Ram Management
Ram Management

We expect rams to do his years work in 17 days
How Do We Currently Manage Rams

- Put in pasture at other place after lambing and forget about (good fence)
- A couple days before buck sale send kids over to count how many are still alive
Prior to Turnout

Semen production takes 7 weeks

Anything we do to try to improve semen production needs to occur 7 weeks prior to turn out
Ram Nutrition

Other than extremes ram condition has little affect on semen production.

Ram nutrition programs are designed to assure rams are in optimum condition (3 ½ ) at turn out.

Trace minerals:
- Zinc
- Selenium
Ram Nutrition

Ram nutrition programs are designed to assure rams are in optimum condition (3 ½) at turn out.

More of a fitness issue than anything else.
Show or Sale Rams

Fat
Out of shape
Lazy
Prior to Turnout

About 2 Months Prior To Breeding

Check rams condition: Target BCS = 3.5
Prior to Turnout

Semen Test
Ram Health Issues

- Ram Epididymis
  - B. ovis
  - Other
- Pizzle Rot
- Urinary Calculi
Using Ram Lambs

In a extensive range flock ram lambs are poorly managed (which increases their likeliness not to live through a 2’and breeding season)
Out Of Season Breeding

Why

✓ Accelerated Lambing
✓ Fall lambing
Out Of Season Breeding

Day Length
Sheep breed in decreasing daylight

Temperature
Sheep breed in cool temperatures
Daylength and Reproduction in Sheep

- **Summer**: Anestrus
- **Fall**: Breeding
- **Winter**: Pregnant
- **Spring**: Lambing
- **Summer**: Anestrus
Out Of Season Breeding

No Magic Bullet
Out Of Season Breeding

Management

Right Sheep

Both Ewe and Ram

Nutrition

Genetic component

Both ewes and rams are affected

Trying to make sheep go against mother nature. No set blueprint and results hard to predict.
Out Of Season Breeding

Ewes in Estrus
Ewes Ovulating
Ovulation Rate
Effect of Breeding Season on Ram

↓’ed Semen Production (about $\frac{1}{2}$)

Semen Production directly related to testicle size

↓’ed Testicle Size
↓’ed Testicle Firmness
Effect of Breeding Season on Ram

Several Months of Decreased Sexual Activity

![Bar graph showing mating index for Finn and Suffolk rams across different months.]

- **Finn**
- **Suffolk**
## Out Of Season Breeding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Most</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Dorset</td>
<td>- Columbia</td>
<td>- Border Leicester</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Polypay</td>
<td>- British Breeds (Suffolk, Hamp. etc.)</td>
<td>- Cheviot</td>
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<td>- Rambouillet</td>
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<td>- Coopworth</td>
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<td>- Targhee</td>
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<td>- Oxford</td>
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<td>- Katahdin</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Romney</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Finn</td>
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Out Of Season Breeding

Heritability

✓ Fairly High For Reproductive Trait
Ram Effect

Ram introduction will stimulate ewes to begin cycling

![Diagram showing the effect of ram introduction on ovulation phases in ewes. The diagram indicates that 50% of ewes have premature CL regression after teaser ram introduction, and 50% have CL with normal lifespan when estrus/heat occurs.](image-url)
Even if everything goes right expect $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ less lambs per ewe

http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/hettingerrec/sheep/fall-lambing-guide
**Fall Lambing**

- **April 4 - May 25:** Breeding - Fall Lambing Group
- **Aug 29 - Oct 19:** Lambing - Fall Lambing Group
- **July 17 - Sept 6:** Breeding - Clean-up
- **Dec 28 - Feb 2:** Lambing - Clean-up

*Month*

![Graph showing the timeline of different lambing and breeding events throughout the year.](image)
Fall Lambing

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Rams in 51 days (3 cycles)

Use plenty of Rams
Fall Lambing

April 4 - May 25: Breeding - Fall Lambing Group

Aug 29 - Oct 19: Lambing - Fall Lambing Group

Bulk of Lambing Begins Sept 15

Dec 28 - Feb 2: Lambing - Clean-up

July 17 - Sept 6: Breeding - Clean-up
CIDR

- Can be used in combination with ram introduction

- Increase the proportion of ewes conceiving out of season (up to 20 + percent)

- Costs about $6 to $10.
- Increase the proportion of ewes conceiving out of season (up to 20 + percent)

- Dr Keith Inskeep,
  West Virginia University

Photos from: Premier Supplies
Accelerated Lambing

- Right kind of sheep
- First class nutrition program
- Cutting edge knowledge

Are you already maximizing production (200% lamb crop) on a once year program
Accelerated Lambing

Year Round
- Leave bucks in year-round
- Difficult to manage

Three lamb Crops in Two Years
- 8 month lambing interval
- Fixed mating/lambing schedule
- Only breed during normal breeding cycle once every two years

Twice a Year
- 6 month lambing interval
- Most intense
- Difficult to manage
Accelerated Lambing

STAR © System

(Cornell)

✓ Lamb every 73 days (5 lambings per year)

✓ Everything goes right will get 5 lambings per ewe in 3 years

http://www.sheep.cornell.edu/management/breeding/star/history.html
Where are we getting our information

Mis-information highway

INTERNET

I DON’T KNOW WHY WE ARE GO’IN TO THE VET’S. ALL THE EXPERTS ARE DRINK’N COFFEE AT THE FEED STORE.