

NUTRITION & HUSBANDRY

EFFECT OF BODY CONDITION SCORE, LITTER SIZE AND EMBRYO SEX ON COLOSTRAL IGG LEVELS IN EWES DELIVERED IN KUWAIT.

Tareq AL-Sabbagh, PhD

**Food Resources Division, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, P.O. Box 24885
Safat 13109 Safat Kuwait**

ABSTRACT

Body condition was measured weekly for sixty two Border Leicester Merino ewes delivered in Kuwait. Scores of body condition, as a measure of nutritional status, were collected until lambing. The Body condition score at lambing demonstrated a clinically meaningful influence on the colostrum concentration collected from the ewes within twelve hours post lambing, that did not reach statistical significance. Ewes with scores ranged from 2.5 to 3.5 were superior regarding IgG concentration than those either scored higher or lower than this range. Lambs that were born to ewes with body condition score of 2.5-3.5 at lambing weaned heavier than those were born to ewes of either higher or lower body condition score at lambing (BCSL) ($p= 0.02$). Weaning weights (95 days post partum) for these lambs were heavier because of the quality of colostrum they were fed.

Sex of lambs born did not affect the quality of colostrum. In general, it was found that colostrum belong to ewes that gave twins was of higher quality than colostrum of ewes that gave singles. Although difference was not significant, male lambs tended to be born heavier than female lambs whether they were born single or twins. Male lambs weaned heavier than female lambs (23.7 Kg vs. 20.65 Kg, respectively) at the age of 95 days.

Time of milk collection was demonstrated to be a significant factor in colostrum concentration. Samples that were collected closer to the time of lambing had higher colostrum concentration ($p=0.002$).