



**When you sell your wool clip
Through the Canadian Co-operative
Wool Growers Limited,
You...**

- SHARE** the advantages of a producer-owned co-operative in operation since 1918.
- YOUR** wool is marketed on world markets in the most effective and cost-effective manner.
- RETURNS** all wool sales proceeds are returned to the growers less a minimum operating cost. The company collects, grades and markets the wool for sheep producers all across Canada.
- TAKE** advantage of the convenient national network of wool collection and stockman supply centres. Wool sacks are readily available from the centres or from licensed operators.
- SUPPLIES** a complete line of stockman supplies, animal health products and ID equipment at very competitive prices are offered. Prompt servicing of shearing equipment is provided.
- MAIL SERVICE** dependable Canada-wide mail and courier service for stockman supplies is a feature of the operation. Catalogues available upon request.
- RECEIVE** the Woolgrowers magazine free of charge. Published by the CCWG, the publication provides up-to-date information on the sheep industry.
- SUPPORT** the company provides much support and encouragement to sheep and wool shows across Canada.
- DEVELOPMENT** the company is researching and developing products made from Canadian wool.

Remember - the CCWG

Year in and year out, you as a grower are assured of full market value for your product. All the accrued service and discount benefits of a co-operative organization formed to serve your best interests. A supportive and informative centre that welcomes your membership and input.

WWW.WOOL.CA

Before Shearing -

While the wool is on the sheep

Canadian fleece will be worth more when you...

- * Use proper health and nutritional practices. Consult your Ag. Rep. or sheep specialist for help and advice.
- * Use approved feeders that allow sufficient feeder space for your flock and which protect the fleece.
- * Handle all forage and bedding carefully to prevent it from entering the fleece. Immediately remove and dispose of baler and poly twines.
- * Use sufficient clean bedding. Increased care in feeding and bedding translates into a cleaner more saleable product.
- * Brand with a scourable marking substance. Paint makes your fleece worthless as a marketable commodity.
- * Practice proper weed control. Burrs and thistles will lower your wool grade and market value.
- * Crutch sheep before shearing, removing tags, burrs and chaff. More care in fleece preparation translates into better wool grades for you, more efficiency, a more valuable product and higher financial returns.

Breed for increased fleece weight, finer fiber and no coloured fibers. Breeding for a finer and heavier fleece gives Canadian wool a more competitive position on both domestic and world markets.

Shearing

If hiring a custom Shearer

Shearing will be more efficient when you...

- * Book well in advance.
- * Have sheep crutched before-hand.
- * Pen sheep close 12 hours prior to shearing with no feed or water.
- * Prepare a clean, well-lighted area with access to an electrical outlet.
- * Provide plenty of head room.
- * Have catching pen near the shearing area.
- * Have extra help for filling the catching pen and preparing the fleece for market.

If you are doing the shearing

Shearing will be more efficient when you...

- * Get qualified instruction.
- * Shear only dry sheep on a clean, dry surface.
- * Shear belly wool first and pack separately.
- * Shear coloured sheep last and pack this wool separately.
- * Do not shear black face and leg fibres.
- * Avoid second cuts on the wool wherever possible.

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR WOOL PREPARATION

To enable Canadian wool growers to achieve better wool preparation and higher financial returns the following are the recommended guidelines.

1) All sheep need to be emptied out before shearing. i.e. No feed or water to be administered to the sheep for a minimum of 12 hours prior to shearing. By carrying out this practice the sheep's stomach and bladder will be empty and therefore the wool does not become contaminated with dung and urine. The sheep will also sit better for shearing as they do not struggle the same which enables the shearing process to be easier for both the shearer and the sheep. Never shear wet wool or pack wet wool.

2) The belly wool needs to be kept completely separate from the fleece wool. The shearer should remove and throw the belly aside as the sheep is being shorn, belly wool to be packed separately.

3) All short, stained wool and tags need to be removed from the crutch area as the sheep is being shorn. This wool is kept completely separate from all other types of wool and packed separately.

