



Living And Working In Your Community

Recipient Selection and Management for Embryo Transfer

After the involved process of flushing a ewe to harvest embryos we want to give those embryos the best chance of becoming a positive pregnancy and a viable lamb. By selecting and managing recipients appropriately we can help increase the implantation success rate.

When deciding how many recipients to programme for implantation bear in mind the expected number of embryos (average 6 per flushed ewe), whether they are to be implanted as singles or twins and that not all of those programmed will cycle accordingly.

When considering implanting embryos as singles vs twins strongly bear in mind that if a ewe does not hold or loses the lambs we may be losing two embryos rather than one. The saying “all your eggs in one basket” comes to mind.

Selection

The ideal recipient would meet the following criteria:

- Have lambed successfully before with no complications eg a caesarean section
- Be able to rear a lamb ie good udder
- Be in a good body condition but not fat, ideally on a rising plane of nutrition
- Be cycling (see management section) – some breeds cycle through the year eg Dorsets so can make ideal recipients for out of breeding season recipients.

Management – Pre-Programme

Ensure the following management tasks are completed before beginning the programme.

- Recipients are up to date with Enzovax and Toxovax as required. No closer than 4 weeks before the implantation date.
- Any potential trace element deficiencies are rectified, utilisation of a multi trace element drench may be beneficial. Selenium deficiency is associated with poor fertility in the ewe.
- Utilisation of Regulin before beginning the programme can aid recipients to cycle out of season.
- Keeping recipients away from rams before starting the programme and utilisation of teasers during the programme will aid synchronisation and cyclicity

Management – Post-Programme

Post implantation be consistent with the management (as it was before starting the programme). Consistent with feeding and no sudden changes. Avoid stress, moving ewes and handling procedures unless necessary for the ewes welfare for 1 month after implantation.

Some post implantation stressors are unavoidable eg hot weather and can vastly affect implantation success. Ensure recipients have shade and water access.

Teaser/Ram Post Implantation

Your programme will give a date post implantation (normally a week) for you to add a raddled ram/teaser to the implant group. Monitor the recipients for raddle to indicate a return to oestrus and an unsuccessful implantation. Record the ewes which repeat and report this back to us as we can correlate it with our records.