Sheep Production Calendar for Accelerated Lambing

Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service
SHEEP PRODUCTION CALENDAR FOR ACCELERATED LAMING

Breeding Dates: Aug. 10 to Sept. 15
Lambing Dates: Jan. 2 to Feb. 7
Weaning Dates: Mar. 2 to Mar. 15
Market Dates: May 2 to July 1

Winter

Fall
Apr. 10 to May 15
Sept. 2 to Oct. 7
Nov. 2 to Nov. 15
Jan. 2 to Mar. 1

Spring
Dec. 10 to Jan. 15
May 4 to June 9
July 4 to July 15
Sept. 14 to Nov. 1

WINTER LAMBS

JULY
1. Shear and fertility-test rams the first week, and keep in cool quarters.
2. Drench ewes and rams the first week.
3. Paint brand number on all ewes.
4. Check all feet, trim carefully.
5. Shear around docks of ewes.
6. Provide fresh water and good salt-mineral mixture.
7. Cut hay for fall-winter feeding --square bales for storage, round bales for field utilization.
8. Fertilize pastures for fall regrowth.

AUGUST
1. Flush ewes all month.
2. Give rams additional grain from August 1.
3. Turn in vasectomized teaser ram with marking harness on August 1.
4. Turn in breeding rams with marking harness on August 10.
5. Use night and day rotation of rams or use at night only.
6. Change ram marking color on August 27.
7. Keep records of breeding dates.
8. Observe ewes for repeat breeders.
9. Provide fresh water and good salt-mineral mixture.
10. Fertilize pastures for fall regrowth.

SEPTEMBER
1. Remove breeding rams on September 17.
2. Stop feeding rams additional grain.
3. Check pasture growth; give ewes hay, if needed.
4. Check condition of ewes.
5. Provide fresh water and good salt-mineral mixture.
6. Fill silo -- corn silage (if used).
7. Collect soil samples and forward for analysis.

OCTOBER
1. Check condition of ewes.
2. Check pasture growth; if short, feed legume hay.
3. Drench all sheep.
4. Provide good salt-mineral mixture.
5. Collect soil samples and forward for analysis.
6. Purchase necessary corn.

NOVEMBER
1. Start feeding hay and/or silage, if needed.
2. Start feeding 1/2 pound shelled corn per ewe about November 15.
3. Provide plenty of fresh ice-free water and good salt-mineral mixture.
4. Order lambing supplies.
5. Prepare lambing facilities and pens.
6. Purchase necessary corn.

DECEMBER

1. Trim crotch, udder and face of ewes in early December.
2. Paint brand number on all ewes.
3. Feed 4 pounds of good legume hay or equivalent per ewe per day.
4. Start feeding 3/4 to 1 pound shelled corn per ewe per day in early December.
5. Add 0.20 pounds of protein supplement per ewe daily with low quality roughage or corn silage.
6. Provide plenty of fresh, ice-free water and good salt-mineral mixture.
7. Check breeding dates for time of lambing.
8. Sort group of early-bred ewes.

JANUARY

1. Provide dry, draft-free, well-bedded lambing pens.
2. Help the lamb get its first meal.
3. Dip or spray navels of newborn lambs with iodine.
4. Ear tag all lambs at birth.
5. Trim and treat feet of all ewes when taking from lambing pen.
6. Feed ewes with single lambs 4 to 6 pounds good quality hay or equivalent and 1 to 1 1/2 pounds shelled corn daily.
7. Feed ewes with twin lambs 4 to 6 pounds good quality hay or equivalent and 1 1/2 to 2 pounds shelled corn daily.
8. Dock and castrate lambs at 7 to 10 days of age.
9. Start lambs on creep feeder at 10 days of age. Consider vaccinating for enterotoxemia.
10. Group ewes and lambs by lambing date or by multiple or single births.

11. Provide good salt-mineral mixture and fresh, ice-free water.
12. Complete birth date on form ISPTP-1.
13. Weather permitting, make spring application of fertilizer to pasture and hay fields.

FEBRUARY

1. Identify all non-lactating ewes.
2. If non-lactating ewes are saved, feed only hay.
3. Continue creep-feeding lambs.
4. Continue feeding hay and grain to lactating ewes.
5. Provide fresh, ice-free water and good salt-mineral mixture.
6. Make spring application of fertilizer to pastures and hay fields.
7. In early February, frost seed legumes in lactation pastures.

MARCH

1. Continue creep-feeding lambs.
2. Vaccinate all lambs for enterotoxemia before weaning.
3. Eliminate grain from ewes for 2 days and water for 1 day prior to weaning.
4. Restrict feed and water for 2 days after weaning to reduce milk flow.
5. Wean all lambs by March 15.
6. Finish lambs, preferably in drylot or on clean pasture separate from ewes.
7. Cull non-producing ewes.
8. Shear ewes, check, trim and treat feet and identify poor wool producers.
9. Drench all sheep.
10. Number ewes with paint brands.
11. Turn in vasectomized teaser ram with marking harness on March 25.
12. Weigh and complete form ISPTP-1 90-Day Record, for lambs between 80-100 days of age.
13. Provide fresh, ice-free water and good salt-mineral mixture.
14. If not applied, make spring fertilizer
application to pastures and hay fields.

