Hair Sheep 101
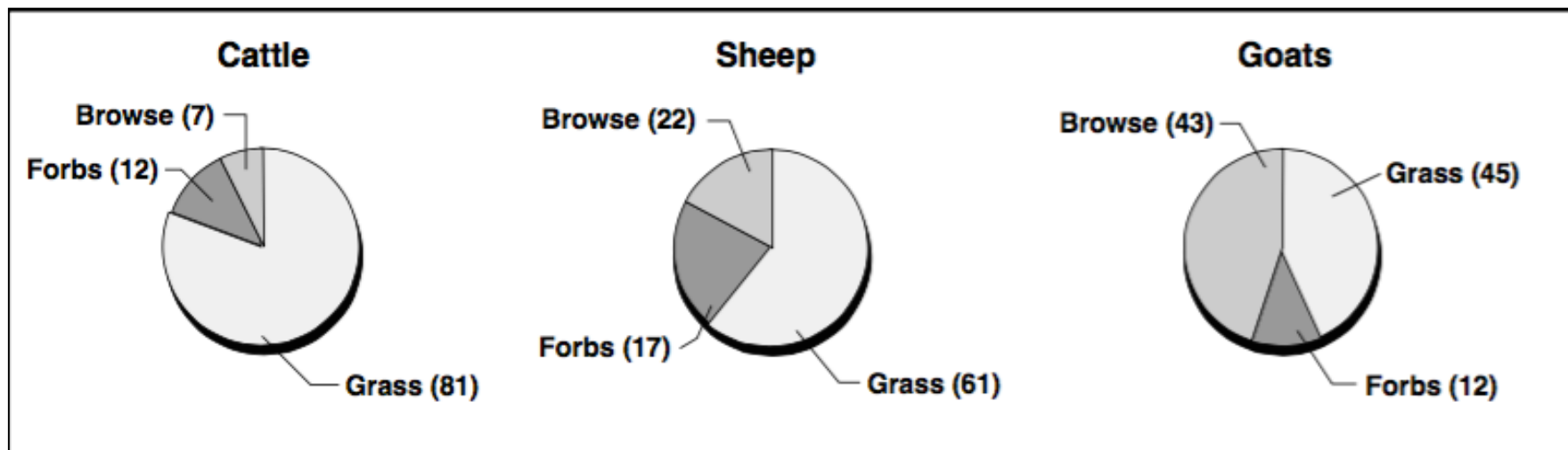
R. Reid Redden, PhD
Associate Professor,
Sheep & Goat Specialist
Reid.redden@ag.tamu.edu
(325) 653-4576 office
(830) 591-3213 cell

