

EWES PRE-LAMBING PROFILE

The profile includes albumin, urea and betahydroxybutyrate (BHB) and is intended for monitoring energy and protein status in healthy groups of ewes in the period before lambing.

The profile is available where 6 or more ewes are sampled at a cost of £5.50 per sample. Veterinary interpretation will be included on all reports with further advice available by telephone.

The profile will most usefully be employed around 4 weeks before lambing when there is still time to make changes to the feeding regime based on laboratory results. It may be useful before this time, at 6 to 8 weeks pre-lambing, for example in groups of triplet bearing ewes or flocks that have had issues with pregnancy toxæmia, poor milk production and increased perinatal lamb mortality in previous years. In this case, even if all values are normal, it may be advisable to repeat closer to lambing dates to monitor progress.

Sampling of 6 twin bearing ewes and 6 triplet bearing ewes will give a good indication of adequacy of the ration fed. Serum samples should be taken either before concentrate feeding or 4 hours after to avoid short term elevations in urea that could be misleading. Information on scanning data, expected lambing date, body condition score and current feeding regime (forage and quantity of concentrates fed) will help with interpretation of results and allow better advice to be provided. It is generally not worthwhile sampling single bearing ewes.

If there are 'problem' ewes, whether they are thin, lame or sick in any other way, these should not be included as the profile is a tool for monitoring the flock situation. It is nevertheless worthwhile collecting serum and heparinised blood samples from such ewes as they may warrant other laboratory investigation to determine the cause of ill health.

Please contact us for any additional advice on groups and numbers to test on an individual flock basis and how best to investigate barren ewes / thin ewes / problem ewes.



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