15. Lightly disk or harrow grass sod, and apply legume seeds to the lactation pastures.

APRIL

1. Flush ewes by turning onto good early wheat pasture if available; otherwise feed 1/4 pound of shelled corn per ewe daily during breeding season.

2. Turn in breeding rams with marking harness on April 10, and remove the teaser ram.

3. Self-feed lambs on corn, hay and protein supplement, if needed, or on complete lamb finishing pellet.

4. Weigh and complete form ISPTP-1, 90-Day Record, for all lambs between 80 and 100 days of age. Forward for summarization.

5. Lambs weighing over 60 pounds should not go to pasture.

6. Identify replacement ewes and rams, and sale ewes and rams, on basis of 90-day adjusted weight record to be evaluated by 210-day weight record later.

7. Provide good salt-mineral mixture and fresh water.

8. If not applied, make spring fertilizer application to pastures and hay fields.

MAY

1. Continue to self-feed lambs in dry-lot or pasture.

2. Remove breeding rams on May 15.

3. Drench and dip all sheep.

4. Rotate ewes to clean pasture.

5. Consider purchasing yearling replacement ewes.

6. Locate breeding rams -- select on basis of 90-day or 210-day weight record.

7. Provide fresh water and good salt-mineral mixture.

8. Cut quality hay for fall-winter sheep and lamb feeding.

9. Give light application of fertilizer to fields following cutting.

JUNE

1. Continue to self-feed lambs.

2. Market all lambs weighing 90 pounds or above by July 1.

3. Purchase replacement ewes.


5. Cut hay for fall-winter feed -- square bales for storage, round bales for field utilization.

6. Make light application of fertilizer following cutting.

FALL LAMBS

JULY

1. Drench all ewes, rams and remaining lambs.

2. Start feeding 1/4 pound of shelled corn per ewe daily on July 15.

3. Provide adequate shade for pregnant ewes.

4. Provide fresh water and good salt-mineral mixture.

5. Rotate pastures as needed.

6. Round bale pasture and hay field regrowth for fall pasture.

7. Fertilize pastures and hay fields for fall regrowth.

AUGUST

1. Increase shelled corn to 3/4 to 1 pound per ewe daily, as needed.

2. Rotate pastures as needed; provide adequate shade.

3. Trim crotch and udder of all ewes, as needed.

4. Weigh and complete form ISPTP-1 at 210 days for January-born lambs between
200 and 220 days of age. Forward for summarization.

5. Provide fresh water and good salt-mineral mixture.
6. Order lambing supplies.
7. Prepare lambing pastures and/or sheds.
8. Round bale regrowth for late fall pasture.

SEPTEMBER

1. Observe ewes at lambing; give assistance as needed.
2. Dip or spray navels of newborn lambs with iodine.
3. Ear tag all lambs at birth.
4. Trim and treat feet of ewes, and move ewes and lambs to lactation pasture when lambs are 7 to 10 days old.
5. Group ewes and lambs by lambing date, or by single and multiple births.
6. Dock and castrate all lambs at 7 to 10 days of age.
7. Start lambs on creep feeder at 10 days of age. Consider vaccinating for enterotoxemia.
8. Feed ewes according to forage availability.
9. Ewes with single lambs need 1 to 1 1/2 pounds of shelled corn daily.
10. Ewes with twin lambs need 1 1/2 to 2 pounds of shelled corn daily.
11. Provide fresh water and good salt-mineral mixture.
12. Complete birth data on form ISPTP-1.

OCTOBER

1. Continue creep-feeding lambs.
2. Cull non-producing ewes.
3. Vaccinate all lambs for enterotoxemia before weaning.
4. Provide good, clean fall pasture for ewes and lambs -- wheat, bluegrass or fescue.
5. Feed good quality hay or silage, if needed to supplement pasture.
6. Provide fresh, ice-free water and a good salt-mineral mixture.
7. Purchase corn or forage, if needed.
8. Collect soil samples and forward for analysis.

NOVEMBER

1. Continue creep feeding lambs.
2. Wean all lambs by November 15 and finish in drylot.
3. Eliminate grain from ewes for 2 days and water for 1 day prior to weaning.
4. Restrict feed and water to ewes following weaning to reduce milk flow.
5. Drench all ewes and lambs.
6. Number ewes with paint brands.
7. Turn in vasectomyed teaser ram with marking harness on November 25.
8. Provide fresh, ice-free water and salt-mineral mixture.
9. Feed ewes 3 to 4 pounds of good quality hay or equivalent or pasture round bales, if available.
10. Weigh and complete form ISPTP-1, 90-Day Record, for lambs between 80 and 100 days of age.