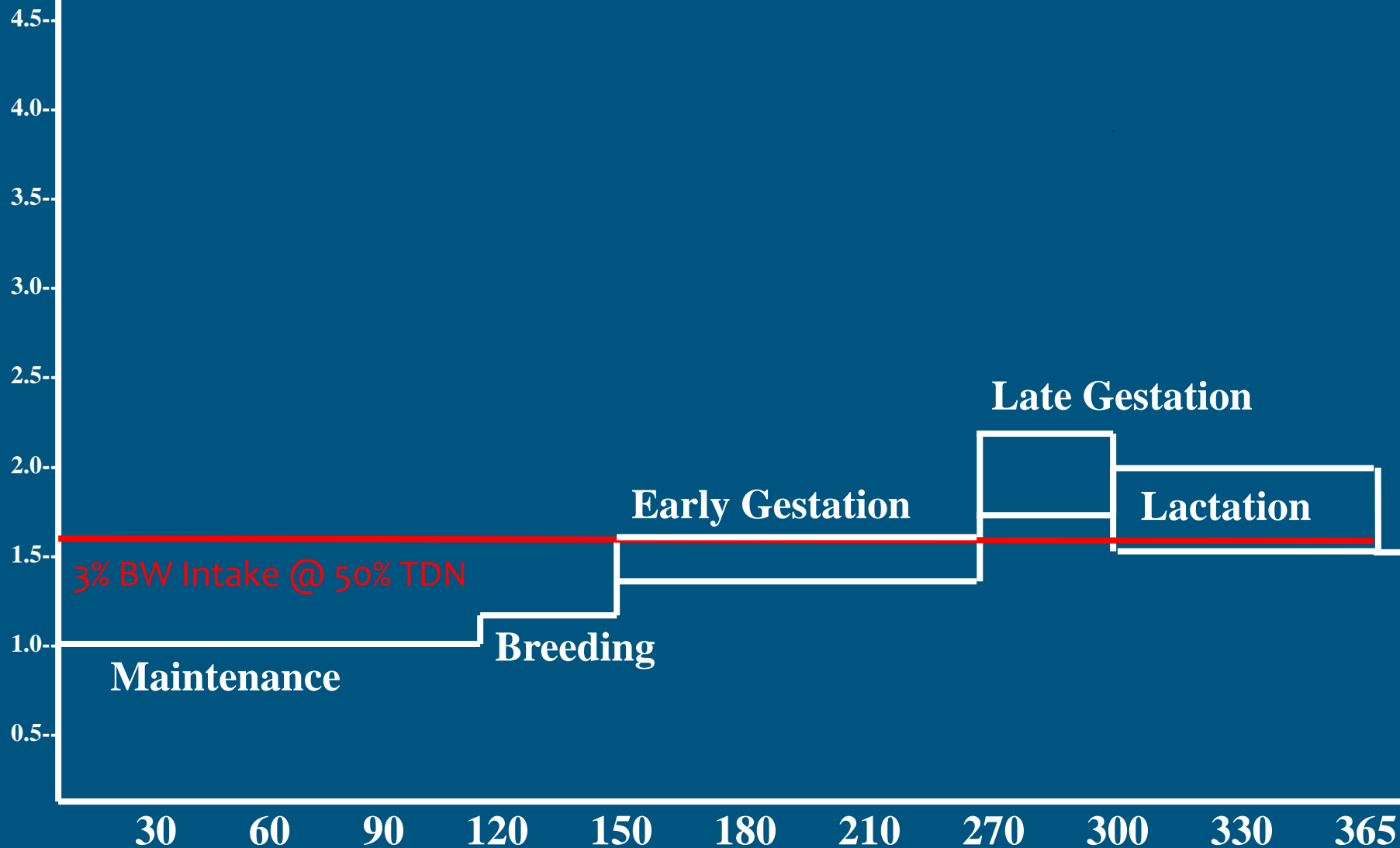TEXAS A&M AgriLife EXTENSION

KISS - Keep It Simple Stupid

Don't Try and Fit a Square Peg Through a Round Hole

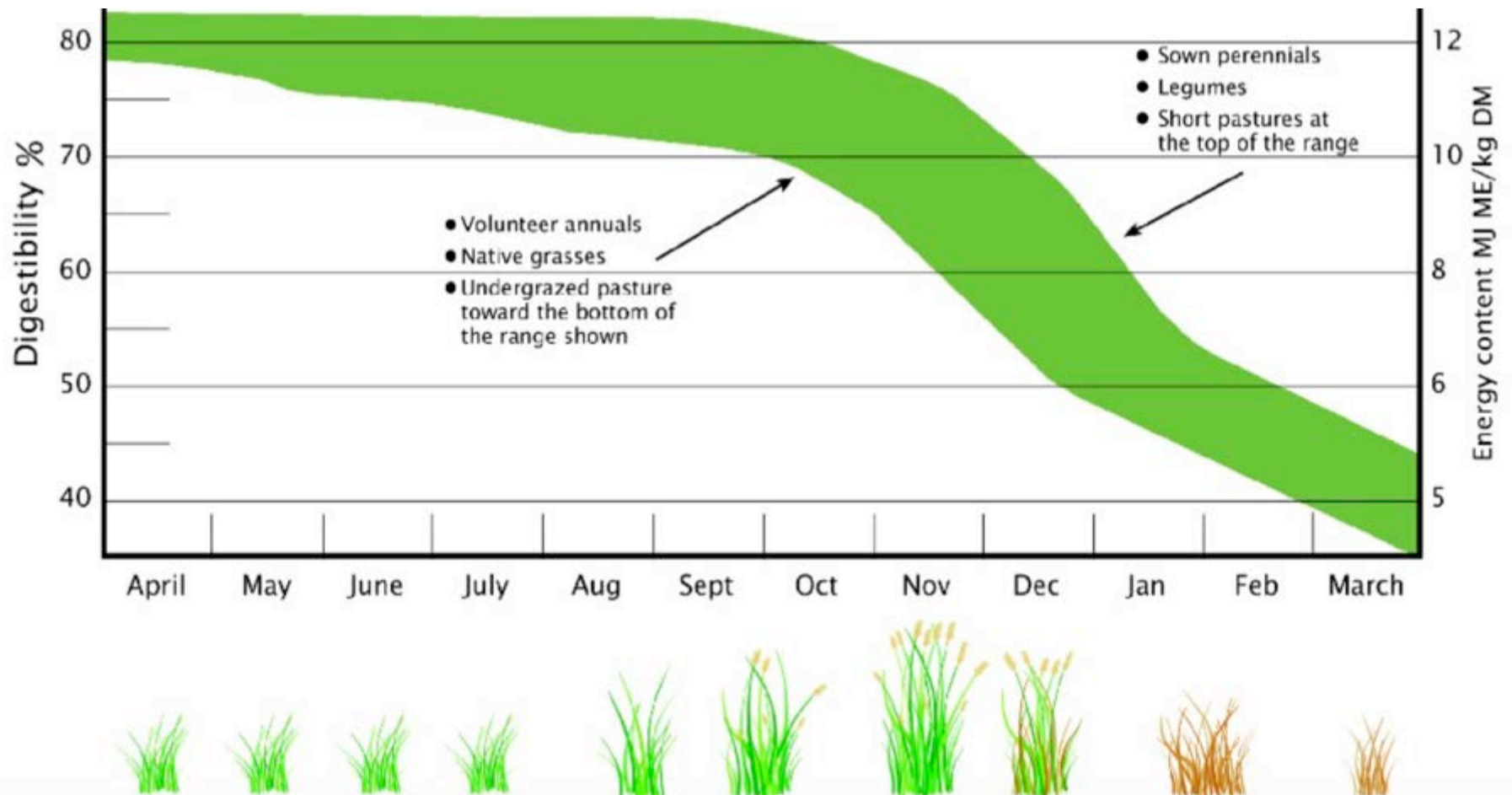Daily TDN Requirements – 110 pound Breeding Ewes

