

Glossary of Small Ruminant Terminologies

Bulletin II, Vol. II



By
Angela McKenzie-Jakes
Extension Animal Science Specialist

Florida A&M University
College of Engineering Sciences, Technology and Agriculture
Research and Cooperative Extension Program



GLOSSARY

A

ABOMASUM: The fourth or true stomach of a ruminant where enzymatic digestion occurs.

ABSCESS: Boil; a localized collection of pus.

ACIDOSIS (Grain Overload): A condition in which the pH of the rumen is abnormally low (<5.5).

ACUTE: Any process occurring over a short period of time.

AFTER BIRTH: The placenta and associated membranes expelled from the uterus after parturition.

ANEMIA: The lack of red blood cells in the body.

ANESTROUS PERIOD: The time when the female does not exhibit estrus (heat); the non-breeding season.

ANTHELMINTIC: A drug that kills parasites.

ANTIBODY: A protein produced by the body's immune system that recognizes and helps fight infections and other foreign substances in the body.

ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION: The injection of semen into the female's reproductive tract through the use of a French gun in order for animal to become pregnant.

AVERAGE DAILY GAIN (ADG): The amount of weight gained each day.

ADG= $\frac{\text{Final weight} - \text{Initial weight}}{\text{Number of days between weights}}$

B

BALANCE RATION: A ration containing nutrients in the correct proportion to nourish the animal for 24 hours.

BALANCE/SYMMETRY: Describes how the parts of the body blend together and eye appeal.

BALE: A packaged of wool in a standard wool pack for shipment. The common farm bale weighs between 200 and 450 pounds.

BELLY WOOL: The wool that grows on the belly of the sheep. It is often uneven, tender and shorter than the wool from the other parts of the body. It is often stained and seedy.

BLACKFACE BREEDS: Meat breeds of sheep.

BLIND TEAT: A nonfunctioning half of an udder (usually due to mastitis).

BLOAT: An excessive accumulation of gas in the rumen and reticulum, resulting in distension of the abdomen.

BODY CONDITION SCORES: A numeric value assigned to an animal that estimates the degree of fatness or condition that covers the animal's body. This score is assessed by palpating the spine, transverse processes and ribs.

BOER: The leading breed of meat goats in the U.S. This breed originated in South Africa and was imported into this country during the early 90's.

BOLUS: A rounded mass of medicine used in cattle, goats and sheep.

BREED: A group of animals with similar characteristics (color markings, size etc.) that distinguishes it from other animals. The characteristics are passed from the parents to the offspring.

BREEDING SEASON: The period when goats or sheep will breed.

BUCK (Billy): A male goat used for breeding.

BUCKLING: A young male.

BUCK RAG: A cloth rubbed on a buck and imbued with his odor. The rag is kept in a closed container and can be used to assist in synchronizing the doe into heat.

BROWSE: Bushy or woody plants that goats love to eat.

BURDIZZO: A tool used to castrate goats, sheep or cattle that crushes the spermatic cords to render the male sterile.

BUTT HEAD: Goats born with horns.

BUTTING: A method of fighting by which one animal strikes the head and horns of its opponent.

C

CAPRINE: The scientific name for goat.

CAPRINE ARTHRITIS ENCEPHALITIS (CAE): An infectious disease that is causes arthritis and progressive inflammation in one or more organ or tissue systems such as the joints, bursae, brain, spinal cord, lungs and udder. This disease affects goats and is currently incurable.

CALIFORNIA MASTITIS TEST (CMT): A kit that can be used to test mastitis in cattle and does.

CHEVON: Chevon is the French word for goat. These are animals that are slaughtered near or shortly after weaning.

CARCASS: The dressed body of a slaughtered meat animal.

CASTRATION: Removal of the testicles.

CUBIC CENTIMETER (cc): A volume measurement identical to milliliter (ml).

CHEVIOT: A breed of sheep.

CISTERN: The final temporary storage area of milk in the udder.