DECEMBER

1. Self-feed fall lambs on corn, hay and protein supplement, if needed, or on complete finishing pellet.
2. Flush ewes with 1/2 to 3/4 pounds of shelled corn daily through breeding season.
3. Turn in breeding rams with marking harness on December 10, and remove teaser ram.
4. Feed ewes 3 to 4 pounds of good quality hay or equivalent or pasture round bales, if available.
5. Provide fresh, ice-free water and salt-mineral mixture.
6. Weigh and complete form ISPTP-1, 90-Day Record, for all lambs, and forward for summarization.
7. Identify replacement ewes and rams and sale lambs on basis of 90-day adjusted weight record to be evaluated by 210-day record later.
JANUARY
1. Continue self-feeding fall lambs.
2. Remove breeding rams on January 15.
3. Market lambs of 100 pounds or more.
4. Feed ewes 4 to 6 pounds of good quality hay or equivalent or pasture round bales, if available.
5. Provide shelter for ewes as needed.
6. Provide fresh ice-free water and salt-mineral mixture.
7. Frost seed legumes in lactation pastures.
8. Apply spring fertilizer to pastures and hay fields.

FEBRUARY
1. Continue to self-feed fall lambs.
2. Market all lambs by March 1.
3. Feed ewes 4 to 6 pounds of good quality hay or equivalent or pasture round bales, if available.
4. Provide shelter for ewes as needed.
5. Provide fresh, ice-free water and salt-mineral mixture.
6. Frost seed legumes in lactation pastures.
7. Apply spring fertilizer to pastures and hay fields.

SPRING LAMBS

MARCH
1. Continue to feed ewes on good quality forages.
2. Provide shelter for ewes as needed.
3. Provide fresh, ice-free water and salt-mineral mixture.
4. Seed and fertilize pastures.
5. Repair equipment and fences.
6. Drench all ewes and rams.
7. Order lambing supplies.

APRIL
1. Turn ewes onto a new pasture of fescue or wheat, if available, or continue hay, if necessary.
2. Feed 3/4 to 1 pound of shelled corn per ewe daily.
3. Provide water and salt-mineral mixture.
4. Shear all ewes as weather moderates; trim feet.
5. Weigh and complete form ISPTP-1 at 210 days for September-born lambs between 200 and 220 days of age. Forward for summarization.
6. Purchase or select replacement ewes as needed.
7. Prepare lambing pasture and/or shelter area.
8. Number all ewes with paint brands.
9. Check breeding dates for time of lambing.
10. Sort off group of early-bred ewes.
11. Seed and fertilize pastures as needed.

MAY
1. Help lamb get its first meal.
2. Dip or spray navels of newborn lambs with iodine.
3. Ear tag all lambs at birth.
4. Group ewes and lambs by lambing date, or single and multiple births.
5. Dock and castrate lambs at 7 to 10 days of age.
6. Start lambs on creep feeder at 10 days of age. Consider vaccinating for enterotoxemia.
7. Feed ewes with single lambs 1 to 1 1/2 pounds of shelled corn daily.
8. Feed ewes with twins 1 1/2 to 2 pounds of shelled corn daily.
9. Remove all open and non-lactating ewes and place on separate pasture with no grain.
10. Provide fresh water and salt-mineral mixture.
11. Cull non-producing ewes.
12. Harvest excess forages from pasture; clip uneaten pasture aftermath.
13. Rotate pastures as needed.
14. Cut quality hay for fall and winter feeding.
15. Locate replacement stud rams -- select on basis of 90-day or 210-day weight records.

JUNE

1. Continue creep feeding of lambs.
2. Discontinue all feed to ewes except pastures.
3. Provide fresh water and salt-mineral mixture.
4. Provide shelter for ewes and lambs on pasture.
5. Purchase replacement performance-tested stud rams.
6. Weigh and complete form ISPTP-1, 90-Day Records for all lambs between 80 and 100 days of age.
7. Cut quality hay for fall-winter feeding.
8. Fertilize pastures and hay fields following grazing or harvesting.

JULY

1. Continue creep feeding of spring lambs.
2. Wean all lambs by July 15 and put in drylot.
3. Reduce feed to ewes at weaning time.
4. Weigh and complete form ISPTP-1, 90-Day Records, for all lambs, and forward for summarization.
5. Market all lambs weighing 90 pounds and above.
6. Drench all rams, ewes and lambs not marketed.
7. Trim feet of all ewes, shear around dock and paint brand.
8. Provide shade for ewes on pasture.
9. Provide fresh water and salt-mineral mixture.
10. Harvest hay for fall-winter feeding.
11. Rotate pastures for ewes.
12. Apply fertilizer to pastures for fall regrowth.
13. Shear and fertility-test rams, and keep in cool quarters.

AUGUST AND SUBSEQUENT MONTHS

1. Follow same procedure as previously listed for the production of winter lambs.
2. In December, weigh and complete form ISPTP-1 at 210-days for May-born lambs between 200 and 220 days of age. Forward for summarization.
3. Two flocks can be alternated in the accelerated lambing program to produce a lamb crop every 4 months. This will make better use of rams, facilities and labor and will produce a more even flow of lambs to market and a better distribution of income from the sheep enterprise.