#TDN/day

4.5
4.0
3.5
3.0
2.5
2.0
1.5
1.0
0.5

3% BW Intake @ 50% TDN

Maintenance
Breeding
Early Gestation
Late Gestation
Lactation

30 60 90 120 150 180 210 270 300 330 365

Forage Quality

Daily CP Requirements – 110 pound Breeding Ewes

#CP/day

0.90
0.80
0.70
0.60
0.50
0.40 — Lactation
0.30 — Late Gestation
3% BW Intake @ 10% CP
Early Gestation
0.20
Maintenance
0.10 — Breeding

30 60 90 120 150 180 210 270 300 330 365
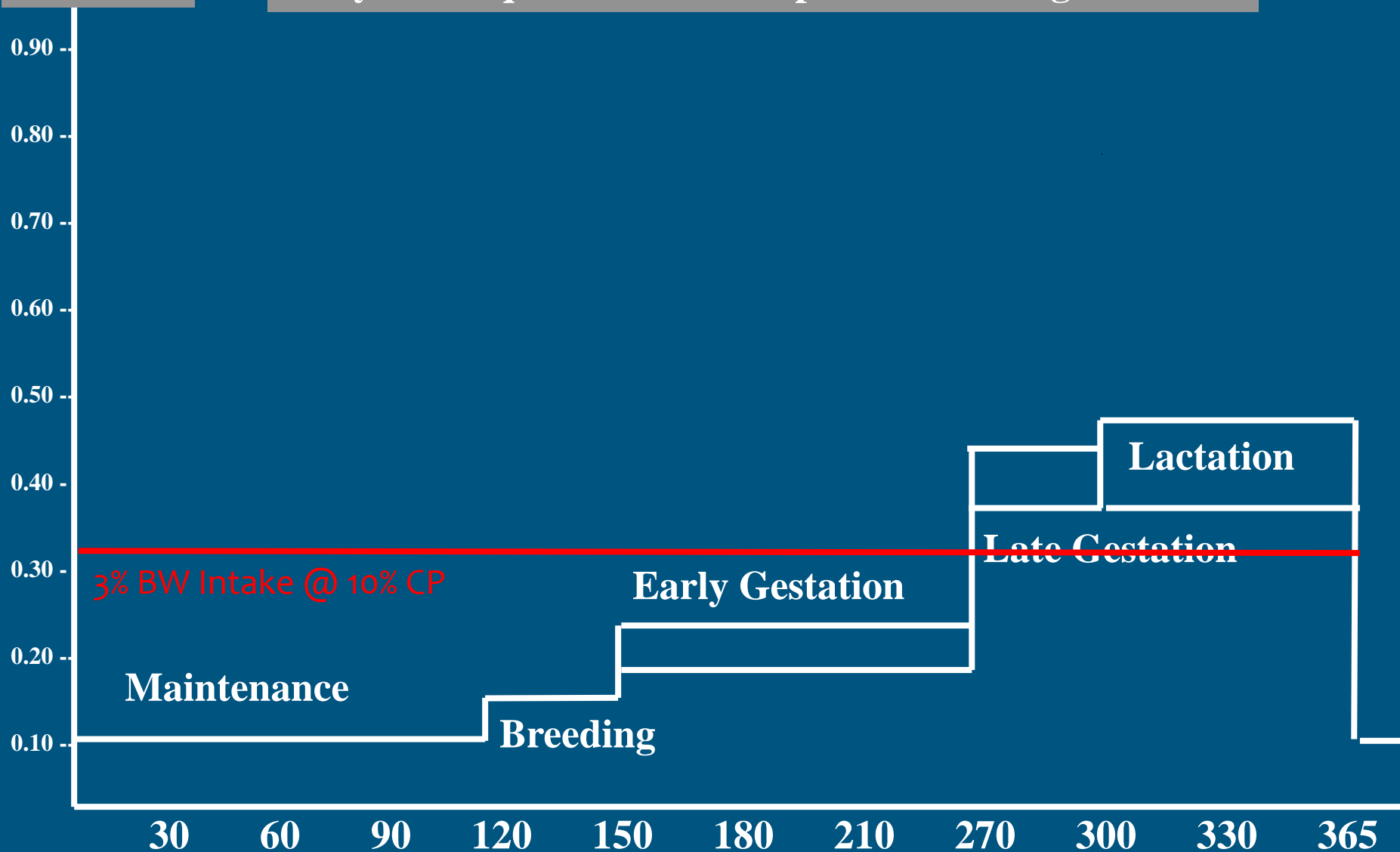
How to Condition Score