CLEATS (Clays, Claws, Clees): The two halves of the sheep's foot.

CLOSE HERD or FLOCK: A process by which no new animals are introduced into the herd or flock.

CLOSTRIDIAL: A bacterial infection that can occur in sheep and goats.

COCCIDIOSIS: A disease that is commonly exhibited in younger animals. It is characterized by diarrhea, dehydration, weight loss, unthrifty, and weakness.

COLOSTRUM: The first milk the doe or ewe produces after given birth to their offspring. The milk is thick and golden yellow in color and contains rich antibodies. If the newborn does not consume the milk within the first 24 hours of life there is very little chance the animal will survive.

CONCENTRATE: The non-forage part of an animal's diet, principally grain and including oil meal and other feed supplements that are high in energy, but low in crude fiber.

CONFORMATION: Conformation is the combination of structural correctness and muscling of the animal and refers to the frame and shape of the animal.

CREEP FEEDER: An enclosed feeder for supplementing the ration of young animals.

CROSS BREED: An animal whose parents are two different breeds.

CROWN ROAST: Made of adjoining two Frenched eight-rib racks with twine and bending them to form a circle. The ends are secured by twine.

CRYPTORCHID: A testicle that fails to descend into the scrotum sac.

CULL: To remove a substandard animal from the herd or flock.

D

DOCKING: The removal of the tail.

DOE: A female goat.

DOELING: A young female.

DRENCHING: Giving medication from the bottle.

DRESSING PERCENTAGE: The dressing percentage is calculated by dividing the carcass weight divided by the live weight.

DRY PERIOD: The time when the female is not producing milk.

DRYLOT: An animal enclosed in an area with no vegetation.

DYSTOCIA: Difficulty in delivering the fetus.

E

EAR TAG: A number or letter assigned to an animal for the purpose of identification (ID). The ID is usually printed on a plastic or metal tag and placed on the ear or on a chain or rope and hung around the neck of the animal.

ENCEPHALITIS: Inflammation of the brain usually with severe signs such as fever, incoordination and convulsions.

ENVIRONMENT: The sum of all the conditions the animal is exposed to for example the climate, housing, pasture, disease etc.

ESTROGEN: The hormone that causes regression of the corpus luteum and stimulates estrus.

ESTROUS CYCLE: The beginning of one heat to the beginning of the next heat period.

ESTRUS (Heat): The period in which the female is receptive to breeding.

EWE: The female sheep.

EWE LAMB: An immature male ewe is called a "ewe lamb."

F

FAMACHA: The process of examining the lower eyelid of the animal to look for signs of anemia which indicates infection by one or more of the blood sucking parasites. The technique was developed in South Africa. A chart must be purchased through a veterinarian. You compare the color of the mucus membrane of the lower eyelid of a sheep (this will also work for goats) to the color chart, which will indicate the level of anemia. This test was developed for detecting barber pole worm, and can be used to cull susceptible animals.

FECAL FLOTATION: A microscopic procedure used to identify various parasite eggs in a fecal sample.

FECES: The manure of excrement produced by an animal.

FEED ADDITIVE: Anything added to a feed, including preservatives, growth promoters and medications.

FEEDER LAMB: A lamb lacking in weight and/or finish that is usually placed in a feedlot for finishing till slaughter grade.

FETUS: An unborn offspring.

FIBER: The portion of a feed that is indigestible or slowly digested by ruminants. It may be expressed as crude fiber, neutral detergent fiber, acid fiber or effective fiber.

FINISH/CONDITION: Refers to the amount of external fat that covers the body.

FLEECE: The wool from one sheep.

FLOCK: A group of sheep that are managed together. Sheep have an inborn ability or desire to flock, or gather together which is also known as gregariousness.

FLUSHING: The practice of conditioning an animal before breeding by allowing them to forage in better pastures or by increasing their feed by half a pound per head per day until the desired condition is reached. This practice also helps increase the number of twins or triplets that will be born in the herd or flock.

