Notes for Feeding Show Lambs
Jim Sprinkle

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To avoid legume bloat, adjust you lamb slowly to an alfalfa diet when you receive it according to the timetable shown. Sheep are a type of ruminant animal which are able to digest grass in the diet by the presence of bacteria in the rumen. These bacteria act like little “Pac men” to attack chemical bonds in the fiber. Other bacteria are present in the rumen that love starch in higher energy rations. However, the starch loving bacteria are present in lower amounts for a grazing lamb or a lamb that is eating hay,

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To explain further some nutritional principles you will need to know, we need to define total digestible nutrients. By conducting feeding trials with different animals, we have been able to classify feeds for nutritional quality. Higher quality feeds will have more of the amount fed be digested by the lamb and applied to daily gain and maintenance. In the example shown, 4 lbs. of the hay fed passed through the cow as waste products in manure (and urine). Therefore, we know that (10 - 4) or 6 lbs. of the hay was digestible, so the feed was 60% digestible. This is a good quality hay. Grain products contain more energy. Corn is around 91% digestible, barley about 84%, and oats 76% digestible. So, to slow down average daily gain in a grain diet, more oats instead of corn could be used in the ration.

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The table shown here and in your handouts shows the crude pr

weighing 110 lbs. gaining 0.40 lbs. per day. For daily maintenance, the lamb would require 0.91 lbs/d of a 70% TDN ration. Adjusting for the moisture in the feed (usually about 10%) would increase this portion of the daily feed to 1.0 lbs./d. To accommodate the additional feed for gain would require an additional 1.79 lbs./d of feed on a dry matter basis, or 1.99 lbs. as fed (1.79 ÷ .90 = 1.988). So, we would estimate that we would need to feed this lamb about 3 lbs/d of feed to meet his requirementsl, 2.3 (o)-6..6 ( )10.6 (m)ma-(e)a-6 (t