



SHEEP SHEET

by **Dr. Lyle G. McNeal, Executive Director, Sheep & Wool Specialist**

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Isolation:

Sheep are strongly influenced by the flocking instinct. An isolated sheep or lamb is often showing signs of sickness.

Disinterest in Feed or Water, Off-Feed:

May indicate any of a number of forms of gastric upset or other illness.

Lagging:

The last sheep through the gate or the barn should be suspected of illness, particularly if that animal is normally one of the first through.

Lethargy, Depression:

An unresponsive sheep with head hung low and dull eyes is probably quite ill.

Excessive Time Lying Down; Reluctance to Move About:

May indicate fever, mastitis or other illness that may make it painful for the sheep to stand or walk.

Restlessness, Anxiety:

Animals under stress may have difficulty in relaxing.

Depraved Appetite:

Sheep sometimes eat unusual things, such

Behavior Signs of Possible Health Problems

Sheepdex H-3

as wood, dirt, acorns, paint, bones, wool and hair (from cattle or horse tails). This may indicate a dietary deficiency (example: iron deficiency can cause dirt eating and phosphorous deficient sheep may eat bones or wood) or may be a behavioral problem (boredom or stress may lead to depraved appetite).

Vocalization:

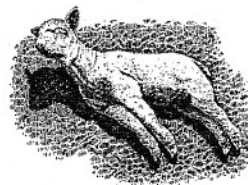
Bleating is a common method for a lamb to express its needs. Extended or weakened bleating may indicate a problem such as starvation, which the dam is unable to correct. Throaty, moaning noises are indicative of severe stress (hardware disease, trauma due to injury).

Rapid Breathing:

In lambs, may indicate pneumonia.

Manure:

Sheep droppings are normally firm and pelleted. Watery manure and/or droppings with blood indicates a problem.



For more information write The Navajo Sheep Project, Inc. PO Box 4454, Logan, UT 84323-4454. The Navajo Sheep Project is a registered non-profit Utah corporation.