Hunter Nutrition

Winter 2020 Newsletter

Body Condition Scoring

By: Dr. John Hendrickson, DVM

An Indiana winter has arrived once again and these cold, windy, and wet conditions can add extra stress to livestock. There are three factors to consider that can help them do well through these conditions; shelter, food and water, and body condition score.

The first is shelter. Most livestock can manage with wind chills above 20 degrees F. But as it gets colder, they need a place to escape the cold, rain, and wind. Wet and windy conditions require livestock to use more energy which is met by increasing their feed consumption or using their own energy reserve, this being their body condition or fat. Adequate shelter is one way to help reduce this impact. Windbreaks can help greatly with the wind. Natural wind breaks like tree lines or a lower valley area may be sufficient. Wind breaks can be made by making a wall of round bales or solid panels at least 8 feet tall along the lot area. Three sided loafing areas have the added protection from rain and snow allowing them to stay dry. Allow enough room for animals to lie down safely without being trampled or crowded. Clean, dry bedding insulates livestock from the cold ground. Table-1 displays some square foot requirements for different livestock .

Table 1– Square Foot per Animal per Species

Cows	30	Ewe w/lamb	12
Calves	15	Goats	10
Horses	100–150	Llama	25–30
Sheep	8	Alpaca	20–30

The second factor is feed and water. Ruminants, like cattle, sheep, and goats, have a rumen that ferments the fiber from hay which produces energy and heat. A good quality grass hay or alfalfa is effective for producing heat. As a general rule, mature livestock in good body condition need 2-3% of their body weight in dry matter per day. Below is a chart that could be used as a basic guide. In addition, water is essential for digestion leading to fiber break- down and heat. Free access to clean water at all times is very important.

Table 1B. Animal forage (dry matter in lb/month)

1 cow (1,000 lb)	800	1 llama	300
1 horse	1,000	1 goat	200
1 sheep	200	1 alpaca	100

These weights are for actual consumption; when feeding hay, include 10% more to account for waste.

The third consideration is body condition score. Body condition scoring (BCS) is a method of determining the relative fatness of beef cattle and other livestock. In beef cattle, a score from 1-9 is used. A BCS score of 5 to 6 is ideal for beef cattle. Changes in these scores reflect how well the nutrients being provided are meeting the energy needs of the cow. Animals using their energy reserves to fulfill their energy requirements through winter lose body condition. This can potentially lead to decreased pregnancy rates the following breeding season and decreased weaning weights. The table below illustrates this point. A cow with a BCS of 3 has a lower pregnancy rate and calf weaning weight as compared to the cow with a BCS of 5. Monitoring the BCS of the herd throughout the year allows for adjustments in feeding and management strategies to maintain BCS leading into winter and increased profitability.

Table 2. Relationship of body condition score to beef cow performance and calf performance[1]

BCS[2]	Pregnancy rate, %	Calving interval, d	Calf ADG[3], lb/d	Calf WW[4], lb
3	43	414	1.60	374
4	61	381	1.75	450
5	86	364	1.85	514

As we enter another unpredictable Indiana winter, there are many important things to consider when caring for your livestock. Three areas of most importance are shel- ter, food and water, and body condition of the animal. When all of these areas are provided you can work to ensure the safety and good health of your animals which will naturally improve the profitability of your operation.

Sources:

Jaymelynn Farney, et al. (2016). *Guide to Body condition Scoring Beef Cows and Bulls*, Kansas State University, (Publication No MF 3274).

Brian Tuck, et al. (2010). *Winter Livestock Care*. Oregon State University Extension. (Publication No. EC 1635).

Brian Tuck, et al., 2010

Farney, et al., 2016

Lambing Time: A curse or pleasure?

By: Todd Deno

Lambing time should be a time when you feel the most excited about your sheep project. You have spent time researching the ewes'

genetics and matching their flaws with rams that will help them give you your ideal type of lambs..

Proper nutrition plays a big part in the success of a lambing operation. One nutritional aspect that should never be compromised is free choice mineral. Body scores are great in determining the amount and type of feedstuffs to include in the daily ewes' diets.

Sometimes it is not the sheep in the flock we should look at, but rather the keeper of the flock – the Shepherd. For me , this means looking at different opportunities to improve the overall quality of ways I perform as a Shepherd.

One of the biggest misconceptions of raising sheep, is that sheep are looking for a corner to die. When I got back into raising sheep, I thought that meant I should build a round barn. Is this the fact or are we, as shepherds, not in tune with the needs of our flocks? So, as we

get ready to start lambing season maybe some research on the sheep species is just what the doctor ordered. Happy lambing and good luck.

Water Importance In Winter

By: Katie Marchino

Water is normally a nutrient we think most about in warmer weather, but what many don't realize is the high need for water in the winter. With gestating females comes the production of milk. Lactation increases the animal's need for extra water in the body. Milk is composed of primarily water and the need for water nearly doubles during gestation/ lactation. (see table 2). It is crucial that producers have a clean, easily accessible source of water for females, as well as the rest of your stock. In the winter, it is important to keep water above freezing, around 40 degrees Fahrenheit, by using a water tank heater, and/or keeping water sources in a shelter to avoid the weather. When water accessibility is taken away, its been known for ruminants to obtain water by eating snow off of the ground. It isn't a permanent source of water, but can be sustainable to the animal for a short period of time while a water source is acquired. Water is a key nutrient in an animal's diet and is essential to their overall health and well– being. Keeping your livestock well hydrated will ensure a healthy, profitable operation.

