



# SHEEP SHEET

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## FACTORS INFLUENCING LAMB LOSSES:

1. Lambing Management
2. Genotype of Ewe and Lamb
3. Birthweight
4. Type of Birth
5. Sex of Lamb
6. Age of Ewe
7. Cross-Fostering (Grafting)

**"You are important in reducing lamb losses!"**

### Lambing Management:

1. Dystocia
2. Starvation
3. Infections
4. Mis-Mothering

### Genotype (Breed) of Ewe and Lamb:

1. Crossbred dams generally result in better mothers.
2. Some genotypes are considered low in maternal traits.
3. Variation in lamb mortality can also be due to the sire of the lamb, particularly from dystocia where large meat-type breed sires are mated to smaller ewes.

### Birthweight:

1. Birthweight of the lambs are consistently associated with lamb mortality.
2. Mortality decreases sharply as birthweight increases up to a point
3. Mortality increases for single lambs that reach heavy weights, and this is largely due to lambing difficulties.

## Factors Influencing Lamb Losses

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### Sheepdex L-10

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#### Type of Birth:

1. There is a consistent increase in mortality rate from singles to twins, etc.
2. This is partly a reflection of the smaller size lambs born as multiples, but also reflects the increasing susceptibility to starvation due to increase competition.

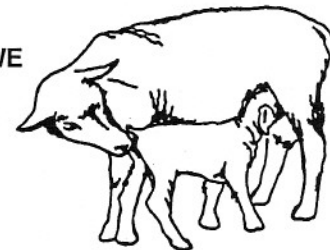
#### Sex of Lamb:

1. Ram lambs tend to show higher mortality rates than ewe lambs in spite of their slightly higher birthweight.
2. It appears that a higher incidence of dystocia may be one of the factors involved in the higher death rate of ram lambs.

#### Age of Ewe:

1. Young ewes lambing for the first time, have the highest mortality rates.
2. After first lambing differences due to age of ewe are less marked.

### THE GOOD EWE



**THE GOOD EWE.** The ewe and lamb are well oriented one to the other. This facilitates teat seeking and suckling which the ewe encourages by turning her head to nudge and lick the lamb, the

### Cross-Fostering (Grafting):

1. Various methods have been used to achieve adoption.
2. It is normally easier if attempted as near to lambing time as possible.
3. In flocks where there is a significant proportion of multiple lambs born, cross-fostering techniques are valuable.
4. Many methods have been used with varying degrees of success:
  - Slime or wet graft (maternal placental fluids)
  - Skin of dead lamb attached to lamb to be grafted (skin jacket)
  - Ewe's milk
  - Close confinement of ewe and lamb for 24 hours + (Tying up a leg of the ewe, etc.)
  - Dog harrassment
  - Stanchion
  - Foster-coat
  - Aerosol, i.e. "U-Lamb" or "Mother-Up"
  - Benzocaine spray to inactivate the ewe's sense of smell temporarily
  - Tranquilizers
  - Others, i.e. 'Pine-tar', etc.

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For more information write:

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### Additional Notes:

