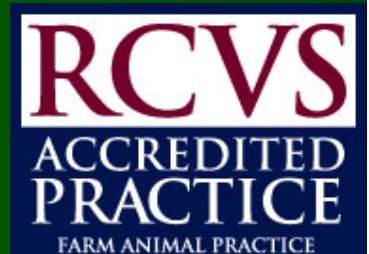




**Parkside Farms**

# Sheep Year Plan

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# Sheep Basic Information

- Normal Temperature = 38.3-39.9°C (100.9-103.8F)
- Heart Rate = 70-80 beats per minute
- Respiratory Rate = 16-34 breaths per min
- Urine volume 10-40ml/kg body weight/day
- Ideal Lamb Birth Weight = 5.0-6.0 kg (twin lamb Sufflok x Greyface)
- Adult weight = 40 - 135 kg (Greyface Mule ewe = 70-85kg)
- Life span = 6-16 years
- Oestrus cycle 14-19 days (seasonally polyoestrus)
- Duration of oestrus = 24-36 hrs (ovulate at 24-30 hrs from start)
- Gestation period = 143-147 days (~5 months)
- Puberty = 5-8 months old (50-60kg body weight)
- 1 ram per 30-35 ewes (60 day breeding season)

# Sheep names etc

- Ram / Tup / Tip = male
- Wether / Weder = castrated male
- Ewe = female
- Lamb = newborn
- Ewe lamb / gimmer / hogg / hoggette = immature ewe
- Shearling = had 1 shear, 2 shear = 2 shear etc
- Flock = group (3 or more)
- Topping = act of breeding
- Lambing = act of giving birth
- Commercial target of number born = 1.5 lambs per ewe
- Weaning age = 3-5 months of age
- Pasture carrying capacity = 5-6 ewes & lambs per acre

# Sheep teeth (ageing)

- 20 baby teeth, 32 adult teeth
- 4 pairs of incisor teeth only on lower jaw
- upper incisors missing, hard dental pad on upper jaw, split upper lip with mobile lips (makes sheep selective grazers)
  - lamb = 4 pairs of baby incisors
  - 1 year old (shearling), 1st pair of adult incisors appear in centre
  - 2 year old (2 shear), 2nd pair / 3 year old (3 shear), 3rd / 4 year old (full mouthed), 4th pair = all adult incisor teeth present
  - 5-6 years old incisor teeth start to spread apart as sheep gets older
  - 7-8 years old starts to become 'broken mouthed' = has lost or broken some incisors
  - 10-12 years old is when all incisors start to be missing

# Sheep Year Plan - April

- Lambing Time

- Highest rate of deaths for both ewes and lambs is at this time of year
- Labour - 1st stage 3-6hrs, behavior, stringy mucus, ends when water bag appears
- Labour - 2nd stage 1 hr, process of giving birth (10-60mins between each lamb)
- Labour - 3rd stage, 2-3 hrs, after birth (placenta) delivered
- Critical that lambs get colostrum (200ml/kg during first 24 hours, 50ml/kg of which should be ingested within first 2 hours)
- Lambs navel should be treated as soon as born
- Clean environment at birth (use paraformaldehyde powder on bedding) - I use oral antibiotic drench at birth against watery mouth given at same time as navel sprayed
- Individually pen the ewe with her lambs for at least 24 hrs
- If you are tailing and / or castrating the lambs, this must be done before they are 1 week old (in order to be within the law)
- Treat the ewe for liver fluke and roundworms - when turned out with her lambs - this reduces the parasites on the pasture so there will be less infecting the lambs
- Check and trim ewes feet after they have lambed (if needed)

# Sheep Year Plan - May

- Finish lambing-ewes BCS will be dropping
- Clean up pens etc
- Clostridial vaccinate lambs
  - Ovivac P Plus from 3 weeks old, 2 injections, 4-6 weeks apart
  - Lambivac from 3 weeks old, 2 injections, 4-6 weeks apart
  - Heptavac P Plus from 3 weeks old, 2 injections, 4-6 weeks apart
  - Covexin 10 from 8-12 weeks old, 2 injections, 6 weeks apart
- Dung sample lambs / treat if required
- Watch parasite warnings for Nematodirus battus ([www.nadis.org.uk](http://www.nadis.org.uk))