4) All fleeces should be thrown onto a wool table to enable the skirting of the fleeces to be performed in a proficient manner. Chaffy or bury wool should be skirted from the fleece and packed separately.

5) The board should be swept and kept clean between sheep as well as during the shearing of the sheep.

6) All fleeces should be shaken to remove any second cuts before rolling and pressing the fleeces.

7) When pressing the wool all the different categories of wool are to be pressed separately. There should be no mixing of the different wool types during shearing but when pressing at the end of shearing the different types of wool can be put into one bag but they need to be separated by sheets of newspaper.

8) All bags are to be sewn with butchers twine. Please do not use baling twine, wire, electric fence wire, or polyprop twine to sew the wool bags.

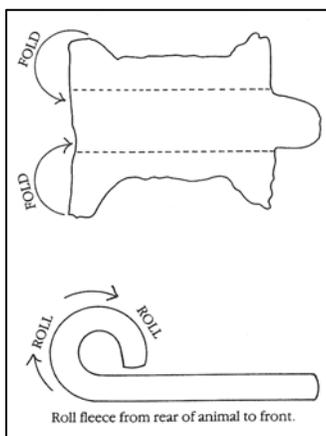
9) All bags need to be identified as to their contents.

10) Where possible during shearing the level of straw needs to be kept to a minimum and away from the shearing area to keep the contamination level to a minimum.

11) Coloured & Blackface sheep are to be separated and shorn last so as not to contaminate the white wool with coloured fibres.

12) Fleece preparation incentives of up to 8¢/lb is applicable for bright high yielding fleeces that have been properly skirted and packaged.

13) Maintaining a clean shearing board and floor is an important and continuous process. It must be done before, during and after shearing to insure a quality clip.



Rolling the fleece (all wools)

- * Spread skirted fleece on skirting table or clean wool handling area, flesh side down.
- * Fold fleece into thirds
- * Roll fleece from rear of animal to front.
- * Roll fleece flesh side out.

Preparation for Sheep Shearing

Tips provided by: Donald S. Metheral, Professional Shearer, Ontario and Anita O'Brien – Sheep & Goat Specialist, OMAFRA, Kingston, ON. Edited by Marg. Zillig. March, 2008.

Aim for a STRESS FREE Shearing Day!
Be prepared. Have an efficient set-up.

Shearing Facilities:

- Goals:**
1. Delivery of sheep to shearer with minimal effort for handler; sheep and shearer.
 2. Removal and preparation of wool with minimal effort.
* clean and careful fleece preparation
 3. Skirting table and wool packer conveniently located.

Keep in mind:

- * a DRY place!
 - Pens, shear floor, wool handling & storage area, all free of drips, leaks, excessive dampness.
- * Facilities do not need to be permanent
 - but arranged before shearer arrives!
- * Get ready the day before shearing.
 - put up temporary lighting in the shearing & wool handling areas.
 - shearing floor should be level to stand on
 - provide for ventilation
 - have good wiring to clipper outlet
- * Sheep will be reluctant to move toward noise of shearing machine
 - in chute, use a stanchioned “decoy” sheep
 - if possible, have helper for moving sheep so shearer and wool handler can work without interruption.
- * Catch pens should hold 12 – 20 ewes (15 ideal)

→ → → →

Examples of layouts for shearing facilities

by:

Donald S. Metheral, Professional Shearer, Ontario and
Anita O'Brien – Sheep & Goat Specialist, OMAFRA, Kingston, ON.

Fig. 1.
**Shearing board
in "Bull Pen".**

* sheep close to
shearer for quick
catching.

