



2026 Sheep Update

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Topics

- 2024 NAHMS Study Results
- Scrapie Report
- Identification
- Management & Health Tips



2024 NAHMS Study



- USDA's National Animal Health Monitoring System
- Conducted once every 10 yr
- Results from this study will help veterinarians and producers with new treatments, controls, and preventive actions for the future
- Questionnaires and samples including interdigital swabs, blood, and fecal samples were taken
- Gastrointestinal parasites (and resistance levels), enteric microbes, lameness pathogens
- Results.....

2024 NAHMS Study RESULTS

- Questionnaire -
- Due to government layoffs...not all results have been completed
- 2,431 farms completed the questionnaire
- Wool production was frequently reported as the primary production type for medium and large operations.
- 25% of the operations expected to have fewer or no sheep in the next five years - retirement or lack of a successor (17% in 2011)
- 25% of the farms plan to grow their flocks in the next five years

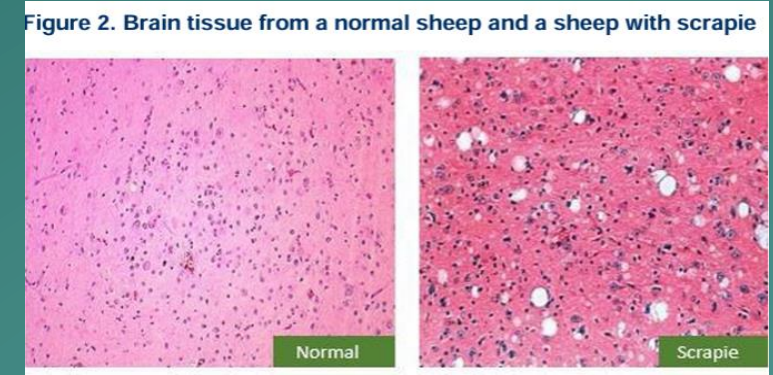
2024 NAHMS Study RESULTS

- Direct sales to consumers or ethnic markets are growing, up from 17% to 24% in 2024
- Over half of all operations kept handwritten notes, 13% used electronic record-keeping systems and 28% did not maintain any records
- Most common diseases reported - sore mouth, foot rot, enterotoxemia and coccidiosis

2024 NAHMS Study RESULTS

- Biological Sampling – not all completed
- Campylobacter - 57% of the operations have at least one positive result for and about 14% of the sampled sheep were positive
- Salmonella – Very low positive rate
- Clostridium perfringens – Very high positive rate
- Lameness pathogens – 75% of operations tested positive
- Parasites - average fecal egg count 535 eggs per gram
 - 50% had less than 200 epg
 - 5% had fecal egg count of greater than 2,500 epg
 - 30% of operations tested positive for liver flukes (Pacific Northwest)