# Sheep Year Plan - June

- Shearing Time & check feet / trim if required
- Apply external parasite prevention
  - Clik, blowfly strike prevention only, lasts 16 weeks
  - Clikzin, blowfly strike prevention only, lasts 8 weeks
  - Crovect, treat & control head flies, treatment of tick infestations, treatment of biting lice and prevention & treatment of blow fly strike, lasts 10 weeks
  - Dysect, control & treatment of blow fly strike, treatment of lice and ticks, lasts 8 - 12 weeks
  - Pfizer's (was called Cooper's) Spot-on, control of ticks, lice, keds & blowfly strike, lasts 4-6 weeks. NB. Pfizer becoming Zoetis

## Sheep Year Plan - July

- Dung sample lambs / treat if required
- In a very wet year you may need to fluke treat the ewes and lambs



# Sheep Year Plan - August

- Repeat fly strike prevention treatment - depends on the drug you have used
- Select any older fat lambs for sale (this is very early but if you have a low stocking density it is possible)
- Expect ewes BCS leveling off (2.5 - 2.75)

# Sheep Year Plan - September

- Wean Lambs - treat for worms and fluke if you are keeping them, treat ewes for fluke.
- Sell lambs fat or store straight off ewes or keep and fatten further to sell before they are a year old.
- Body condition score ewes-target 2.0 -2.5
- Health check tups and separate tups from sight, sound and smell of ewes.
- Check ewes feet - trim if required

# Sheep Year Plan - October

- Vaccinate ewes against abortion
  - Toxovax, from 5 months of age, vaccinate during the 4 month period before tugging and at least 3 weeks prior to tugging
  - Enzovax, from 5 months of age, vaccinate during the 4 month period before tugging and at least 4 weeks prior to tugging
  - Both vaccines last at least 3-4 years from a single injection so are generally only given once in the ewes life.
- Put tugging mineral bucket in with ewes, start flushing ewes 2 weeks before tugging
- Fluke treat ewes (if not done in Sept)
- Clip ewes around tail if dirty

# Sheep Year Plan - November

- Topping Time, you will lamb for the length of time the tup is with the ewes - so if he is there for 5 weeks you could lamb anytime over five weeks.
- Fertility best if ewes on a rising plane of nutrition (target to rise up to 2.75 - 3.0 by end of topping) - this is called flushing ewes and will give better ovulation

# Sheep Year Plan - December

- In a wet year you may need to treat the ewes for fluke.
- Dung sample any retained lambs and treat as required
- Check feet - trim if required

# Sheep Year Plan - January

- **Pregnancy Scan Ewes**
  - ideally between 45 -100 days pregnant
- **Body condition score ewes (target = you should be seeing gradual increase to 3.0 - 3.25 during early pregnancy)**

# Sheep Year Plan - February

- Clostridial vaccinate ewes
  - Heptavac P Plus, first year 2 injections, 4-6 weeks apart with the second dose given 4-6 weeks before the first lamb is expected, subsequent years a single booster given 4-6 weeks before the first lamb is expected
  - Covexin 10, first year 2 injections, 4-6 weeks apart with the second dose given 2 weeks before the first lamb is expected, subsequent years a single booster given 2 weeks before the first lamb is expected (assuming lambing os over 6 weeks)

# Sheep Year Plan - March

- Prepare for lambing time
- Body condition score ewes (target 3.5)
- Feed pregnant ewes
  - use high (18% protein ewe rolls)
  - Amounts vary with type of ewe, BCS and number of lambs
  - eg Mule ewe with twins
    - 6 weeks before due date 0.2kg feed/day + 1.8kg hay
    - Increase hard feed by 0.1kg per week upto 0.6kg/day, after lambing can get extra (upto 1.3kg each per day - if thin)
    - Hay consumption will drop off as the lambs grow and take up more space inside the ewe, this is normal



# Tups

- Where I have said worm or fluke ewes, remember to do the tup at the same time.
- Tups body condition score cycle in the year is different to the ewe - he is expected to work hardest at tugging time so should be fattest just before then (3.0-3.5), lose weight over tugging time (2.0-2.5) then gradually put it back on.

## Disease risks

- The commonest source of disease for small flocks is other sheep either bought in, in contact through a fence or borrowed eg a tup.
- All new additions should be isolated from the rest of the flock and treated for foot rot, fluke, worms, scab and blood tested if required - speak to your vet about them.

# Legislation

- Always check you are upto date
- Record all medicines administered
- Keep a breeding record
- Ear tagging - depends on the end result for your lambs eg if they are going fat then you just need to use a flock numbers tag, not individual tags, breeding sheep need individual tags

# Questions