



SHEEP SHEET

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There are many reasons why we sometimes need to encourage a nursing ewe to either adopt an "extra" or replacement lamb. Because the ewe first identifies with her own lamb immediately after birth by its own unique odor, she is unlikely to accept a foster lamb unless it smells like her own offspring.

The traditional method to get a ewe to foster a lamb has been to skin her dead lamb and place the skin over the orphaned lamb's body that you want to get fostered. However, some modern day shepherds do not like to use this method, or a shepherd may not have a dead lamb to use for the skin. Two products that have been introduced to the U.S. sheep market are as follows:

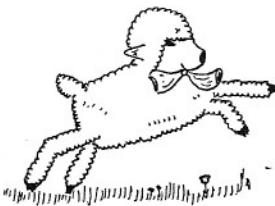
1. Fostercoat™ and
2. Lamb Woolover™

Fostercoat™

Fostercoat is a possible solution to this problem. It has a unique knitted 100% polyester pile construction capable of absorbing lamb odor when worn for a time by the natural offspring. The Fostercoat is subsequently transferred to the lamb to be fostered who then smells enough like the natural lamb to be accepted by the foster ewe.

Uses

- Substitution fostering
- Add-on fostering
- Assist in retaining body temperature (i.e. hypothermia)
- Weather protection

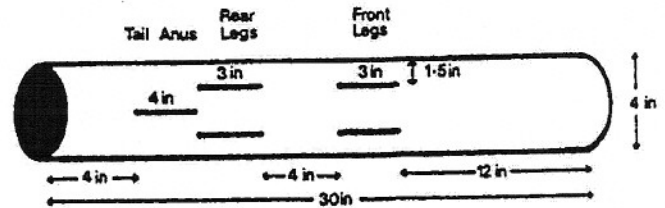


Lamb Coats

Sheepdex L-4

How to use Fostercoat™

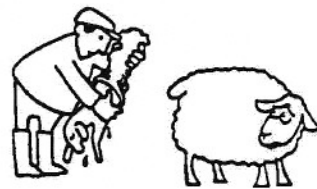
Fostercoat may be cut to any length required. The diagram shows suggested measurements and position and length of slits for legs and anal-genital area. Openings for umbilical (navel) and the male genitals (sheath) are made after Fostercoat is fitted on the lamb.



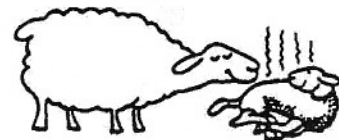
Substitution fostering

Substitution fostering is most successful when started as soon as possible after the birth of a stillborn (dead) lamb.

To substitute an orphaned lamb for stillborn lamb, pull the dead lamb through the Fostercoat several times. This process transfers the birth fluids from the dead lamb to the Fostercoat.



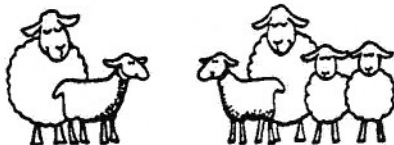
The lamb to be fostered is then fitted with the Fostercoat turned inside out and introduced to the foster ewe. It is advisable to tape or tie the lamb's legs for approximately 15 minutes to prevent it from sucking and to allow the ewe to become familiar with the foster lamb.



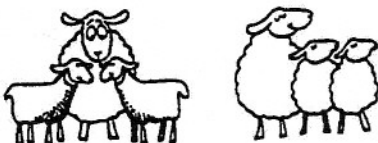
Fostercoats may be removed from adopted lambs 48 hours (2 days) after acceptance occurs.

Add-on Fostering

To add on an "extra lamb" to the ewe who has only a single lamb but enough milk to raise twins, Fostercoat is fitted on both the natural lamb and the lamb to be fostered.



After a few hours the lamb odors are absorbed by the Fostercoats. The Fostercoats are turned inside out and then exchanged between the two lambs and the lamb to be fostered is placed with the foster ewe and her natural lamb.



Since add-on fostering is more difficult than substitution fostering it is helpful to exchange Fostercoats several times to confuse the ewe as to which lamb is her own.

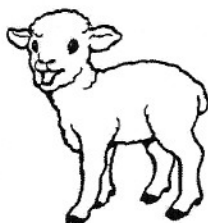
After use, Fostercoats should be discarded or washed prior to re-use.

Lamb Woolover™

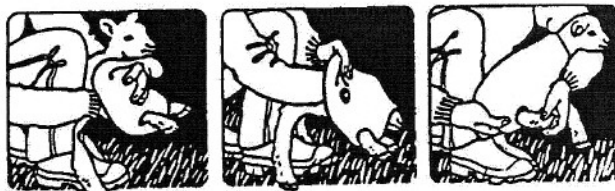
The Lamb Woolover is a lamb coat that also provides multiple uses for the shepherd. The Woolover coat is made of 100% wool. However, the primary uses for it are as follows:

- Treating lambs for hypothermia and
- Grafting orphan lambs to a foster dam
- Protection from sudden weather changes

The Lamb Woolover is a durable product that can be re-used over and over again. It has no fasteners that could cause chafing to young lambs. No velcro or string ties are needed either. Fitting for a lamb only takes seconds. The same company that makes the Lamb Woolover makes them for goat kids and baby calves too.



Fitting procedure



1. Roll tail end of cover forward. Grasp both front legs in one hand and guide through front holes. Pull cover up to knees.
2. Push lamb's head forward through neck opening.
3. Unroll rear of cover and place each rear leg through holes. Covers will offer beneficial protection if left on the lamb until docking (2-3 weeks). The covers will then only be suitable for recycling.
4. To obtain multiple use of the covers they should be removed (weather permitting) after 3-4 days.

NOTE: If you are interested in obtaining either of these two commercially made coats, contact your nearest sheep equipment supplier.

Reference to or mention of a trade name, i.e. Fostercoat™ or Lamb Woolover™, or proprietary product(s) does not constitute a guarantee or warranty of the product by The Navajo Sheep Project and does not imply its approval to the exclusion of other products that may also be suitable.

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.