



HEALTH CONCERNS DURING SHOW SEASON

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This is the time of year when youth and families are getting ready for the show season. Remember that when you attend a show you are exposing your sheep to hundreds of farms and the diseases that exist on those farms. The three most contagious and serious are soremouth, footrot and club lamb fungus. Since all three may have up to a two week incubation period, there will be sheep at shows that, although inspected by a veterinarian, are infected and at the time show no clinical signs. Therefore, it is in your best interest to isolate show animals when they return from a show for a 30-day period to protect the rest of your flock. Lambs should be vaccinated for soremouth well in advance of shows. Footrot prevention includes dipping feet or running sheep through a foot bath upon return from a show. We recommend a 1:19 dilution of formaldehyde or 4 lbs. of zinc sulfate to 5 gallons of water. Some clients of ours have had success using BioSentry S-3 antifungal shampoo as a prophylactic rinse against club lamb fungus.

There are a few other "show lamb diseases". Rectal prolapse should be no surprise if lambs are docked extremely short and spend most of their day on their rear legs. Short docking removes some of the innervation of the rectum and elevating feed pans or hay feeders will cause all of the weight of the internal organs to be placed on rectal muscles. Sheep are designed to have four legs on the ground. Be very careful of looking to feed additives to give your lamb that extra boost. Most are not formulated for sheep and may contain toxic levels of copper. I realize that many people thrive on the competition of youth shows but remember to consider what we are teaching our youth. Too many people learned a hard lesson with clenbuterol. Good luck in the show season.