SHEEP VACCINES AND VACCINATION SCHEDULE

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1. Prebreeding – 3 weeks prior to ram introduction
   A) Campylobacter (Vibrio) – may make ewes sore for a couple of days, is boostered
      60 to 90 days later.
   B) Chlamydia – usually in with the Campylobacter, has not been consistently on the
      market.
   C) Ewe lambs would be vaccinated 6 weeks and 3 weeks prior to introduction of rams.

2. Prelambing – bag ewes and vaccinate 3 weeks prior to lambing
   A) Clostridium perfringens C and D, tetanus
   B) Intranasal Parainfluenza – Nasalgen, squirt 1 ml up one nostril.

3. Preweaning – 2-3 weeks prior to weaning
   A) Clostridium perfringens C and D, tetanus

4. Weaning
   A) Clostridium perfringens C and D, tetanus

5. Replacement ewes approximately 6 weeks prior to breeding
   A) Campylobacter and Chlamydia
   B) 8-way clostridial vaccine – optional, this vaccine causes knots
   C) Orf vaccine – use if orf (contagious ecthyma) is a problem

6. Lambs at the time of castration and docking
   A) Clostridium perfringens C and D, tetanus
   B) If ewes have not been vaccinated with tetanus prior to lambing, lambs should
      receive 300 IU of tetanus antitoxin as well as the vaccine. Do not mix the antitoxin
      and vaccine in the same syringe.

7. Foot rot vaccine
   A) Give prior to time of the year when foot rot is a problem. Usually it is during the
      rainy/wet seasons but may vary on individual farms.

Campylobacter (Vibrio)

Campylobacter is a bacterium that causes abortion in ewes. The organism is harbored by
carrier sheep in the gall bladder and intestinal tract. Infection usually occurs through oral
ingestion of the organism. Sources of contamination are feces, aborted fetuses, placenta,
and fetal fluids or vaginal discharge. The bacterium infects the placenta and the fetus
causing abortion. The organism usually causes abortions during the second half of
gestation. Ewes are not sick but may have diarrhea.
Chlamydia

Chlamydia is a bacterium that causes abortion in ewes. The organism is shed in aborted fetuses, placenta, and vaginal fluids. Oral and conjunctival contact with infected fluids is the major route of infection. The organism infects the placenta and the fetus. Ewes may be off feed and have a fever prior to aborting but often times these clinical signs are overlooked. Ewes that abort have immunity for the next 3 years. This vaccine comes on and off the market. One study indicated that there was no real benefit in vaccinating.

Clostridium perfringens C and D

Clostridium perfringens is a bacterial disease that causes sudden death in lambs. This is the organism that causes the classic overeating disease and is the most common cause of hemorrhagic diarrhea in lambs less than a week of age. As a result then, the animal needs to be protected during the first week of life and then around the time of weaning. To protect the lamb at birth, the ewe is vaccinated prior to lambing so antibodies to the organism are present in the colostrum. The lambs are then vaccinated prior to and at the time of weaning. This vaccine is cheap and often contains tetanus.

Clostridium tetani

Clostridium tetani is a bacterial disease that causes tetanus. The organism can not live in the presence of air. Therefore, it is a disease that occurs when there has been an injury or a puncture wound. The organism remains in the soil for a long time and is shed in horse feces. Ewes and their lambs then are likely exposed when housed in barns that have previously been used to house horses. Sheep are very susceptible to tetanus. Since the organism prefers traumatized tissue, tail docking, castration, shearing, and lambing are times. To protect the lamb at birth, the ewe is vaccinated prior to lambing so antibodies to the organism are present in the colostrum. The lambs are vaccinated at the time of castration or docking and again around the time of weaning as the C and D vaccine often times contains tetanus.

Other Clostridium organisms

The 8-way clostridial vaccine contains Cl. chauvoei, Cl. septicum, Cl. hemolyticum, Cl. novyi, Cl. tetani, Cl. perfringens C and D. Cl. chauvoei and septicum cause blackleg and malignant edema. Cl. hemolyticum and novyi cause disease with in the liver and are often associated with liver flukes. In my experience, it is rare for sheep to acquire these infection. The vaccine tends to be fairly reactive causing the sheep to be stiff and sore for a day or 2 after vaccination. This vaccine also leaves some scar tissue. Because of the side effects of this vaccine and the rarity of the diseases it protects, I do not include it in my vaccine schedules.
Parainfluenza

Parainfluenza is a virus that causes upper respiratory disease predisposing the sheep to pneumonia. A cattle product is used. Infectious bovine respiratory virus (IBRV) is included in the vaccine with the parainfluenza virus although IBRV does not cause disease in sheep. The vaccine is a intranasal vaccine. The reason the vaccine is given in the nose is to provide for local immunity within the nasal passages. This is where the virus infects the sheep. The dose on the bottle is 1 ml of vaccine is 1 ml per nostril. Good protection is obtained by squirting 1 ml up one nostril in sheep.