

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Make a List and Check it Twice

No, I'm not talking about your Christmas list, I'm talking about your list of supplies for kidding and lambing! Kidding and lambing season is right around the corner, making now a great time to go through your supplies to make sure you have everything needed for kidding/lambing season. A few of the basic supplies that I like to keep on hand include clean towels, bulb syringe, OB sleeves and/or exam gloves, OB lube, iodine, colostrum, bottles and nipples for bottle feeding, esophageal feeding tube and 60cc syringe, heat lamps, and a thermometer.

When assisting a doe/ewe, it is handy to have towels nearby for cleaning off the kid's/lamb's face to make sure their nose and mouth are clear and they are able to breathe, and to dry kids/lambs off if needed. Another handy tool to have is a bulb syringe. These work great for clearing airways of any birthing fluid they may have inhaled. And while we hope that we won't have to pull any kids/lambs, it is important to have exam gloves/OB sleeves and lubricant on hand in case you do need to pull one.

One of the most important supplies to have on hand is seven percent iodine. It is important to dip the umbilical cord of the kid/lamb in iodine right after birth to prevent infection and reduce the chance of naval ill. Naval ill is caused by bacteria entering the body through the umbilical cord and causing infection. Dental floss is also handy to have to tie off an umbilical cord if necessary, and scissors to cut off any excess umbilical cord after it has been tied off.

Frozen colostrum or colostrum replacer is another very important supply to have. Colostrum is the first milk the mothers produce; it is nutrient rich and most importantly contains maternal antibodies, or immunoglobulins. When born, kids/lambs do not have any antibodies to protect them from disease, but the antibodies absorbed from colostrum help develop their immune system and protect against disease. If kids/lambs do not receive colostrum, their chance of survival is very low. It is very important to make sure colostrum is received right away, because they can only absorb these antibodies within the first 24-36 hours after they are born, and they absorb them best within the first few hours after birth.

If using colostrum replacer, make sure to follow the mixing and storing instructions on the package. It is important to remember that colostrum should not be warmed up in the

microwave, because the high temperature will kill the antibodies in it. Bottles and nipples should be kept on hand for any kids/lambs that need to be bottle fed as well as an esophageal feeding tube and 60cc syringe for kids/lambs that need to be tube fed. However, tube feeding kids that have a subnormal body temperature (normal body temperature is 101-103°F) is not recommended. If you put your finger inside their mouth and it feels cold, they must be warmed up before being fed. A thermometer should be always kept on hand. Check the temperature of any goat/sheep that shows signs of sickness and monitor the temperature of kids/lambs while you are warming them up. Heating pads, heat lamps, and kid/lamb coats are also good to have on hand for kids/lambs that need to be warmed up.

Of course, there are many other supplies that can be added to this list, such as medications, that are most likely already kept on hand in case they are needed throughout the year. In addition to supplies, having the phone number of a vet and/or a more experienced breeder written down or saved in your phone is always good to have in case you have questions or need help.

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