Table 2: Average water requirements of stock

Stock type	Consumption Per head per day (L)
Sheep	
Weaners	2–4
Adult dry sheep	
– grassland	2–6
– saltbush	4–12
Ewes with lambs	4–10
Cattle	
Lactating cows	
– grassland	40–100
– saltbush	70–140
Young stock	25–50
Dry stock (400 kg)	35–80
Horses	40–50

(Table acquired from livestock-emergency.net "Water requirements for sheep and cattle")

Other information inquired from "Nutrient Requirements of domestic Animals"

Customer Profile– Darrell Hall

Darrell Hall is a long- time customer to Hunter Nutrition. He first began buying our sheep feed and minerals about 15 years ago when his daughter started classes at Purdue University. Mr. Hall and his family have been raising Oxford breeding stock for almost 60 years and they farm corn and soybeans in Illinois. His family has had great success over the years, earning 25 champions at various shows around the country since the 1980's. Recently, his family just took home the Supreme Overall Breed from NAILE. What he enjoys most about Hunter Nutrition products are the 'outstanding quality and high performance' he can see out of his sheep. He says that since feeding HN products, he notices a higher breeding rate which is extremely beneficial in the livestock industry. When asking him what advise he has for people wanting to get into the industry he said, "it's a wonderful life, I have enjoyed seeing all of our genetics improve over the years and it is extremely rewarding to see it pay off". Thank you, Mr. Hall and family, for your continued support of Hunter Nutrition and we wish you all of the success in your flock!

Hall Family with their Supreme Champion Ewe at NAILE 2019.

Photo courtesy of The Banner Magazine

Preventing Hypocalcaemia & Hypomagnesaemia In Ewes

By: Jeff Hunter

Calcium, magnesium, and, to some extent, potassium play a big role in metabolic disorders. A deficiency of these minerals can be quite disastrous. Hypocalcaemia and hypomagnesaemia often occur at the same time. Symptoms of low blood levels of calcium and magnesium are listlessness, general weakness, incoordination, and sudden death. The sudden onset of hypocalcaemia and hypomagnesaemia frequently seen in otherwise healthy animals are results of these deficiencies. Feeding these nutrients as a preventive measure is more successful than the treatment options. Most of the hypocalcaemia cases occur in late gestation when the fetal demands for calcium increase rapidly. Hypocalcaemia and hypomagnesaemia can also occur in early lactation. The correct amount of calcium, magnesium, and Vitamin D are critical for prevention. Additionally, off feed and stressful periods can cause the on-set of the disorders. A ewe's metabolism is in a very delicate balance in late gestation. Ewes are really 'on the edge' in terms of correct blood levels of Ca and Mg. Upsets in nutrition and environment can send them into coma and death.

I have witnessed hypocalcaemia/ hypomagnesaemia brought on by a single missed feeding, weather changes, and shearing.

Prevention is achieved by feeding a properly balanced diet, with NO missed feedings! Forage sampling and ration balancing based on the forage analysis is a good management practice. Feeding poor quality forages, and feeding cheap, poorly fortified, 'whatever the mill has' type ewe rations will cause problems.

Treatment with IV Calcium and Magnesium is the best choice. Ewes with early symptoms can be treated with oral liquid and gel CMPK products. Ewes with hypocalcaemia/ hypomagnesaemia will also need extra energy, which can be dextrose in the same IV as the Ca and Mg. The CMPK products contain some dextrose; you can also give the ewes Survive! as additional energy support for recovery.

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Hours: 9 AM — 5 PM
Monday– Friday

Super Lamb Milk

Winter 2020 Prices:

1-9 bags = $44.00/ bag

10+ bags = $42.00/ bag

80+ bags = $41.00/ bag

Product Overview
Hay Saver & CL Ewe Replacer

Hay Saver–

Our pelleted hay replacer, sold in 50# bags and bulk, can replace up to 50-60% of the hay in your animals' diet. This product consists of soy hulls, alfalfa meal, soybean meal, and minerals; all which make it a great fiber source and hay replacement.

CL Ewe Replacer-

This product is a colostrum supplement used to replenish newborn lambs who have not received enough colostrum around the time of birth. You can feed this product 1-2 days and then switch lambs to regular milk replacer. Sold in 50gm, 250gm, & 700gm

Helpful Lambing Products

During lambing season, its important to have all necessary supplies to make sure lambing goes smoothly and successfully. Below are a few items we think are important to your lambing season. Call us today to order any of these products!

- □ Lambing Lube
- □ Lamb Puller
- □ O.B. Sleeves
- □ Lamb Scour Treater
- □ U– Bond
- □ *Lamb Saver* Tube & Syringe
- □ Pritchard Nipples/ Measuring Bottles
- □ Gentle Iodine Spray
- □ Monoject Needles & Syringes
- □ SURVIVE!
- □ CL Ewe Replacer
- □ Super Lamb Milk Replacer