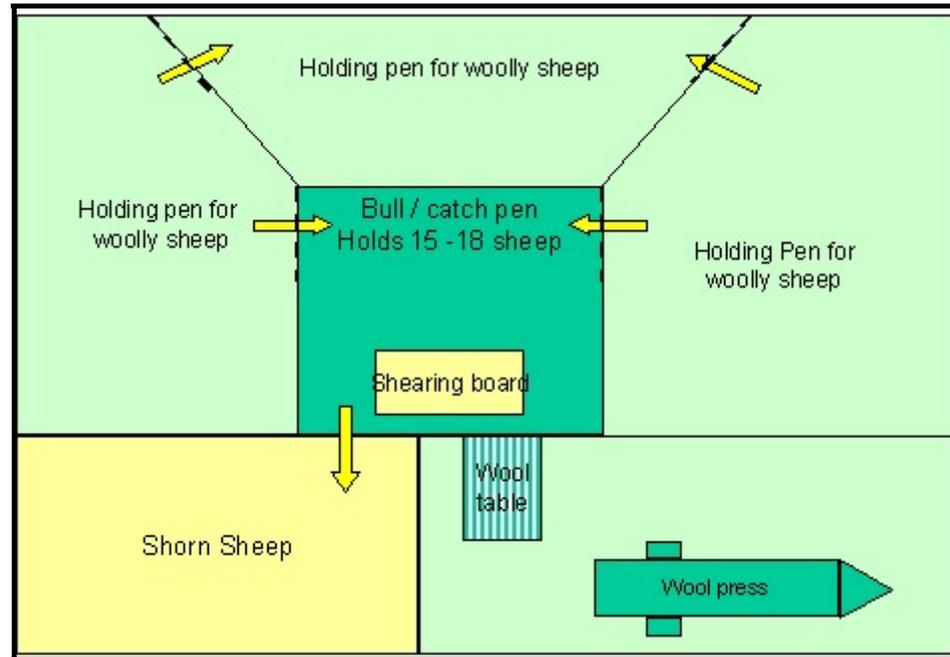
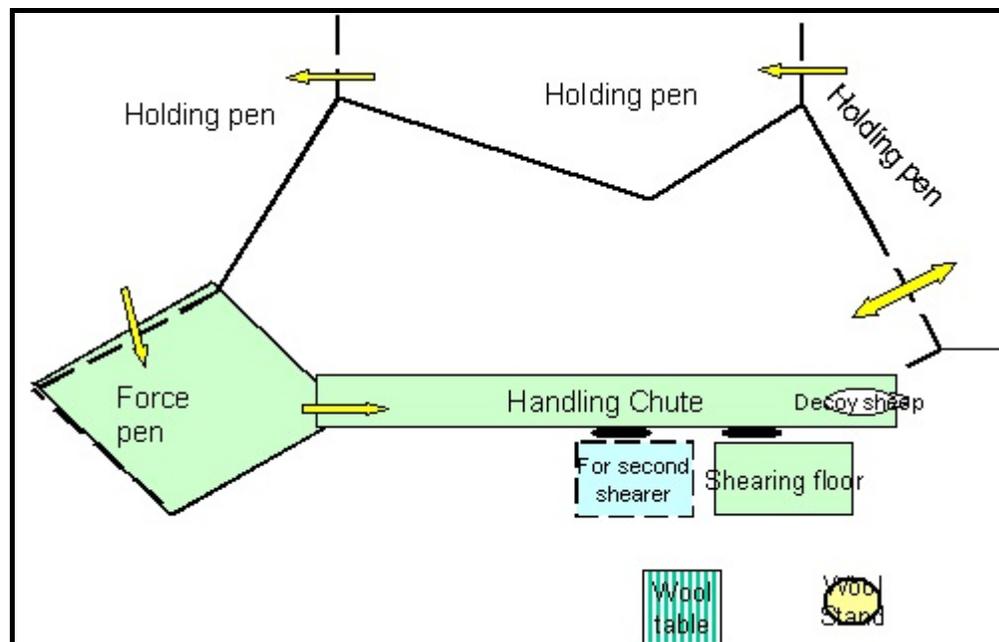


Fig. 2
**Portable
shearing
Chute.**

* useful in larger
(> 50 sheep) flocks

* best to have a
helper to keep
chute full of
unshorn sheep.





