

MANAGING MALES

FOR SUCCESSFUL BREEDING

BODY CONDITION

Bucks & rams should be in moderate body condition. Young males or males in poor body condition can be fed grain at 2% of body weight per day to increase body weight. Males in good condition should have limited access to concentrates and unlimited pasture access to promote muscle growth and reduce excessive fat deposition. Minerals with added selenium can be beneficial in preparation for the breeding season.



BREEDING SEASON

Breeding season should be limited for young bucks and rams. Males under 2 years old should have a 60 day breeding season. Longer breeding seasons can risk over-use, weight loss, or reduced libido. Over-use and exhaustion of young males can impair future development and breeding seasons. If multiple males are comingled breeding, they should be of similar size and age.

MALE TO FEMALE RATIO

Young bucks/rams (under 2) can breed 10 does. as males age the amount of females they service can increase (25+) without jeopardizing their health.

HEAT STRESS

Heat can cause physical stress on males, particularly during the breeding season. Heat stress could impact fertility. Provide shade and clean water.

PREVENTATIVE CARE

Ensure males receive vaccinations, foot care, parasite management and other preventative maintenance on a regular schedule.

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PHYSICAL EXAM

Breeding soundness exams (BSE) should be conducted annually. This exam will measure fertility and ability to breed. Semen quality, sperm morphology, and other characteristics can be evaluated, along with testing for reproductive diseases. Testicles should be palpated and the circumference measured. Hip soundness should be determined as rams begin to age. Ensure that any notes or measurements are recorded.

LAMB/KID MANAGEMENT

Ram lambs and bucklings can breed at an early age, with some breeds reaching puberty at just 5 months of age. Ensure that young males are pulled from the herd before puberty to prevent unwanted breeding. Adult males should not be exposed to young females who may not be of proper development to breed.



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