



DN NEWSLETTER

issue 13

Some tups are out with the ewes which will lamb in January. For many farmers it may seem early to start thinking about tupping time but it takes 6-8 weeks for a ewe to change 1 body condition score. By preparing for tupping time by sorting through the ewes and the tups, a farm will become more productive.

Pre-Tupping

As lambs are weaned and starting to leave farms or are being sorted and selected for replacements we also need to start thinking about planning for tupping for the next lambing season. The sooner we prepare the more successful tupping time will be and the more productive our farms should become.

The 5 T's for Tups

Now is the time to carry out the Ram MOT, at least 10 weeks pre tupping:

Toes – check locomotion, legs and feet

Teeth – check for under and overshot jaws, gaps and molar abscesses

Testicles – Measure and check firmness (like a flexed biceps) with no lumps or bumps

Tone – check for body condition score between 3.5-4.0 (spine well covered)

Treat – check vaccinations are up-to-date (clostridia, Pasteurella), parasites, lameness, shearing?

Consult your vet for a thorough examination.

Ensure tups have access to shade to avoid heat stress which can affect sperm viability Consider feeding high-quality protein supplement for 6-8 weeks pre- tupping to improve testicle tone and boost semen production if BCS is low. Feed a maximum 0.5kg/ram per day. (Progressive GT nuts)

Sort through ewes - Keeping more productive ewes is vital to productivity so ensure you go through your ewes and cull out those less likely to be productive:

Body condition score – Lean ewes, cull those that were BCS 2 or less at weaning and have not gained 0.5 BCS in 4 weeks. Overfat ewes, BCS 4-5 at weaning may not have reared lambs last year, check records if available and cull if not.

Udders – mastitis, cull ewes with hard and lumpy udders or current infections as they will not yield enough milk and will be a disease reservoir

Low or slack udders, or large teats – may cause problems for lambs suckling and increase the risk of mastitis

Reproductive problems – cull those which aborted, or had ringwomb or prolapse

Teeth – teeth issues have an impact on condition and reduce the capability of ewes to rear lambs

Feet – lameness should be investigated and treated, failure to respond to treatment should be culled, cases of footrot should be culled if treated more than twice in a year, cases of CODD should be kept away from other ewes until the infection has healed and the ewe is no longer infectious

Lambing score – ease, cull if difficult lambing and do not keep their female lambs for replacements; mothering ability, again cull if issues and do not keep female lambs as replacements





Body Condition Scoring

Segregate ewes into 3 groups, fat (BCS >3.5), fit (BCS 3-3.5) and thin (BCS 2.5 or less).

Identify pasture that will ensure ewes reach optimum score (3-3.5) by tupping.

To gain 1 BCS ewes will need access to unrestricted high-quality grazing for 6-8 weeks

Ovulation Rate

Ovulation rate is influenced by age, breed, stage of breeding season and nutrition/body condition. Younger ewes will often have lower ovulation rates. Prolonged under-nutrition can have long-term effects. A high protein supply increases ovulation rate.

Do not flush on red clover and keep off red clover for 45 days either side of flushing.

Flushing = Increasing nutrition with forage or concentrates before breeding, increases ovulation rate in ewes and sperm production in rams. Most effective when BCS near target and if less than 2 or greater than 4. Ewes need improved nutrition for at least one cycle (2-3 weeks) to influence ovaries to release more eggs.

Stimulating Ewes

Proximity to rams stimulates ewes to cycle and ovulate earlier, up to 3-4 weeks. The pheromones from the ram stimulate ovulation in the ewe. A teaser ram can run 17 days before planned tupping at a ratio of one teaser per 100 ewes. Remove the teaser after 15-16 days and replace with entire males. This method helps synchronise the ewes to make lambing period more compact.

Pre Tupping Bucket Offer



We have a SPECIAL OFFER running on DN Pre-Tupping mineral buckets. **Buy 10 buckets and get 1 FREE.**

Product features include:

- Provide energy, vitamins & minerals
- Support fertility in Ewes
- Support Tup performance
- We recommend feeding for 4 weeks before and 6 weeks after tups are introduced
- 22.5kg

Product benefits include:

- Energy, protein and minerals, including Availa Zinc to optimise performance and support health
- Supports fertility in ewes and tups with Omega-3 fish oils

For further information please contact your local DN Sales Specialist or 01200 420234.