Ministry of Agriculture and Food

USE SHEEP BEHAVIOUR TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

A. O'Brien

INTRODUCTION

Producers who understand sheep behaviour can use this knowledge to their advantage in all aspects of sheep production and management. Whether setting up and using handling and shearing facilities, moving the flock to a new pasture, or catching an individual sheep, taking their behaviour into account ensures the job is completed in an efficient, low-stress manner.

Some important aspects of sheep behaviour as it relates to handling and movement include:

- Sheep do not like to be enclosed in a tight environment and will move on their own accord into larger areas.
 - Sheep move toward other sheep willingly.
 - Sheep move away from workers and dogs.
 - Sheep have good long-term memory (relative) especially with respect to unpleasant experiences.
 - If given a choice, sheep prefer to move over flat areas rather than up an incline, and up an incline rather than moving down it.
 - Sheep prefer to move from a darkened area towards a lighter area, but avoid contrasts in light.
 - Sheep flow better through facilities if the same paths and flow directions are used every time.
 - Stationary sheep are motivated to move by the sight of sheep running (away).
 - Sheep will balk or stop forward movement when they see sheep moving in the opposite direction.
 - Sheep will move faster through a long, narrow pen or area than through a square pen.
- Sheep move better through the handling chute (race) if they cannot see the operator.
 - Sheep will more willingly move toward an open area than toward what they perceive as a dead end.
 - Very young lambs that become separated from their dams will want to return to the area where they first became separated.
 - Sheep react negatively (as do all livestock) to loud noises, yelling and barking.
 - Young sheep move through facilities easier when their first move through is with well-trained older sheep.

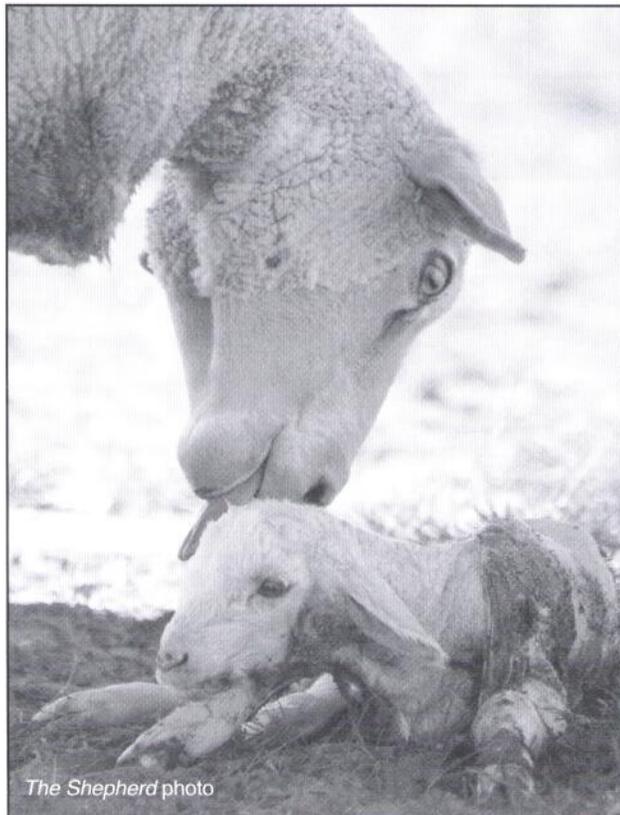
Many years of observation by people who work with sheep under a wide range of conditions have gone into establishing the above-listed points of sheep behaviour. They illustrate that certain actions and reactions by sheep are very predictable, and can be used to the producer's advantage in all aspects of sheep management. Those producers who incorporate aspects of sheep behaviour into management of their flock will see positive results in the ease of moving groups, willingness of sheep to enter and be processed in handling facilities, and fewer stress indicators in the animals and handlers.

This Factsheet was written by **Anita O'Brien**, Sheep and Goat Specialist, OMAF, Kemptville.

Timely Tips

Reprinted from the North Dakota Sheep Industry Newsletter

North Dakota State University Extension Service & North Dakota Lamb & Wool Producers Association



1. Starting 45 days prior to lambing, provide ewes with supplemental feed to meet late gestational nutritional requirements.