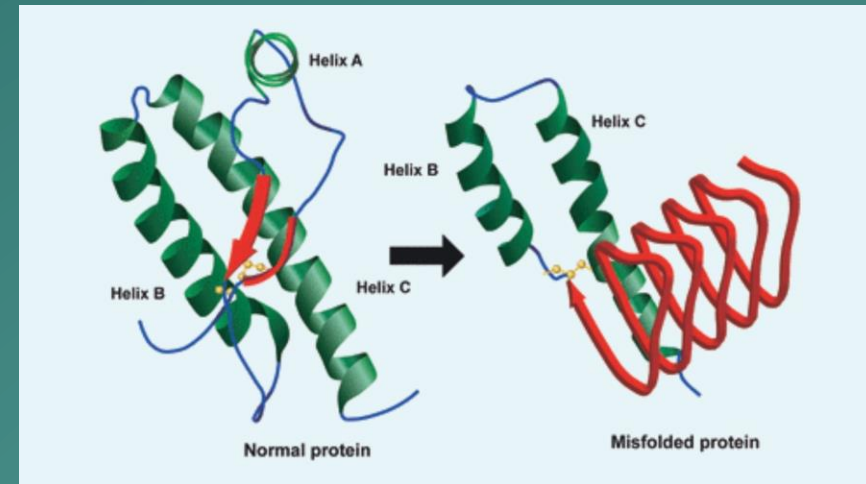
Scrapie

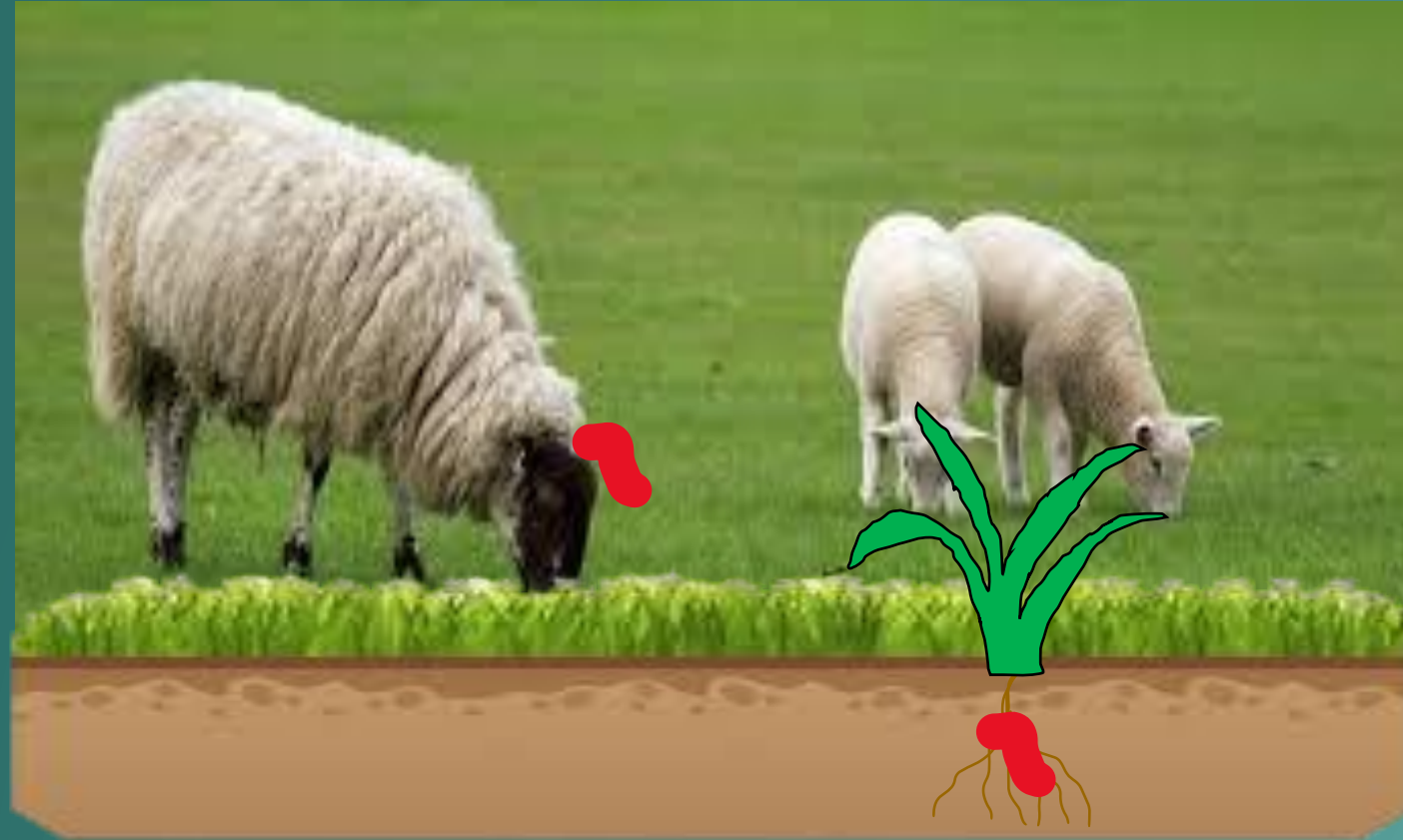


- A fatal, degenerative disease affecting the central nervous system of sheep and goats.
 - Ataxia, Behavior changes, Wt. loss, Star gazing, Intense rubbing
- Classified as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE)
 - BSE - “Mad cow” disease, and CWD – chronic wasting disease in cervids
- Genetic resistance
 - Sheep codon 171: RR/QR/QQ
 - Goats codon 222: KK/QK/QQ
- Surveillance, and depopulation are the primary means of controlling this disease.