Condition Score 1

Backbone
The bones form a sharp narrow ridge. Each vertebra can be easily felt as a bone under the skin. There is only a very small eye muscle. The sheep is quite thin (virtually unsaleable).

Short Ribs
The ends of the short ribs are very obvious. It is easy to feel the squarish shape of the ends. Using fingers spread 1cm apart, it feels like the fingernail under the skin with practically no covering.

Condition Score 2

Backbone
The bones form a narrow ridge but the points are rounded with muscle. It is easy to press between each bone. There is a reasonable eye muscle. Store condition- ideal for wethers and lean meat.

Short Ribs
The ends of the short ribs are rounded but it is easy to press between them. Using fingers spread 0.5cms apart, the ends feel rounded like finger ends. They are covered with flesh but it is easy to press under and between them.

Condition Score 3

Backbone
The vertebrae are only slightly elevated above a full eye muscle. It is possible to feel each rounded bone but not to press between them. (Forward store condition ideal for most lamb markets now. No excess fat).

Short Ribs
The ends of short ribs are well rounded and filled in with muscle. Using 4 fingers pressed tightly together, it is possible to feel the rounded ends but not between them. They are well covered and filled in with muscle.

Condition Score 4

Backbone
It is possible to feel most vertebrae with pressure. The back bone is a smooth slightly raised ridge above full eye muscles and the skin floats over it.

Short Ribs
It is only possible to feel or sense one or two short ribs and only possible to press under them with difficulty. It feels like the side of the palm, where maybe one end can just be sensed.