- a. Providing 1 to 2 pounds of grain per ewe per day increases energy supplied to ewes in a small volume. Abdominal space is limited during this time and forage intake can decline.
- b. If feeding grass hay, often additional protein may be required to meet the ewes' needs, whereas alfalfa typically supplies adequate protein for late gestation.
- c. If abortions are a problem, consider the use of oral or injectable antibiotics to improve health.
- d. Consider working with a nutritionist to balance dietary needs and costs.

2. Shear ewes two weeks to two months prior to lambing.

- a. Ewe and lamb health can be improved by shearing ahead of lambing.
- b. Ewe intake and air quality can be improved by shearing ahead of lambing.
- c. Provide protection from severe weather to shorn ewes two weeks to one month post-shearing.
- d. Become a U.S. certified wool program. Improving your wool clip and the reputation of American wool takes just a little planning and preparation. To learn about the program, go to www.sheepusa.org/Wool_Information.

3. Consider management modifications or technological improvements to reduce lambing labor.

- a. Labor requirements to manage a sheep operation are daunting and often a reason for the liquidation of flocks, especially during lambing season.
- b. Feeding time (evenings) can increase the number of lambs born during the day instead of at night.
- c. Barn cameras can reduce night barn checks and, in turn, reduce night lambings.
- d. Sorting ewes into smaller pens at night can reduce mismothering that occurs when multiple ewes lamb during the night in the same pen.
- e. Ewes and lambs that need assistance should be recorded and culling decisions should be made with regard to this information.
- f. Make equipment or facilities improvements to reduce labor needs during lambing:
 - i. Water tubes that provide water to all lambing jugs, instead of buckets
 - ii. Fence-line feeders to reduce the need to enter pens
 - iii. Automatic foster lamb-rearing equipment
 - iv. Self-feeders for ewes and/or lambs in lactation pens

4. Keep a lambing record book.

- a. Accurate records are a must for any sheep operation.
- b. Each lamb should be recorded with an ID, birth date, sex, dam, sire and comments.
- c. Weaning weights should be collected on all lambs.
- d. Data can be used to determine replacements, ewe and ram culling decisions, flock productivity benchmark and calculate in-flock index, or submitted to the National Sheep Improvement Program for calculation of estimated breeding values. ■

Using Paint and Markers to Identify Sheep

By **RON COLE**

ASI Wool Education Consultant, Sheep Industry News

According to a wide range of wool buyers and processors, paint-free wool remains the most desired type of wool because it can be utilized in a wide array of fabrics. It allows processors to eliminate a potential problem area that can be very costly when excessive amounts of paint or grease markers are not able to be scoured out completely in early processing stages. This gives both buyers and processors a wider range of use for the wool, regardless of other factors and reduces costs through processing. Both wool top mills and fabric makers have noted decreased issues in the amount of paint issues recently; however, they remind the industry that when these issues arise at the processing facility, costs skyrocket immediately.

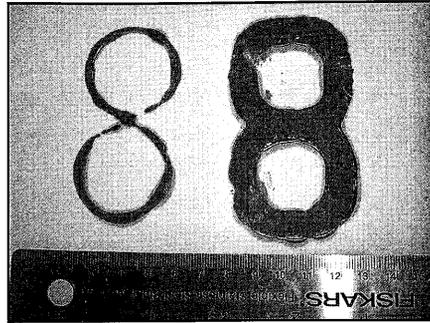
They suggest that growers remain firm in their commitment to wool quality improvement by reducing all types of contamination.

Many range operations in the plains and mountain states need to be able to identify their sheep as they utilize public grazing lands. Herds can accidentally mix under these conditions and cause hours and hours of sorting time to separate various herds. Many sheep producers utilize branding paint to identify lamb and ewe pairs as they are sorted and turned out into various management systems throughout the country. Thus, in terms of wool quality improvement, it behooves producers to be aware of potential processing issues when they utilize branding fluids and markers. From a cost standpoint, with paint at \$30 plus per gallon, certainly using less of the product to cover more sheep increases efficiency and lowers overall cost.