Prion Disease

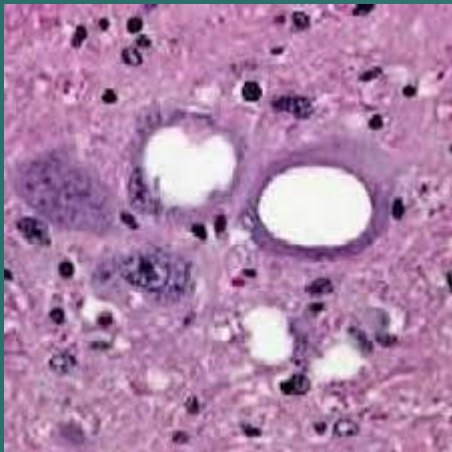
- Virus, Bacteria, Parasites, Fungal, AND Prions
- Not fully understood
- Causes misfolding of normal proteins in the brain
- No prevention or treatment
- Shed in all secretions
- Not alive – so very hard to inactivate!





Virginia (All State) Producers

- We need Whole heads from sheep and goats
 - Over 18 months
 - Slaughtered, die, or euthanized
 - Especially if the Sheep/Goat was exhibiting neurological symptoms
 - Your veterinarian or VDACS can collect
 - Scrapie Tag needs to be submitted with the animal



Why is all this important?

- For the US to be deemed FREE of Scrapie
 - Must go 7 years without a positive classical scrapie case (2028)
- Only Australia and New Zealand are considered Free of Scrapie
- Would open new Sheep and Goat Trade
 - Est. loss of \$10-20 million



Free Scrapie Tags for New Producers

- 1-866-USDA-TAG
- VA producers → 804-343-2569





Both plastic and metal tags are acceptable identification.



