



SHEEP SHEET

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

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Newborn lambs are subjected to an extreme temperature change even though they are born in moderate weather. They have just spent nearly five months inside their dams at a temperature of 102°F when they are suddenly dropped in the outside environment which may be a hundred degrees cooler. Besides, they are wet, which makes for even greater shock.

This sudden change may be one of the most important reasons for so many deaths in very young lambs. It is estimated that 10 to 25 percent of the lambs born alive never live to weaning age, and that about three-fourths of these die during the first week. Pneumonia is the principal killer, but artificial warmth for the newborn lamb would in many cases ward off its development.

One way of providing artificial heat to young lambs is to use an infrared, 250-watt lamp suspended about 3.5 to 4 feet over the lambing pens or jugs. These pens are usually 4' x 4'; 4' x 5'; 5' x 5' and 36" high. They can be easily constructed by hinging 4 or 5 eight-foot boards in the middle, and should be made of light material for ease in handling.

The ewe and her lambs should be confined in these pens for several days, depending on the strength and vigor of the lambs.

If this heat lamp is used, here are some important points to keep in mind:

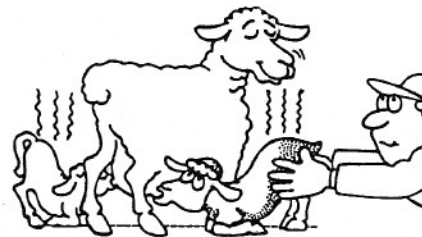
- ▶ Although this bulb has a built-in-reflector it is best to shield it with a metal reflector to prevent moisture dropping on it while hot.

Heat Lamps for Young Lambs

Sheepdex L-11

- ▶ Be sure to fasten it securely so that it cannot fall on the bedding.
- ▶ Do not hang it within 18" of the ewe's back or it will burn the wool.
- ▶ It will require approximately 6 kilowatt-hours (KWH) per day to operate.

The chief feature of this type of lamb brooder is that it is easily movable and is available to the lamb as soon as it is born. Another big advantage of this lamp is that it can be used for pigs and chicks as well as lambs.



NOTES:

*For more information write:
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