Current recommendations in the U.S. Code of Practice for Wool Handling in the United States include the following do's and don'ts.

Do's of Paint Branding Sheep

- Shake and stir paint well. In colder weather, paint will thicken, so place can in warm water bath for 5-10 minutes. Paint manufacturers sometimes make recommendations about diluting agents. Read the label.
- Apply paint sparingly – only enough to make a legible brand.
- Use an application tool 4 mm wide – the length of this line: or the thickness of four credit cards.
- Let the excess paint run off the applicator before applying to sheep.
- Use a branding iron of minimal overall size – enough to recognize the sheep and only have minimal impact on wool



If paint brands must be applied, a 4 mm wide application tool should be used.

quality. One letter/number is better than two to limit paint effects. In addition, open number or letters are better as they limit the amount of thick, globs of paint concentrated in one area.

- Brand on the head if possible; if not, on top of shoulders or on juncture of neck and shoulders as this area consists of lower-value wool than that on the middle of the back.

Don'ts of Branding

- Do not put paint in fire to warm it or thin it.
- Do not mix brands of paints.
- Do not let paint freeze.
- Do not dilute paint unless label allows this practice.

Wool buyers and processors have indicated that the most difficult paint to remove is usually applied to sheep with 1.5" of wool or more. This is evident in "winter bands" that are being formed in late fall to go on public land areas till shearing time in the spring. Excess amounts of paint results in hard, dry clumps of paint deep in the wool which are extremely difficult to remove during scouring. Some producers choose to remove the paint brands when fleeces are placed on classing tables at shearing time. This results in additional time and labor costs to the producer and removes 10 percent to 15 percent of the higher-valued wool from the center of the back – often sold at significant price discounts.

In the farm flock states, the use of markers on rams is an accepted practice in many areas. However, producers should be aware that these products are very difficult to remove from wool as these are oil-based products and are deeply imbedded into the wool in the rump areas of the ewes and chest areas of the rams. This wool needs to be completely sorted out at shearing time and kept separate, as this is a major wool contaminant in wool processing. ■

Lambing Checklist

In the lambing box:

these items are easily accessed when going from pen to pen if they are put in an open utility tool tote that fits over a gate.

<input type="checkbox"/> Injectable Vitamin A & D, E-Sel - if needed in your area	<input type="checkbox"/> Elastrator rings & pliers for tail docking & castrating - to be done in the first week of life.
<input type="checkbox"/> Needles & syringes of varying sizes	<input type="checkbox"/> Ear tags & pliers for your on farm ID
<input type="checkbox"/> Notebook & pencil to keep track of mother & lamb ID numbers & other important info	<input type="checkbox"/> Spray or crayon marker for quick ID of animals that need (closely) watching.
<input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol mixed with a little food colouring kept in small squeeze bottle. Use on injection sites, ear tagging or lamb navels. The colour shows you where the alcohol site is.	<input type="checkbox"/> Iodine - kept in a small squeeze bottle for lamb navels.

Lambing supplies to have on hand

<input type="checkbox"/> Lamb Kick Start - energy boost for slow, chilled lambs	<input type="checkbox"/> Hair dryer & box (for warming chilled lambs) or heat lamp
<input type="checkbox"/> Colostrum feeding tube and large syringe	<input type="checkbox"/> Nipples and bottles
<input type="checkbox"/> Scour solution	<input type="checkbox"/> Towels, olds ones for drying off lambs
<input type="checkbox"/> Powdered Colostrum	<input type="checkbox"/> Gloves, sleeve length and short OB gloves
<input type="checkbox"/> Powdered milk replacer	<input type="checkbox"/> Lamb Pullers
<input type="checkbox"/> Lamb Woolovers	<input type="checkbox"/> Lubricant
<input type="checkbox"/> Lamb sling, if you've ever carried a cold wet newborn lamb to its pen, you probably will want to use one of these forever after.	<input type="checkbox"/> Injectable antibiotics - some work better for different infections - ask your vet
<input type="checkbox"/> Prolapse retainers & harness & a big bag of white sugar - the sugar will take the swelling out of the prolapse	<input type="checkbox"/> Ear tags and Pliers - you must have the new CCIA tags for when you ship animals, you may also want a different tag for on farm ID.