FORAGE: The hay and/or grassy portion of the diet of goats, sheep and cattle.

FOREQUARTERS (Front Assembly): The area on the animal's body that includes the withers, front legs, feet, shoulder and chest and brisket area.

FREE CHOICE (Ad Libitum): Feed made available to an animal at all times.

FRENCHING: Frenching is the process of removing one and a half inches of meat from the end opposite the loin eye of the roast or rib chop.

FRESHEN: To give birth (kid) and come into milk.

G

GAMBREL RESTRAINER: A restraining device that is a gambrel-shaped piece of plastic that is placed over the top of the animal's neck, with slots on either side to hold both front legs of the animal.

GESTATION: The period in which the doe or ewe is pregnant.

H

HAND MATING: A breeding scheme in which a female and the male are joined together in a confined area for breeding.

HEAT (Estrus): The period in which the doe or ewe is receptive to mating.

HERITABILITY: The heritability of a characteristic is a measure of how easily a trait (i.e., birth weight, weaning weight) will be expressed in an animal's offspring.

HERMAPHRODITE: A sterile animal with reproductive organs of both sexes.

HORMONE: A chemical secreted into the bloodstream by an endocrine gland, bringing about a physiological response in another part of the body.

HOTWEIGHT BASIS: The weight of a dressed carcass immediately after slaughter prior to the shrinkage that occurs in the cooler.

HYPOCALCEMIA: Low levels of calcium in the blood.

HYPOMAGNEMIA: Low levels of magnesium in the blood.

HYPOTHERMIA: Inability to keep warm often caused by cold or wet weather.

I

IMMUNITY: Protection from disease that comes as a result of the body's normal immune system response.

INBREEDING: The mating of closely related individuals.

INTERNAL PARASITES: Parasites located in the gastrointestinal system in animals.

INTERNATIONAL UNIT (IU): A standard unit of measurement of vitamins and drugs.

INTRADERMAL: Within the dermis, which is the layer of skin below the epidermis (outermost layer).

INTRAMUSCULAR (IM): The route of administering medications by inserting the needle straight into the skin and deep into the muscle.

INTRANASAL (IN): The spraying or administering of a solution into the nostrils.

INTRAVENOUS (IV): Medication injected into the vein.

J

JOHNE'S DISEASE (*Mycobacterium paratuberculosis*): A bacteria disease causing severe weight loss and some diarrhea.

K

KEDS: A bloodsucking tick that pierces the skin causing serious damage to the pelt.

KETONE: Compounds found in the blood of pregnant does or ewes suffering from pregnancy toxemia.

KETOSIS: The accumulation of ketone in the body, responsible for pregnancy diseases, acetonemia, twin lambing disease and others that occur at the end of pregnancy or within a month of kidding.

KID: A goat less than one year old.

L

LACTATION: The period in which a doe or ewe produces milk; the secretion or formulation of milk.

LAMB: A young sheep up to 5 months of age.

LARVAE: The immature stage of an adult parasite. The term applies to insects, ticks and worms.

LEGUMES: A family of plants that have nodules on the roots to enable it to fix-nitrogen from the atmosphere. Legumes are high in protein and bear its seeds in a pod (i.e., clover, alfalfa, cowpea).

LETHARGY: An animal that is slow to react, lack energy and is often sick.

LIBIDO: Usually refers to the mate's sex drive.

LINE BREEDING: A form of inbreeding that attempts to concentrate the genetic makeup of some ancestor.

LIVER FLUKES: A small leaf shaped organism that rolls up like a scroll in the bile ducts or liver tissue.

LOIN: The muscle that lies between the last rib and the hip bones of the back.

LUNGWORMS: Roundworms found in the respiratory tract and lung tissue.

LUTALYSE (PGF₂ or Prostaglandin): A hormone used for synchronizing estrus in does and ewes.