New style (Shearwell) plastic tags from USDA

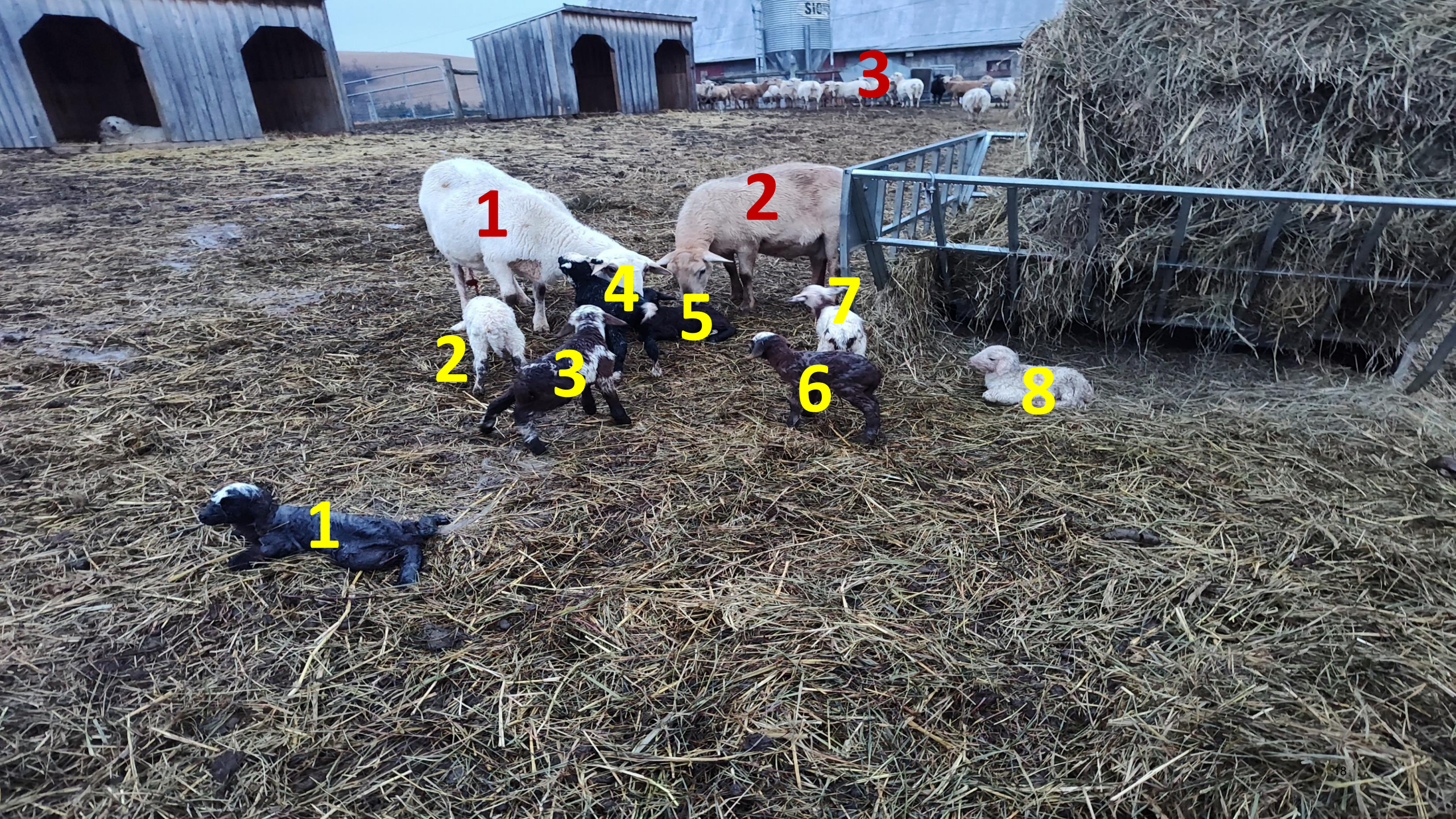
Who Needs Tagged?

- Any Sheep or Goat that leaves your farm!
 - Livestock market
 - Shows
 - Even if you sell an animal to your neighbor!
- The only time they don't need a tag is:
 - Staying at home (however it's good for your own records)
 - Lambs under 18m going directly to slaughter facility



Quick Health Tips And Tricks





1

2

3

2

4

5

7

3

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8

1

To Recognize Abnormal → Know NORMAL

- Temp: 102.2-104.9 °F
 - Rectal temp, human thermometer will work
- Pulse: 60-90 BPM
 - Inside of the thigh
- Resp: 12-20 BPM
 - Watch chest, or place hand in front of nose
- Hydration status:
 - Skin tent
 - Gap between eyeball and eyelid
- Anemia level: FAMACHA Score



