by Susan Schoenian, Sheep and Goat Specialist
Western Maryland Research & Education Center, University of Maryland Extension

Two weeks before your first ewes and/or does are due to lamb/kid, you should organize your supplies and set up your facilities. While the general rule of thumb is to have one lambing pen per ten females, you may need more if your lambing and kidding is tightly spaced. A lambing pen, also called a “jug,” is an enclosure (4 x 5 ft. or 5 by 5 ft) where you put the dam and her offspring together for 1 to 3 days to encourage bonding and for close observation. Even with pasture lambing/kidding, you will want a few pens in case you have some problems.

At least 14 days ahead of time, you should bring your ewes or does to the location where they will be lambing or kidding. This will enable them to manufacture antibodies specific to the environment in which their offspring will be born. Lambing and kidding can occur in a well-bedded barn or on a clean pasture. The area should be dry and protected from drafts.

Here are some suggested supplies to have on hand prior to lambing and kidding:

- Halter
- Propylene glycol or molasses (for treating pregnancy toxemia)
- Calcium borogluconate (for treating milk fever)
- 50% dextrose
- Syringes and needles
- Bearing retainer (spoon) or prolapse harness
- Rubber gloves, protective sleeves, or latex gloves
- OB lubrication
- Nylon rope, snare, or leg puller
- OB S-curve needle
- Towels and rags
- Heat lamp or warming box
- Antibiotics
- Thermometer
- Gentle iodine (or other disinfectant)
- Frozen colostrum (ewe, doe, or cow)
- Lamb/kid feeding tube
- Lamb/kid milk replacer
- Nipples
- Scale and sling
- Ear tags
- Pocket record keeping book
LIVESTOCK FEEDSTUFFS PROGRAM

More feedstuff options are available to the livestock producer than there ever has been. It is also extremely confusing as to which one is best for your operation and how to feed them. A seminar will be held February 19, 2009 at the Poplar Bluff Chamber of Commerce beginning at 6 p.m. to discuss feed nutritional values, how to use certain feedstuffs and the benefits of by-products. Participants will also look at how to read a feed label and understand hay testing results. The program is sponsored by the Butler County University of Missouri Extension and Butler County Fair board. There is no cost to attend but pre-registration is required by calling the Butler County Extension at 573-686-8064.

SHEEP & GOAT SHEARING SCHOOL

Lincoln University will be holding their annual shearing school on March 11 at the George Washington Carver farm in Jefferson City, MO. Alex McClure of Midstates Wool Growers and Guy Frazier will be teaching and supplying shears for the beginners. Please bring shears if you have some. Helen Swartz and Alex McClure will be teaching wool grading and Alex will share how to market wool and mohair. The school begins at 9 a.m. and sheep will be provided. Breeders must furnish Angora goats. Contact Helen Swartz for more information at 573-681-5540 or e-mail swartzh@lincolnu.edu. I also have registration forms available in the office.

SEMO BULL SALE

The 64th SEMO All-Breeds Performance Tested Bull Sale will be held Friday, March 27th at 7 p.m. in the Farmington Livestock Auction. 30 + bulls will be available for sale from area producers. Catalogs will be out late February or early March. If you would like a catalog, contact me and I will mail them out as soon as I receive them.

SHOW-ME-SELECT SALE

The Southeast Missouri Show-Me-Select sale was held on Saturday, December 6th in the Fruitland Livestock Auction. 95 heifers sold for an average of $1,287. The high lot went for $1,750 for a registered Angus heifer bred AI and sold by Mike Kasten Beef Alliance. There were 87 registered buyers. Of the 26 buyers that purchased heifers 6 buyers were from out-of-state.

GOAT & SHEEP CONFERENCE

A two day sheep and goat conference will be held March 27-28 at George Washington Carver Farm in Jefferson City, MO. Topics include goat breeds, parasite control, CL, diseases, AI and embryo transfer, carcass evaluation, sheep selection, hoof care, showing sheep and goats, and nutrition. I have registration forms in the office. For more information you can contact Helen Swartz or Vonna Kesel at 573-681-5312.

PASTURE WALK

The Ripley County Extension, NRCS and Ripley County SWCD is sponsoring a pasture walk at the home of Jim Beal on April 2nd. Rotational grazing systems will be the main topic along with short presentations from Melissa Welch with NRCS about EQIP and Sam James with SWCD about state cost-share programs. More information will be available later but you may contact Ripley County Extension at 573-996-2921 to pre-register.
In many areas of the country, calves are born during times of the year when cold stress can be a leading cause of death. During the first 24 hours of life, calves are in the greatest danger of cold stress (also called hypothermia). Because calves are born wet, with a saturated hair coat, body heat loss can be very rapid until they are dry. Contact with snow or wet ground will increase the amount of time that a calf stays wet and in danger.

Calves are born with a body temperature of about 100°F. When exposed to a cold environment, calves are able to produce heat in two ways, shivering and the heat production of brown adipose tissue (brown fat that surrounds the kidneys of a new-born) and they can conserve heat by reducing blood flow to the body surface and extremities (feet, ears, etc.). In early stages of cold exposure, calves will shiver vigorously and have a faster heart rate and breathing rate. If that does not keep his body temperature up, the calf’s body sends less blood to extremities in an effort to minimize heat loss. When this occurs, nostrils and feet feel cold. Severe cold stress occurs when the body temperature drops below 94°F. At this temperature, the brain and other organs are affected and the calf becomes depressed, unable to rise, and can become unconscious.