M

MARBELING: The fat within the muscle.

MASCULINITY: An animal that has well-developed secondary male characteristics which is exhibited in the head, neck shoulders and chest.

MASTITIS: Inflammation of the udder usually caused by a bacteria infection.

MATERNAL: Pertaining to the mother or dam.

MEAT-TYPE: A breed of goat or sheep that is primary used for meat production.

METRITIS: Inflammation of the uterus.

MILLITTER (ml): A metric volume measurement that is identical to cubic centimeter (cc).

MICROORGANISM: Any living creature of microscopic size, especially bacteria and protozoa.

MUTTON: The meat from sheep older than 12 months of age.

N

NECROPSY: To examine an animal after death to determine the cause of death.

NON-PROTEIN NITROGEN (NPN): Feed ingredient that is not a protein, but contains nitrogen (urea).

O

OMASUM: The omasum is the third compartment of a ruminants stomach located between the reticulum and the abomasum.

OPEN: A female that is not pregnant.

OPEN SHOULDERS (Loose shoulders): The shoulder blades are too far apart at the top which makes it difficult for the animal to stand for long periods or to move around freely.

OVER-CONDITIONED: An animal that is overfed.

OVER SHOT or PARROT MOUTH: An animal that has the lower jaw shorter than the upper jaw and the lower teeth hit the back of the dental pad.

OVINE: The scientific name for sheep.

P

PALATABLE or PALATABILITY: The taste and texture of forage. A forage that is highly palatable has a pleasant taste and texture to livestock.

PARASITE: An organism which lives on or in another living organism (host) at the expense of the latter.

PARTURITION: The process of giving birth.

PASSIVE IMMUNITY: Acquiring the protection against infectious disease from another animal. This commonly occurs when a newborn consumes antibody-rich colostrum from its mother. Failure to consume sufficient colostrum increases the animal's risk of contracting a disease.

PATHOLOGY: The study of tissues for signs of disease.

PATERNAL: Pertaining to the father or sire

PEDIGREE: A paper showing an animal's ancestors.

PELT: The skin of a goat or sheep including the wool from the latter.

PENCIL SHRINK: A percentage adjustment in lamb live weight, generally between 2 and 4 percent, which is subtracted to insure that responsibility for weight loss during transport are shared by the buyer and seller.

PERITONITIS: Inflammation of the internal surface of the abdomen. This condition is often the result of infections and certain diseases.

pH: How much acid or how much base is in a sample. The lower the pH of a substance, the more acidic the sample. Conversely, the higher the pH, the more basic the sample. Normal rumen pH should be around 6-7, depending on the ration being fed.

PHENOTYPE: The phenotype includes an animal's external appearance, measures of its productivity and its physiological characteristics.

PHOTOPERIOD: Length of day (or length of period artificial light is provided). Also expressed as a ratio of daylight to darkness.

PLACENTITIS: Abnormal inflammation of the placenta, usually due to infectious disease.

POLLED: Naturally hornless.

POSTPARTUM: Occurring after birth.

ppm: Parts per million.

PREPARTUM: Occurring before birth.

PRIMAL CUTS: Also called wholesale cuts. The original cuts resulting from the first division of the fore and hindsaddle of lamb or mutton.

PROGENY: Offspring.

PROLAPSE: An interior organ pushing outside of the body cavity.

PROGNOSIS: The chances of an animal having a normal quality of life following a disease or problem. This is reported using the words poor, fair, good, or excellent.

PROLIFIC: Tendency to produce many offspring.

PROTEIN: A nutrient required for growth and the repair of body tissue.

PROTEIN SUPPLEMENT: A feed that contains a high density of protein and is used to supply additional protein in the ration.

PROXIMAL: A structure that is nearer the main body. For example, the three bones in the foot are designated by the terms proximal, middle, and distal depending on their location relative to the main body.

PUBERTY: When an animal becomes sexually mature.

