

### ***General Information About Abortion***

<b>Cause</b>	<b>Prevention</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• most abortion diseases are spread by direct contact through feed and water or contaminated material (fluids, placenta, fetus). Brucellosis, an exception to the rule, is spread by the ram during breeding.</li> <li>• diagnosis (determining the type of organism causing the abortion) is difficult by looking at fetus. It is important that the whole fetus, its membranes (placenta or afterbirth) be submitted to the provincial veterinary lab in all cases of abortion. Fresh, preferably clean specimens are necessary for good results</li> </ul> <p><b><i>If the laboratory cannot detect, isolate or identify infectious abortive agents after a number of suitable submissions, one should look for non-infectious causes of abortions such as:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nutritional deficiencies (vitamin A, iodine) or malnutrition</li> <li>• rough handling, accidents</li> <li>• exhaustion after stress, transport over long distance, dog attacks, etc.</li> <li>• any disease accompanied by high fever</li> <li>• hormonal disturbances, (estrogens, or progesterones).</li> <li>• young ewes that are still growing may be more prone to stress/nutrition related abortions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• abortion storms can rapidly decimate your lamb crop and profits for an entire year. It is therefore very important to implement preventative measures and minimizing the spread of the disease if it does occur.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Prevention:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consult your veterinarian about implementing an effective vaccination program (possibly including the use of a coccidiostat)</li> <li>• do not feed on the ground and provide clean water.</li> <li>• prevent contamination of feed and water with feces of rodents, birds and cats. Neuter cats and maintain a stable adult cat population.</li> <li>• maintain first lambing ewes as a separate unit.</li> <li>• maintain purchased replacement ewes as a separate unit.</li> <li>• avoid stressing the sheep. Avoid crowding and unsanitary facilities.</li> <li>• do not bed pregnant ewes with bedding from lambing area.</li> <li>• maintain high standards of sanitation and hygiene while lambing; wash and disinfect hands frequently.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>If abortions do occur:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• submit aborted fetuses and placentas to a diagnostic laboratory to identify the infectious agents. If the abortion storm is prolonged, several samples should be submitted as there may be more than one cause.</li> <li>• immediately isolate aborted ewes from the rest of the flock – do not mix with replacement stock</li> <li>• clean the area where the ewe aborted-remove all traces of fetal material (bury) and spray area with disinfectant</li> <li>• consult with your veterinarian about possible antibiotic or antiprotozoal medications</li> <li>• check for contamination of feed supplies (especially if you are using silage).</li> <li>• monitor and possibly treat aborted ewes for uterine infections (injectable antibiotics and/or uterine infusion)</li> </ul>