

## Health and Disease Issues

### Bloat – Ammonia Induced

Ammonia-induced bloat (as opposed to frothy-bloat) results from ruminants eating feed containing high levels of rumen-degradable nitrogen. In the rumen, the ingested nitrogen is rapidly converted to ammonia, which is then converted into microbial protein and other forms of nitrogen. The ingestion of excessive quantities of such nitrogen can result in a build-up of ammonia gas in the rumen.

#### **Predisposing Factors:**

Rations high in rumen-degradable protein (such as legume based silage) or urea

#### **Signs and Symptoms:**

- Abnormally high alkali levels in blood or body fluids
- Rumen stasis (cessation of normal rumen contractions)
- Lack of belching to release stomach gas
- Bloating (gut distension).

#### **Control and Prevention:**

The following management practices are recommended:

- Provide a high energy concentrate. This concentrate provides the extra energy required to metabolise the high levels of nitrogen, and thus reduces the build-up of ammonia gas.
- Minimise the proportion of feeds containing high levels of rumen degradable protein.

#### **Treatment:**

- 60ml of paraffin oil or similar
- Induce animals to walk until eructation (belching)
- Provide low quality hay to stimulate rumen function.

---

© Sheep Solutions. Unauthorised copying, distribution or technical use of this publication and its contents is prohibited.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (July 2013). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the user's independent adviser.