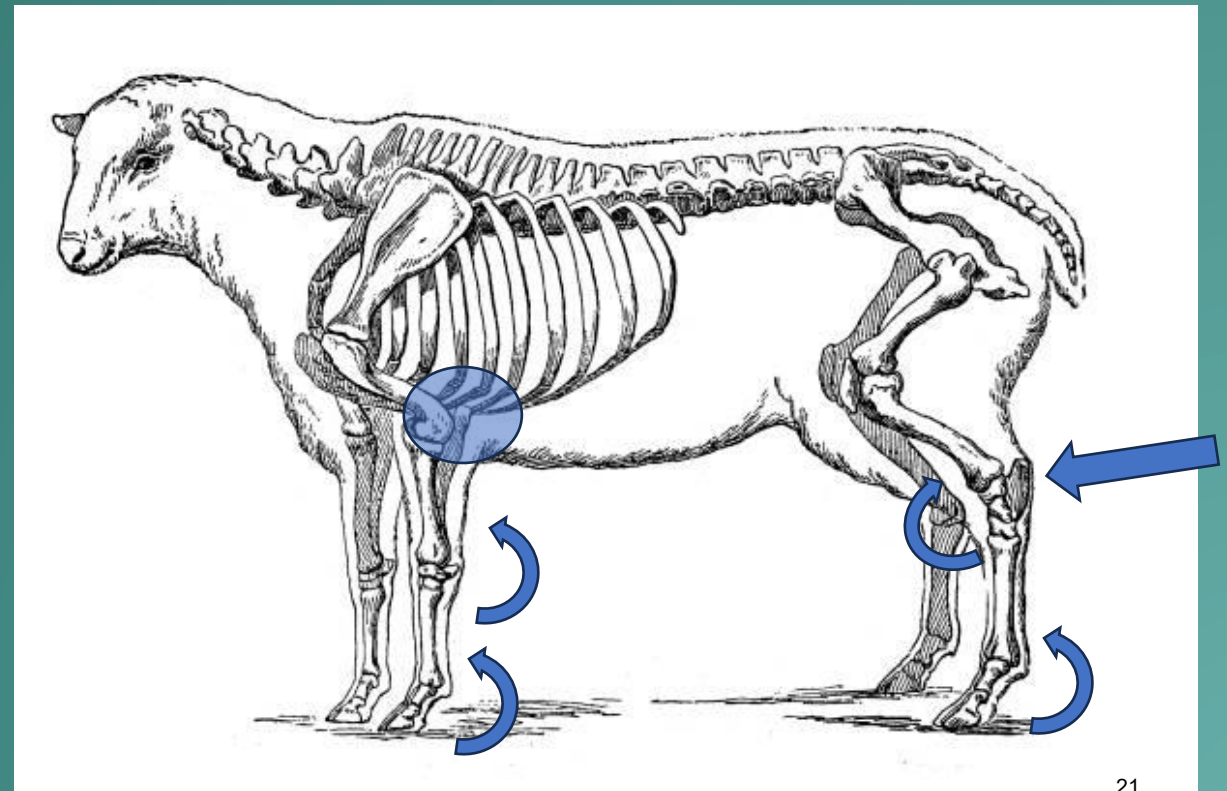
Lambing

- 50% of the lambs that are lost....die w/in the first 48 hrs!!
 - Another 10% die from 2d – 2 weeks.
- Causes of Lamb Death
 - Dystocia
 - Starvation
 - Hypothermia
 - Predators & Disease (Resp and Scours)



Front Limb VS Hind Limb

- Front limbs → Joints flex in same direction
- Hind limbs → Joints flex in opposite directions



