

## A Shepherd's Calendar

### January:

I make a few notes on my personal calendar for the year ahead with reminders (either in print or on my phone/tablet) so I'm reminded in advance of things I might need to do or get organized for our sheep so I'm not caught without wormer, appropriate medicines, a shearing date, etc.

### February:

Prepare for lambing, get your jugs set up, supplies around, etc.  
I set out Sweetlix protein tubs as the sheep get close to lambing; with the lambs taking up so much room sometimes it is difficult for them to get all the energy they need.

### March:

#### Spring Shearing!

Give CDT to ewes at least 3 weeks prior to your first lambing date

Give Bo-Se shots if you are concerned about your ewes being Selenium deficient 2 weeks prior to lambing unless you have been using another form of Selenium Supplementation.

Watch ewes who typically triplet or have very large twins carefully; especially if they are older or in poor body condition. They can have a tough time getting the calories they need to keep their bodies in good condition. We have seen pregnancy toxemia at times.

Keep watch for lambs depending on when you kept your ram with your ewes! I begin lamb watch 140 days after the ram was put in with the ewes.

### April:

Lambing!!!

### May:

Once the lambs are starting to snack on hay we set out grain and high quality alfalfa hay mix in a creep feeder to help make sure they are getting all the protein they need since we don't have extensive pasture.

We also treat with a coccidiostat in the water to prevent coccidia issues or make sure the lamb grain has a coccidiostat mixed in.

We use Valbazen as the wormer or choice for tape worms and use this once as their first wormer.

Make sure you listen for any coughing and treat immediately for anything more than a "hay cough"; with the warmer weather and cooler evenings, the warm to cold can help pneumonia set in easily.

June:

Our lambs get their first round of CDT vaccinations between 6-8 weeks of age and then a booster of CDT 2 weeks later.

While you are reviewing lambs on a regular basis for FAMACHA eye checks make sure you are evaluating to see who is worthy of a breeding home; who is staying in the flock; and who is headed to freezer camp.

July:

Schedule your butcher date, not all lambs are destined to be pets and or breeding stock! Take a hard look at your lambs and decide who is not going to make the cut. Butcher dates typically fill up fast and you want to get your freezer camp lambs out of the barn before you break up breeding groups or have ewes cycling. We typically target the first week in October.

Schedule your fall shearing date. These are typically not as hard to get because most other breeds of sheep are not shorn in Fall, however your shearer might not be as available in the fall so if you haven't already, get it scheduled!

Worm regularly or check FAMACHA scores weekly!!! Sheep can spiral down quickly with the rise in temperatures, especially stressed ewes and lambs.

If you worm on a schedule in the summer or have a vacation, then worm all sheep prior to the extreme heat or being absent. It is so much easier to prevent problems than to try and react to them.

August:

Worm regularly or check FAMACHA scores weekly!!! Sheep can spiral down quickly in this heat, especially ewes who may be wore down from a summer of nursing lambs.

Give extra support and protein with grain, alfalfa, Sweetlix protein tubs, protein blocks, or a combination of these.

Treat lambs as necessary for coccidia and tape worm (most commonly seen as poopy butts).

Tag and tattoo the lambs who are sold to breeding homes or those you are planning to keep on cool evenings.

Start planning your Fall breeding groups and decide who will be bred to who.

September:

Flush your ewes with grain and/or alfalfa hay to help them get their body condition back if they are lean from nursing lambs. You can separate out your leanest ewes and your ewe lambs to supplement them the most.

Make the final cut - evaluate all lambs again and make the tough call on who is going to freezer camp and who is staying in the flock.

October:

Take lots of photos of your beautiful sheep in full fleece and all those gorgeous lambs prior to shearing.

Work on halter training lambs in the cool evenings if it is important to you to have halter broke sheep.

Now that things are calming down, get your sheep registered with the CLRC.

November:

Pick your fleeces and get them sent for processing!

Start the winter with your poorest quality hay and work up to your best quality hay as the ewes get close to lambing.

December:

If you are like me, keep picking fleeces.

Pick more fleeces.

Enjoy watching your sheep explore the snow.

This website is for information purposes only and should not replace the advice of your veterinarian.