

Recording

Roughly guessing the number of ewes and lambs lost in a season will generally lead to an underestimation. Accurately recording any ewe and lamb losses allows us to get a good picture for what is going on, and to better focus on what needs to be improved.

Simple recording sheets, like the ones enclosed, will aid you in working out the percentage of ewes and lambs lost. With this you can compare to previous years figures and against flock targets. Overall losses should be between 5-10%.

With ewe losses, if you include the ewes found barren at scanning you can then work out Barren rates. The aim is for less than 2% of the ewes to be barren. High Barren rates can be investigated by assessing ram fertility, tupping management and addressing any underlying health issues in the ewes (trace elements, infectious causes, etc). High ewe losses pre lambing could indicate nutritional issues, veterinary involvement can help investigate and put measures in place to prevent such losses going forward.

Recording the number and reasons for lamb losses can help identify simple and cost effective management changes. For example, as mentioned earlier, hygiene and colostrum management will aid in preventing navel ill, joint ill and watery mouth.



Abortions should also be recorded as lamb losses, the aim is to have an abortion rate of less than 2%. Without accurate recording it would be very

easy to be well above this target and not perceive there to be a problem. If your rate is over 2% veterinary investigation at that time can help to reduce further abortions later in the season and a plan can be put in place for preventing future problems.

Recording takes discipline and practice, it can be very difficult to maintain accurate records in situations when you're shattered and lambs are flying at you from all directions. However, if this can be achieved and continued, recording can enable improvements to be made year on year.

Here's to a successful, and well recorded, lambing season!

Will



(2018 Tetbury Woolsack Men's Team Champions)

Beef and Sheep medicine course

16th April 2019 (with New improved Practical element).

Meet at the practice for a discussion over lunch followed by a visit to Hyams Farm.

£50 per person or £75 for 2 people from the same farm.

Book early to avoid disappointment



RED TRACTOR COMPLIANT