



The right way ✓

to manage sheep reproduction

Producers of sheep can manage their animals' production in detail with the help of management software that monitors each sheep in the herd through thorough recordkeeping.

Good business management principles on a sheep farm include, among others, the ability record and the history of each ewe in the production unit. These records show when she was born (her age), what she weighed at birth and weaning, how many lambs she produced (inter-lambing periods), how many single and multiple births she had (good genetics), as well as information regarding her health management (statements from producers and certification), especially in respect of her mandatory vaccinations and the prevention of infectious diseases.

Use your management system to record the number of ewes that were allocated to one or more rams in a mating season. Ewes' pregnancy is established by a veterinarian through ultrasonic scanning or pregnancy tests. The information must then be shown in the ewe's records.

Grouping of ewes

In such a system the producer can compile a report which groups specific ewes or multiple-birth ewes that might need more feed to lessen the incidence of diseases due to pregnancy. Ewes with multiple lambs can be kept in smaller groups to stimulate ewe-lamb bonds. Where large groups of ewes with multiple lambs are kept in a single flock, lambs that are rejected by the mother can increase drastically. These losses have a direct impact on the weaning percentage of lambs and must be avoided at all cost.

First-lamb ewes may also be kept in different groups than the older ewes to avoid dominance by the latter. Use your management software to keep record of the animals

that are kept in each camp.

In such a management system the information can be viewed in two ways – before and after the lambing season – when each lamb is identified by the unique ear tag number which cannot be duplicated in the system and can be linked electronically to the ewe's identity.

Birth records

A record system enables the producer to evaluate each ewe's birth records and apply genetic selection criteria with accurate information. Lamb weights recorded at birth and weaning weights supply valuable weaning index data. Birth records can be evaluated accurately for the selection of lambs with low or high birth weights, which may have certain pros and cons.

Recording ewe production performance allows one to evaluate rams. The birth records of the ewes and lambs supply the necessary information to determine the ram's production ability and to determine in which category a ram should be placed. Rams that produce heavy lambs can mean lambing problems. Lambs that don't weigh enough can become weak at birth, and their vitality may be impaired by the cold, their mothers' nutrient levels and body score upon lambing.

A management system that regularly supplies the necessary information in the form of practical reports and sends preconfigured reminders, assists the producer in planning when to bring pregnant animals closer to the kraal when lambing time approaches.

The choice and use of such a management system is of cardinal importance. The preferred system is one that is user-friendly, meets modern challenges, utilises technology that helps the producer to manage his livestock enterprise as profitably as possible and at the same time meets his/her unique requirements.



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