Tubing

- LOOK, FEEL & SUCK
- > 99 °F
- Gravity Flow



1: Measure tube from mouth to point of elbow and mark

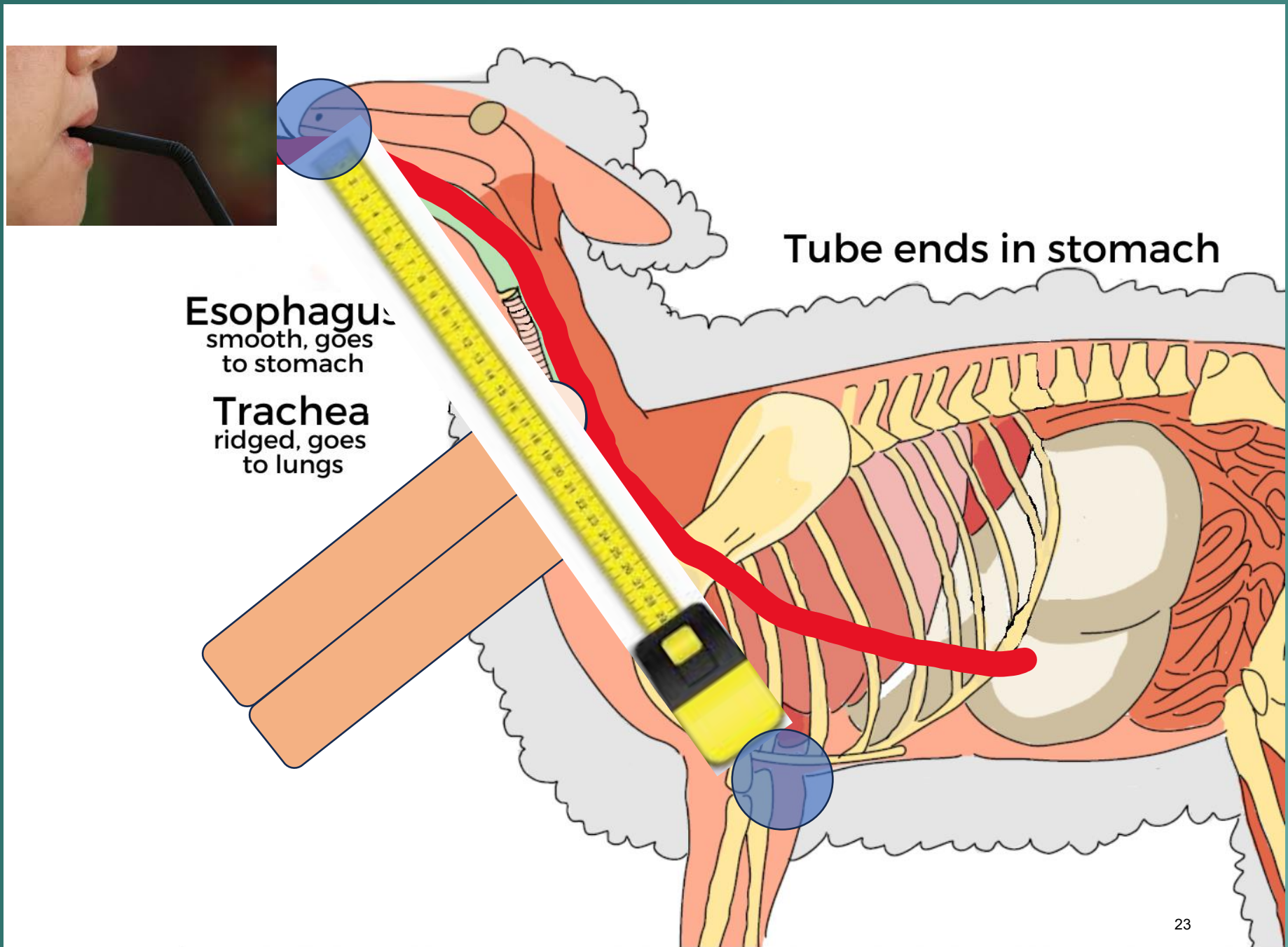
2: Start tube over tongue

3: Advance tube to middle of neck, watching for the tube just under the skin, usually on the LEFT side

4: Feel for the end of the tube just under the skin. May need to move tube back and forth. Should be 2 tubes, Feeder and Trachea

5: Suck on the end of the tube. If correct placement – will not be able to suck air

6: Advance tube to your marked length



Survive!

- Works great!
- High Fat supplement
 - AD&E



Got Water?? And power....

- Then you can have HOT water!!
- \$25.00



Prolapses



Mastitis

- Sub-Clinical
- Post-weaning
- May not see any clinical signs
- Next lambing → no milk
- Scar tissue invades healthy milk producing cells
- Palpate udder after dry off period from weaning
 - Prior to Breeding
 - Lumps / Hard bag – one or both sides
 - Cull



Jug Bedding → Shavings VS Straw

- Absorption
 - Straw at 2.1, Pine shavings at 2.0 #'s of water per pound of bedding
- Insulating capacity
 - Straw - Hollow center
- Bacteria
 - Shavings stick to skin – can lead to ↑ bacteria (udder & navel cord)
- Cleanability
 - Straw ✓



Lime

- Use Barn lime after stripping lambing jug
- Antibacterial
 - Shifts pH
 - Absorbent
- ↓ ammonia smell



Coccidia & CDT



- Provide growing lambs access to coccidiostat
 - Lasalocid (Bovatec®)
 - Decoquinate (Deccox®) – safer for equine LGA
 - Feed or Mineral
 - Treatment – Not a typical parasite
- Don't forget to give lambs CDT
 - 6-8 WK old
 - Booster 4 weeks later



Questions

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