

## FEEDING THE PRODUCING EWE

Nutrients for sheep are:

Water, Energy, Protein,  
Minerals & Vitamins

**WATER** – Provide a constant supply of fresh water. In cold weather make sure water is warm (56°-60°) to assure maximum intake.

**ENERGY** – Energy comes from forages (grazing), roughages (harvested hay) and grains. Provide good quality feeds free of dust and molds. Sheep utilize a variety of grains, forages and roughages. Take advantage of those economically efficient products available in your local. Energy requirements more than double for the twin-bearing ewe in late gestation and lactation.

**PROTEIN** – Protein is available in all feedstuffs. Green forages are an excellent source as is good quality alfalfa hay. Wheat or other cereal grain straws and mature grass hay are very low in protein. Most grains are moderate to low in protein. The protein requirements for the ewe are highest during late gestation and lactation.

**VITAMINS** – Vitamin A is the most critical vitamin. Vitamin A comes from green plants whether fresh or stored. Good green alfalfa hay is an excellent source of Vitamin A.

**MINERALS** – Minerals are extremely complex as interactions often result in deficiencies or excesses. Provide a complete mineral mix FORMULATED FOR SHEEP.



To formulate a ration for your sheep, at various stages of production, refer to the Nutrition chapter in the **SHEEP PRODUCTION HANDBOOK**

### FACTORS AFFECTING NUTRIENT REQUIREMENTS

- Weight
- Body Condition
- Stage of Production
- Weather conditions and length of insulating wool
- Distance to travel for forage and water

### STAGES OF PRODUCTION

1. Maintenance
2. Flushing/Breeding
3. Early Gestation
4. Late Gestation
5. Lambing
6. Lactation
7. Post Weaning

Feeding Alfalfa mid-bloom (16% protein) and whole corn to the 154 # ewe during the various stages of production, assuming that weather is ideal and walking distance is minimal.

1. Maintenance  
3# Alfalfa or 1.5 # of Alfalfa plus 1 # corn
2. Flushing/Breeding (35 days)  
4.5 # Alfalfa or 3.0# Alfalfa plus 1# corn
3. Early Gestation (105 days) Twins  
3.5 # Alfalfa or 2.0# Alfalfa plus 1# corn
4. Late Gestation (42 days) Twins  
3.5 # Alfalfa plus 1.25 # corn
5. Lactation (60 days) Twins  
4.0 # Alfalfa plus 2.0 # corn
6. Post Weaning (10 days)  
2.7 # Alfalfa

- The alfalfa in each ration provides adequate protein to meet the requirements

**MAKE ALL CHANGES  
IN FEED VERY GRADUAL**

**BIOLOGICAL CYCLE OF THE EWE**

<u>Period</u>	<u>Duration</u>
Breeding	35 – 52 days
Early gestation	first 15 – 17 weeks
Late gestation	last 4 – 6 weeks
Early lactation	first 6 – 8 weeks
Late lactation	last 4 – 6 weeks
Maintenance	116-176 days



**TARGET BODY CONDITON SCORES**

<u>Stages of Production</u>	<u>Target BCS</u>
Dry ewe	1.5-2.0
Breeding	2.5-3.0
Early Gestation	2.0-2.5
Late Gestation*	2.5-3.0
Early Lactation*	3.0-3.5
Late Lactation, Weaning	2.0-2.5

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