Lambing supplies to consider having on hand, they might come in handy.

<input type="checkbox"/> Hand shears for trimming wooly udders	<input type="checkbox"/> Scissors
<input type="checkbox"/> Vaccinations	<input type="checkbox"/> Adoption musk
<input type="checkbox"/> Sheep halter or soft rope for tying up the ewe that you're going to work on	<input type="checkbox"/> Shepherds crook, great for catching flighty mothers
<input type="checkbox"/> Gambriel Restrainer - will keep an ewe still while you do necessary work on her.	<input type="checkbox"/> Knife - get a brightly coloured handle for when it falls in the hay (and it will)
<input type="checkbox"/> Injectable Dextrose for hypothermic lambs	<input type="checkbox"/> Hoof nippers (while the mothers are in the pens you might want to pare her feet)
<input type="checkbox"/> Small side cutting pliers and file. Every year we get lambs that are rejected because of sharp teeth. A simple snip of the side teeth and file down of the front teeth will usually stop the rejection, if it is not too late.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sheep raising information, books or video's such as 'Storeys Guide to Raising Sheep' book or 'Lambing Time' video.	

GOAL: To increase the number of lambs marketed by reducing newborn lamb deaths.

- 1. BE PREPARED.** Know the lambing due date. Record all contacts between rams and ewes – accidental and planned! Use gestation table to calculate probable lambing date called Gesta Calc, available at the Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers 1-866-488-2714, E-mail: stockmans@wool.ca.
2. Have all of your lambing supplies on hand at least a week before the first lambs are supposed to arrive. Have an “obstetrical/delivery” bucket ready.
3. Have enough feed to supply all of your ewes through the last six weeks of pregnancy and through lactation. Have feed on hand for lamb creeps. Decide on growing and finishing rations. Changing feeds can cause production losses and health problems particularly during critical production periods (lactation, weaning, lamb grower / finisher). For information on sheep nutrition, contact the AgInfo Centre in your area.
4. Have enough claiming pens / maternity pens / small group hardening pens ready for the number of ewes you have to lamb. Set up pens and panels ahead of time.
5. WATCH YOUR EWES. Weather conditions usually determine how closely a mature ewe flock must be monitored. Ewe lambs give you less warning. It doesn't take bitterly cold weather for wet, newborn lambs to die of hypothermia.
6. Have frozen ewe/cow colostrum on hand. Warm to body temperature in warm water – not in the microwave! Use a stomach tube on a 60cc syringe, or a “Lamb Reviver” to feed weak lambs. Have a bottle and baby lamb nipples ready for supplementing strong lambs that suck well (i.e. triplets).
7. Have barnsheets ready to record all births. If you don't have a lambing record system, or ewe production cards from the CCWG at 1-866-488-2714, E-mail: stockmans@wool.ca.
8. Tag all lambs for permanent identification. You will need Canadian Sheep Identification Program tags to ship lambs to market or move ewes from the farm. Contact the Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers Limited for information and tags. For easy management use flock tags that are easily readable and/or temporary paint brands to identify ewes and lambs belonging to each other, to colour code different groups, or to identify the corral the ewe and lambs belong in.
9. Dock all lambs at 24 to 48 hours of age. Allow lambs to nurse unhindered for the first 24 hours so as to get as much colostrum as possible. Docking procedures should be as stress-free as possible.
10. Consider castrating all ram lambs not being considered for breeding purposes, particularly those born in spring and summer.
11. Watch ewes and lambs closely – cull for mismothering. Select daughters from trouble-free moms.
12. Be sure to write down all animal treatments with withdrawal period and all problem sheep! Decide who is doing the work – you or your ewes.