Calves suffering from cold stress must be warmed so that body temperature can rise above 100°F. If body temperature has not dropped too far, putting the calf in the cab of a pickup out of the wind and moisture and with the heater blowing will warm the calf. In more severe cases the calves can be placed in warm water, specially designed warming boxes, or near a heating source such as an electric blanket, heat lamp, or hot water bottles. To avoid skin burns, the heat source should not exceed 108°F. In addition to an external heat source, cold-stressed calves should be fed warm colostrum, milk, or electrolyte fluid with an energy source using an esophageal feeder.

An experiment done in Canada in the late 1980s showed that immersing calves in warm (100°F) water (being careful to keep the calf’s head above water) brought body temperature back to normal within 1 hour versus 1½ hours for calves warmed with added insulation or infrared lamps. Once body temperature returns to 100°F, the calf’s hair coat should be dried before being returned outside. If using a warming box, care must be taken to circulate air, reduce humidity, and remove the animal once the body temperature reaches 100°F.

During periods of cold or wet weather, newborn calves (<24-48 hours) should be checked periodically with a thermometer and any calf with a below-normal temperature, even if it appears OK, should be warmed. Prevention of cold stress involves management to ensure that calves can be born in a short period of time and both the calf and dam can stand shortly after calving so that they can bond and the calf can begin suckling. Anything that prolongs calving or reduces the chance that a calf will nurse soon after birth should be addressed by management changes. Calving difficulties are minimized by proper heifer development, proper bull selection for calving ease or birth weight, and proper nutrition so that heifers and cows calve in a body condition score of 5 to 6 on a 9-point scale. Cows with large teats or that are not attentive mothers should be culled. In addition, work at the USDA research facility in Montana found that feeding cows a high-fat diet supplemented with safflower seed as the fat source for 45 days prior to calving resulted in calves that were able to maintain body temperature for a longer period of time during cold challenge (could better handle cold stress).

Calving pastures that provide mud-free areas that are out of the wind are important to minimize the risk of cold stress. A large pasture with good drainage, southern exposure, and a natural windbreak that will block prevailing winds is probably adequate for many herds. Inexpensive windbreaks can be constructed when natural protection is lacking. Windbreaks should be sufficiently large to avoid concentrating cattle. In areas of the country with minimal snowfall, winter pasture can be stockpiled. Cool season grasses, such as tall fescue, are permitted to grow in the fall and access to these pastures is restricted until calving season. Use of pasture as the primary forage source during calving encourages cow dispersal and minimizes development of muddy areas. If the herd forage plan includes feeding hay, consider feeding hay in early to mid-gestation and saving stockpiled pasture for the calving season. If supplemental hay and grain are fed during calving, these should be provided at locations that are separate and distant from water sources and windbreaks. This practice will encourage cow dispersal and minimize development of muddy areas. I discourage the use of bale rings in calving and nursery pastures and suggest that if using large round bales, they be unrolled and the feeding area changed with each feeding. Unrolled bales will have greater hay waste, but reduced chance for mud caused by concentrating the herd into small feeding areas, and unrolled hay provides bedding for newborn calves so that they are not in direct contact with the ground.

Planning ahead and considering newborn comfort and protection when making heifer development, bull selection, nutrition, and pasture management decisions can greatly reduce the risk of cold stressed calves if inclement weather occurs during calving. If calving occurs during cold or wet weather, producers will need to carry a thermometer to monitor calves during the first one to two days of life and will need to have facilities available to rapidly and safely warm calves.
### SOUTHEAST MISSOURI MARKET REPORTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>January 16th</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Steers</td>
<td>Heifers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-300 lbs.</td>
<td>$107-116</td>
<td>200-300 lbs.</td>
<td>$91-102</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300-400 lbs.</td>
<td>$111-124</td>
<td>300-400 lbs.</td>
<td>$85.25-100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400-500 lbs.</td>
<td>$96.50-118</td>
<td>400-500 lbs.</td>
<td>$80-96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500-600 lbs.</td>
<td>$88-102.75</td>
<td>500-600 lbs.</td>
<td>$75.50-87.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600-700 lbs.</td>
<td>$84-96.50</td>
<td>600-700 lbs</td>
<td>$75-85.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700-800 lbs.</td>
<td>$79-89</td>
<td>700-800 lbs.</td>
<td>$73-78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goats</th>
<th>Dec. 27 Oregon Co.</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
<th>Dec. 22 Fruitland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selection 1</td>
<td>40 lbs.</td>
<td>$114-118 cwt.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-60 lbs.</td>
<td>$110 cwt.</td>
<td>Fancy 51-58 lbs.</td>
<td>$125-127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-80 lbs</td>
<td>$110 cwt.</td>
<td>68-78 lbs.</td>
<td>$117-129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81 + lbs.</td>
<td>$80 cwt.</td>
<td>Fancy 73-78 lbs.</td>
<td>$132-134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection 2</td>
<td>90-99 lbs.</td>
<td>101-111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-60 lbs.</td>
<td>100 cwt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-80 lbs.</td>
<td>100 cwt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

University of Missouri, Lincoln University, Missouri Department of Agriculture, and Local Extension Councils Cooperating

Equal opportunity is and shall be provided to all participants in Extension programs and activities, and for all employees and applicants for employment on the basis of their demonstrated ability and competence without discrimination on the basis of their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability or status as a Vietnam-era veteran. This policy shall not be interpreted in such a manner as to violate the legal rights of religious organizations or military organizations associated with the armed forces of the United States of America.