

BLOAT IN LAMBS

What is bloat?

Abomasal bloat is a major cause of discomfort and can lead to death in bottle fed lambs. Bloat is caused by sarcina bacteria which feed on the lactose in milk and convert lactose to lactic acid. This creates an environment where good bacteria can't survive and bad bacteria flourish. As a result gas is released into the abomasum which expands the stomach, either compressing other organs, causing them to fail or rupture the stomach wall, causing death.

Bottle fed lambs are fed a higher volume of milk in fewer feeds, than when feeding from the mother. This means there is a larger amount of lactose in the stomach of bottle fed lambs and in-turn more lactose for bacteria to feed on, allowing the bacteria to multiply and rapidly produce large amounts of gas.

Recommendations

- All lambs should receive colostrum within 6 hours of birth. This ensures correct immune development and protection against bad bacteria (sarcina). JumpStart™ can be used as a substitute if there is no fresh colostrum available
- Lambs raised on lamb milk replacer (LMR) should be fed little and often. Do not increase volumes to cut down on the amount of feeds given, as lambs have a small stomach. Feeding larger volumes of warm LMR can cause bloat. We recommend 4–6 feeds per day depending on the lambs age
- Lambs showing signs of bloat (swollen stomach and panting) should be fed smaller quantities, more often
- Decreasing milk temperature to around 4°C (average tap water is 6°C) helps prevent bloat. Always mix warm as per package instructions then allow the milk to cool
- The yoghurt method (overleaf and available at www.nzagbiz.com) has been used successfully by lamb rearer's to reduce bloat
- Check the size of the hole in the teat. Milk should only trickle out when the bottle is tipped upside down, not flow freely. Free flowing milk means the hole is too large and can lead to overfeeding – a cause of bloat
- Some lambs can have a tendency to over feed even when not hungry. Do not be fooled by their hungry bleating – always follow our feeding recommendations.

CULTURED ANLAMB™ FEEDING METHOD

Controls Abomasal Bloat in hand reared lambs

Equipment needed:

- 5 litre jug
- Large waterproof chilly bin
- Acidophilus yoghurt
- anLamb™
- Clean warm water.

Method

- Mix 800 grams of anLamb™ with 2 litres of warm water (approximately 40°C) in the 5 litre jug
- Add 100 millilitres of the acidophilus yoghurt and mix thoroughly
- Place in the chilly bin and fill with warm water to the level of the mixture in the jug
- Allow to thicken to yoghurt consistency overnight
- Top up to 4 litres with water and mix thoroughly the next morning
- Feed lamb(s) as directed on your anLamb™ package
- For future use, simply save around 100-200 millilitres of the thickened mixture as a replacement for the acidophilus yoghurt. Discard the soured anLamb™ after 5 days of refrigeration and start the recipe again by using pure acidophilus yoghurt.

NB: This recipe will feed 4 lambs for one day at the suggested feeding rates specified on the anLamb™ package.

Mixing rates for soured milk

No. of lambs fed in one day	anLamb (gm)	Water (ml)	Acidophilus yoghurt (ml)
1	200	500	25
2	400	1000	50
5	1000	2500	125
10	2000	5000	250
15	3000	7500	375
20	4000	10000	500

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