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California Ewe Mastisis and Lamb Survivability Survey

Rose Digianantonio, DVM, MPH, Livestock Reproduction and Herd Health Resident, UC Davis,

Rosie Busch, DVM, Sheep and Goat Extension Veterinarian, UC Davis

Overview

- Mastitis impacts productivity and profitability of your flock.
- Mastitis can be caused by injuries, viruses, or bacteria.
- Some mastitis is obvious and causes pain and redness of the udder. Others only cause a decrease in milk production.
- Help us improve our knowledge of mastitis in ewes and common production practices in California by taking this anonymous <u>survey</u>

Has the lambing season left you sick of grafting orphaned lambs and/or dealing with bottle babies? It may be necessary to improve ewe udder health on your farm.

To highlight areas for future research, Dr. Rosie Busch, Sheep and Goat Extension Veterinarian at UC Davis, and her research lab in collaboration with UCCE Livestock Advisors have developed a survey for sheep producers about management of ewes and care of mastitis. If you own or manage breeding ewes and are willing to participate, please scan the QR code below or <u>click here</u> and complete the survey. This survey will take less than 10 minutes and can help us improve ewe and lamb health in California!

What is Mastitis and why do we want to prevent it?

In pasture-raised sheep operations, the highest percentage of lamb losses occur within the first 72 hours of birth. This directly impacts productivity and profitability of the flock. Udder pain is one of the main reasons for ewes to reject lambs. In range or pasture rearing systems, rejection of the lamb by the ewe can create orphan lambs or lead to lamb starvation if noticed too late. Mastitis (inflammation of the mammary gland aka udder) in ewes is a significant cause of lamb morbidity, but research is lacking in prevention and control of the disease. In the most recent Sheep NAHMS Survey, producers across the United States noted mastitis as one of the top reasons for culling ewes and for antibiotic use in breeding animals. Mastitis can be caused from trauma to the udder as well as different types of viral (OPP) and bacterial (Staph, E.coli, Mannheimia) infections that can be passed from animal to animal or from the environment to the animal. The risk for mastitis can vary due to the ewe's nutritional status, housing conditions, number of lambs, and other management practices.

Mastitis can be classified as clinical or sub-clinical. Clinical cases of mastitis have visual signs of milk or udder abnormalities (see photo). Ewes with clinical mastitis will typically not allow lambs to nurse due to udder pain, leading to increased lamb morbidity. Ewes may become sick from their mastitis, or have scarring in the mammary gland that prevent them from being able to produce milk for their current lambs or future lamb crop. Thus, it is very important to monitor and control for signs of clinical mastitis.





An ewe that can't raise a twin lamb and has asymetrical udder and wool break should should be checked for mastitis.

Sub-clinical mastitis indicates that there are no visual abnormalities of the milk or udder, but the ewe may have a drop in milk production. Sub-clinical mastitis is diagnosed by testing for increased numbers of inflammatory cells in the milk (i.e. California Mastitis Test, see photo). Sub-clinical mastitis can become clinical. "Hard bag," which is typically related to mastitis caused by the Ovine Progressive Pneumonia (OPP) virus, is a chronic infection leading to the udder feeling firm and having little to no milk production.

All of these forms of mastitis lead to production losses on the farm. Mastitis prevention and control may limit lamb production losses, the number of bottle lambs, and improve lifetime productivity of your ewes. Help us improve our knowledge in this area by taking our survey.

Please contact your County Livestock Advisor with any questions





Develop a Biosecurity Plan

Farm Animal Risk Mitigation Prepare Prevent Evaluate Project

The University of California Agriculture and Natural

Resources Cooperative Extension is inviting you to

build an on-farm biosecurity plan for your operation!

Why? Be Proactive and protect your flock

Who? Small-scale, backyard, diversified and/or multi-species farms

When? June 20th- July 29th 2022

How? Two visits on-farm with a student and a UC Davis Faculty member/ Extension specialist

If you are interested please contact Alda Pires at apires@ucdavis.edu

For more information on biosecurity, visit the <u>FARM PPE website</u> https://farmppe.netlify.app/





University of **California** Agriculture and Natural Resources

Backyard Poultry Biosecurity

Theresa Valdez, Creative Director, University of California, Davis *Myrna Cadena, PhD student, Social Media Manager,* University of California, Davis

If you're a backyard poultry owner you have probaby already heard about the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreak in the last season. While it's slowing down in the warmer months, this is an *eggcelent* opportunity to brush up on your biosecurity practices for your flock, whether its a couple hens or generations of birds. If you're social-media savvy, The UCD Pitesky Lab Instagram and Facebook (@ucdpiteskylab) accounts have you covered for Avian Influenza updates, great graphics for easy reference, and an inside look into the lives of our researchers and students! Here are just a few of the kind of posts you can *eggspect* from our social media manager!



Word Wheel Puzzle

How many words can you make?

Rules:

Include the central letter in every word!







www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/vetext/

School of Veterinary Medicine University of California One Shields Avenue Davis CA 95616

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Maurice Pitesky, editor in chief

For questions or comments, please contact Maurice Pitesky at 530-752-3215 or mepitesky@ucdavis.edu