenium Deficiency
    - Nutritional Imbalance
      - Selenium Def. Pastures
      - High % Alfalfa Hay
- **What to look for?**
  - Weak/Down Pasterns
    - Late Gestation
  - Weak Newborns or Stillborn
    - Starvation & Secondary Illnesses



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## WHITE MUSCLE DISEASE

Stiff Lamb Disease

### • Prevention & Treatment Options

- Vitamin E /Selenium Supplementation
  - Injection 1-4 weeks Prior to Lambing
  - At Birth
- Addition of Grain Sorghum or Wheat During Pregnancy
- Soil Testing
- Early Diagnosis is Typically Treatable
  - BO-SE Injection
    - Toxic at High Concentrations



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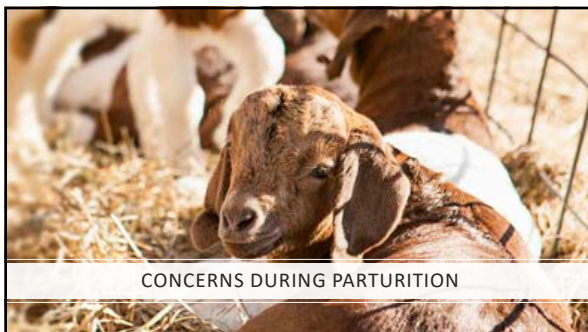
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## DYSTOCIA

- Difficult Birth

### • Causes?

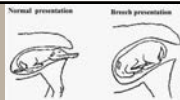
- Fetal Position (Breach)
- Fetal Size
- Lack of Cervical Dilation

### • What to look for?

- Extended Labor (>1hr Straining)
- Yellow Stained Offspring
- Swollen Head

### • Options

- Manual or Surgical Assistance



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### RING WOMB

- Lack of Birth Canal (Cervix) Dilatation
  - Complete/True: RARE
    - Non-Treatable : C-Section
  - Partial/False
    - Assisted Dialation: Manual or Medicated
- Causes?
  - Heritable - Cull Females
  - Lack of Reproductive Maturity
    - Ewe Lambs



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### RETAINED PLACENTA

- Failure to Expel Placental Membranes
  - 12-18hrs following Parturition
  - Affects 5-15% of Herd/Flock
- Causes?
  - Premature Parturition
  - Lack of Removal following C-Section
  - Nutritional Deficits



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### RETAINED PLACENTA

- What to look for?
  - Fever
  - Loss of Appetite
  - Dull Appearance
  - Dark or Brown-tinged Fluid
- Treatment Options
  - \* **DO NOT** Manually Remove Membranes
  - Utilize Medications to Induce Contractions
    - Prostaglandin or Oxytocin
  - Utilize Antibiotics to Treat Infection

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### RECTAL/VAGINAL PROLAPSE

- Protrusion of Vagina or Rectum From the Body
- **Causes?**
  - Dystocia
  - Increased BCS
  - Nutritional Deficits
  - Respiratory Illness (Coughing)
  - Tail Length (Too Short)



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### RECTAL/VAGINAL PROLAPSE

- **Prevention**
  - Target Appropriate BCS
  - Treat Respiratory Infections Early
- **Treatment Options**
  - Clean & Check for Damage
  - Lubricate Tissue & Return to Body
  - Provide Support for Retainment
    - Suture
    - Retainer (T-piece)
    - Harness
  - Utilize Broad-Spectrum Antibiotic



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### MASTITIS

"Blue Bag" "Hard Bag"

- Mammary Gland Inflammation
- Causes?
  - Bacterial or Viral Infection
  - Udder Injury or Teat Damage
- What to look for?
  - Udder Discoloration
  - Swelling or Inflammation
  - Hot to the Touch
  - Scar Tissue Development (Lumps)
  - Unequal Teat Size



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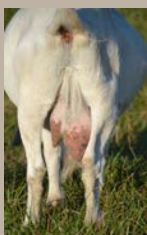
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### MASTITIS

"Blue Bag" "Hard Bag"

- Prevention
  - Clean Facilities
  - Examine Udder & Teat Health
    - Prior to Breeding
    - At Weaning
  - Keep Lamb Health in Mind
    - Pneumonia
    - Sore Mouth
    - Coccidiosis
- Treatment Options
  - Systemic Antibiotics



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### NAVEL/JOINT ILL

- Bacterial Infection
  - Fast Acting Pneumonia
  - Kidney & Liver Abscess
- Causes?
  - Untreated Navel, Castration, or Docking Sites
  - Lack of Colostrum



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**MILK FEVER**  
Hypocalcemia

- Low Blood Calcium
- Affects ~5% of Herd/Flock
- Causes?
  - Stress-Induced
    - Lactation = Increased Calcium Demand
  - Diet
    - Increased Oxalate Containing Plants
      - Turnips
      - Cereal Grains
  - Parathyroid or Thyroid Disorders (RARE)



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**MILK FEVER**  
Hypocalcemia

- What to look for?
  - Muscle Tremors
  - Stilted Gait
  - Hyper-excitability
  - Down Females
    - Stiff Legs Extended Backwards
- Treatment Options
  - IV Dosage of Calcium Borogluconate



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**NAVEL/JOINT ILL**

- What to look for?
  - Swollen & Inflamed Navel, Castration, or Docking Sites
  - Swollen & Inflamed Joints
    - Inability to Walk
  - Signs of Pain
  - Symptoms of Pneumonia



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### NAVEL/JOINT ILL

• **Prevention**

- Colostrum Intake\*\*\*
- Trim Navel
  - 1-2" from Body
- Use Elastrator Bands
- Disinfect Tools Between Uses
- Medicate Areas
  - Dip in Iodine
  - Liquid Bandage



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### TIPS TO AVOID HEALTH CONCERNS

- Know Your Herd/Flock
- Clean Facilities Regularly
- Appropriate Nutritional Plan
- Maintain Vaccination Programs
- Avoid Stressful Events During Pregnancy
- Treat Early
- Use Your Resources

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### LAMBING & KIDDING TOOLBOX

- |  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| • Gloves (Full Arm Length)                   | • Thick Bags      |
| • Thermometer                                | • Disinfectant    |
| • Iodine                                     | • Towels/Blankets |
| • Colostrum & Milk Replacer                  | • Heat Lamps      |
| • Medication (Antibiotics/Pain)              | • OB Lubricant    |
| • Nutra-Drench                               |                   |
| • Vitamin, Mineral, & Electrolyte Supplement |                   |

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**VETERINARIAN ASSISTANCE**

- Identify Local Large Animal Vets
- Develop & Maintain a Relationship



**EXPERTS**

- Extension Educators & Specialists
- Experienced Producers



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**RESOURCES**

**New Mexico State University**  
<https://aces.nmsu.edu/newmexicosheep/index.html>



**Texas A&M Agrilife Extension**  
<https://agrilife.org/sheepandgoat/>



**University of Maryland Extension**  
<https://extension.umd.edu/sheep-goats>

**University of Nebraska Extension**  
Website Coming Soon



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