



## Abortions in Sheep

Early pregnancy loss may only be detected as barren sheep. Foetal loss in later pregnancy will have different appearances and related clinical signs depending on cause. The key approach to abortion is to prevent spread.

### Standard Procedure for Aborted Sheep

1. Isolate and mark ewe
2. Strict biosecurity procedures should be followed.
3. Collect samples of the foetus/lamb and the afterbirth. Arrange examination/testing with us.
4. Dispose of bedding and other infected materials carefully.
5. Reduce stocking rate to reduce the risk of infection.
6. Once the cause has been identified, consult with us for the best treatment and control methods.
7. Vaccinate flock if appropriate.

Disease	Cause	Abortion	Signs & Transmission	Post-abortion
Enzootic Abortion	<i>Chlamydophila abortus</i>	Lambs lost in last 2-3 weeks of gestation or premature and weakly live lambs born. Lambs infected during pregnancy are likely to abort the next year.	No illness. Transmission is from sheep to sheep. It is transmitted through pasture or bedding contamination by aborted or infected lambs.	Isolate ewe. Don't mix with ewes that have already lambed. Vaccinate
Toxoplasmosis	<i>Toxoplasma gondii</i>	<b>Early pregnancy:</b> embryo dies and is reabsorbed. <b>Mid pregnancy:</b> foetus dies and is mummified, other foetus may be compromised <b>Late pregnancy:</b> full term still born or weak lambs.	No obvious signs. Transmission is from cat to sheep through contamination with cat faeces.	Keep cats away. Vaccinate
Campylobacteriosis	<i>Campylobacter fetus</i>	Full term still born or weak lambs.	Ewes develop metritis after abortion.	Ewes become immune.
Salmonella	<i>Salmonella abortus ovis / typhimurium / dublin</i>	Often abort in late pregnancy. Can cause abortion storms.	Ewes are systemically ill: temperature, smelly vaginal discharge, lethargy. Any live lambs will also be sick.	Prevent access to birds
Listeriosis	<i>Listeria</i>	History of eating poor quality silage.	Lameness, diarrhoea, septicaemia, facial nerve paralysis, encephalitis	
Border Disease	Pestivirus	Weak lambs or 'hairy shakers'.		Test and cull.

As always, any issues you would like to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact us,

*Warm Regards:  
Andrew, Hollie & Emily*

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