PUREBRED: An individual whose parents are of the same breed and can be traced back to the establishment of that particular breed through the records of a registry association.

PURULENT: A term describing pus-like discharge or infection.

PYELONEPHRITIS: Inflammation of the kidney, beginning at the "pelvis." Pyelonephritis is generally due to a bacterial infection.

Q

QUARANTINE: To confine and keep an animal away from the rest of the herd or flock to prevent the spread of diseases.

R

RADDLE (Marker): Paint or crayon applied to the male's chest to mark the females he mates.

RAM: A male sheep. Sometimes a ram may be called a buck.

RAMBOUILLET: A large bodied Merino sheep that is hardy, has good yield and fine quality wool.

RATION: The total feed given to an animal during a 24 hour period.

RECESSIVE GENE: A gene which must be present on both chromosomes in a pair to show outward signs of a certain characteristic.

RECTAL PROLAPSE: When a portion of the rectum protrudes from the anus.

REGISTERED: A goat or sheep whose birth and ancestry has been recorded by a registry association.

RETICULUM: The second compartment of the ruminant's stomach.

ROTATIONAL GRAZING: A system by which livestock are allotted to certain grazing or browsing area for a certain period of time before they are moved to another area.

ROUGHAGE: A high fiber, low total digestible nutrient feed consisting of coarse bulky plants or plant parts; dry or green feed with over 18% crude fiber.

RUGGED: Big and strong.

RUMP: The area between the hip bones and the tail head.

RUMEN: The large first compartment of a ruminant's stomach containing microbial population that is capable of breaking down forages and roughages.

RUMENOCENTESIS (rumen tap): When the rumen contents are collected by inserting a needle into the rumen.

RUMINANT: Animals that have a four-compartment stomach (rumen or paunch, reticulum or honeycomb, omasum or manyplies, and abomasum or true stomach).

RUMINATION: The process of regurgitating food to be rechewed.

S

SCALE: A device used to weigh animals, feed etc.

SCOURS: Diarrhea

SCRAPIE: Scrapie is a fatal, degenerative disease affecting the central nervous system, one of the class of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs) which can be found in sheep and goats alike.

SCRUB: A sheep whose ancestry is so mixed it does not resemble any particular breed or cross.

SCROTUM: The sac or bag containing the testicles of a male animal.

SCURS: A rudimentary horn. A small rounded portion of horn tissue attached to the skin of the horn pit of a polled animal.

SECOND CROSS: Progeny resulting from the mating of true half-breeds and a distinct breed.

SECOND CUTS: The short portions of wool staples that result when the shearer makes two "blows" over the same area.

SEPTICAEMIA: A serious infection in which the bloodstream is invaded by a large numbers of causal bacteria which multiply there.

SERVICE: Mating

SETTLED: A female that is pregnant.

SHEARING: Removing the wool from a sheep.

SHEARLING: The male, female or castrated sheep from first to second shearing.

SHEPHERD: A person who cares for sheep.

SHORN: A sheep that has had its fleece removed by shearing.

SICKLE-HOCKED: A hock that has too small of an angle made by the leg above and below the hock, as viewed from the side.

SIRE: Male parent.

SKIN TENT: When the skin of an animal is gently pinched and pulled outward. A dehydrated animal's skin will not rapidly return to its normal position or shape.

SMOOTH-MOUTH: An animal that has lost all of its permanent incisors, usually 7 or more years of age.

SOUNDNESS: a:) If there are no weak spots in the wool: b:) When an animal is free from disease and lacks structural defects that affect its usefulness.

SOREMOUTH: A highly contagious (also to humans), viral infection that causes scabs around mouth, nostrils, eyes and may effect the udders of lactating ewes and does.

STANCHION: A device for restraining a goat by the neck for the purpose of feeding, milking, hoof trimming or artificial insemination.

STANDING HEAT: The period in which the doe or ewe will stand still and accept the male for breeding.

STOCKING RATE (per acre): The number of animals that can be pastured on one acre, or the number of acres required to pasture one animal.

STRUCTURAL CORRECTNESS: Free from any conformational abnormalities which includes the skeleton, feet and legs of the animal.

STYLISH (Tracking): An animal possessing an attractive, pleasing conformation or way of movement.

SUBCUTANEOUS (SQ) INJECTIONS: Are accomplished by inserting the needle just under the skin and not into the muscle. This is important because SQ injectables are designed for a slower rate of absorption.

T

TAPEWORMS: Long, ribbon-like segmented flatworms that can inhabit the gastrointestinal tract of animals.

TATTOO: Permanent identification of animals produced by placing ink under the skin, generally in the ear, but in the tail web of the LaMancha goat using a tattoo gun with digital (sharp needle-like) numbers.

TEASER: A male that has been vasectomized and is used to indicate which females are in estrus.

TOTAL DIGESTIBLE NUTRIENTS (TDN): A measure of energy in a feed or of how much energy an animal requires.

TOXAEMIA: Generalized poisoning, due to soluble (usually bacterial) toxins entering the bloodstream.

TOXIN: Any poisonous substance of biological origin.

TRACE MINERALS(TM): Minerals that are required in very small amounts.

U

UDDER: The mammary gland of sheep and goats that secretes milk.

UMBILICUS: The area where the umbilical cord was attached during gestation. This is commonly known as the "belly button."

UNDER SHOT or BULL DOG MOUTH: The lower jaw is longer than the upper jaw, and the teeth extend forward past the dental pad on upper jaw.

UPGRADE: To improve the next generation by breeding the female to a superior male.

URINARY CALCULI: A metabolic disease of males characterized by the formation of stones within the urinary tract. It is caused primarily by an imbalance of dietary calcium and phosphorus.

URETHROSCOPY: An examination of the urethra using an endoscope.

UROLITHS or UROLITHIASIS: Describing a variety of stones that are found in the urinary system. These include kidney and bladder stones.

V

VAGINAL PROLAPSE: The protrusion of the vagina in ewes or does in during late pregnancy.

VEIN: Blood vessels in the body that carry blood towards the heart.

VENTRICLE: A chamber of the heart that pumps blood to the lungs and the rest of the body. A sheep or goat's heart has two ventricles, left and right.

VIRULENCE: The ability that a microorganism has to cause an infection or disease. Microorganisms which have the ability to cause more severe disease are said to be highly virulent.

W

WASTY: a:) Too much fat on the carcass; b:) An animal that has a paunchy middle.

WATTLE: A small fleshy appendage attached on or near the throat area of the goat and which serve no function.

WEAN: To separate nursing offspring from their mothers so that they no longer receive milk.

WEANER: An animal that has been weaned from its mother or has stopped suckling its mother.

WESTERN WHITE-FACE: A term used to describe the typical ewe utilized on large commercial range sheep operations in the United States. Historically they are comprised predominately of the Rambouillet breed, with Columbia or Targhee genetics in their makeup.

WET EWE: A ewe that is nursing a lamb.

WETHER: A male sheep or goat that as been castrated.

WHITE MUSCLE DISEASE: A disease caused by a deficiency of selenium, Vitamin E or both that causes degeneration of skeletal and cardiac muscles of lambs.

WOOL BLIND: A term applied when the wool around the eyes has excessive growth and interferes with the sight of the sheep.

Y

YEARLING: A male or female sheep or goat that are between 1 and 2 years of age.

Z

ZOONOSIS or ZOONOTIC: Any animal disease that can be spread to humans.

REFERENCES:

Belanger, J. (2001). *Storey's Guide to Raising Dairy Goats*.

Daneke Club Lambs & Livestock: <http://www.danekeclublambs.com>

McKenzie-Jakes, A. (1999). *Selecting and Evaluating Meat Goats for Meat Goat Production*. Florida A&M University. Cooperative Extension Program.