Condition Score 5

Backbone
The spine may only be felt (if at all) by pressing down firmly between the fat covered eye muscles. A bustle of fat may appear over the tail (wasteful and uneconomic).
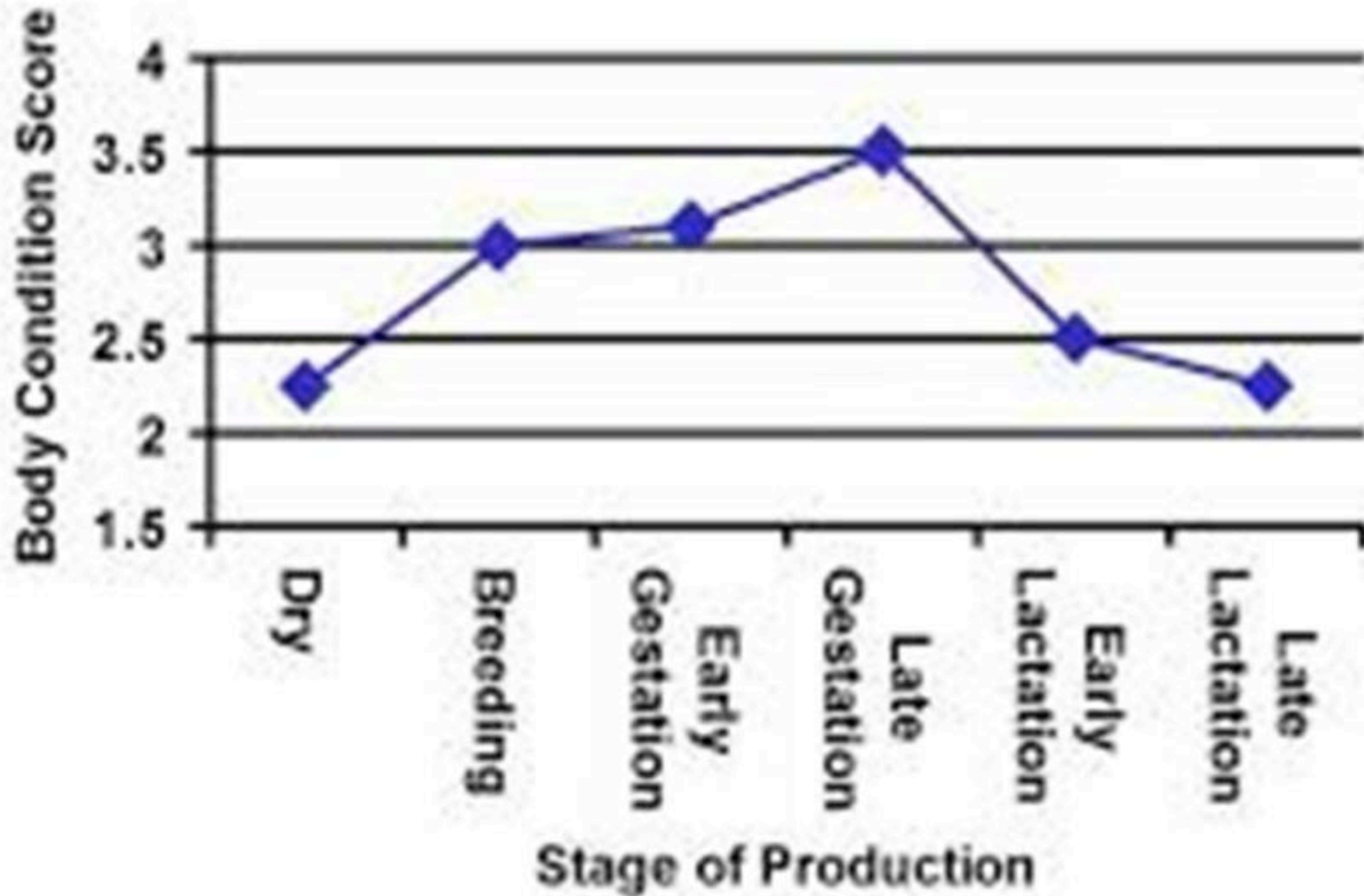
Short Ribs
It is virtually impossible to feel under the ends as the triangle formed by the long ribs and hip bone is filled with meat and fat. The short rib ends cannot be felt.

Body Condition Scoring

Target Body Condition Score

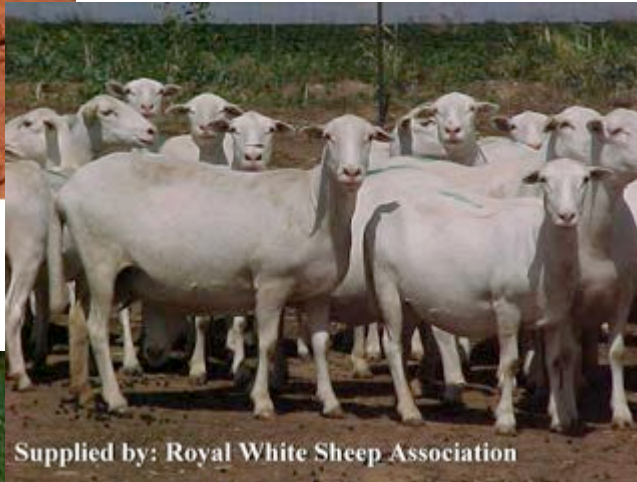Body Condition Score vs. Stage of Production: Dry, Breeding, Early Gestation, Late Gestation, Early Lactation, Late Lactation

Size Matters

Not All Hair Sheep are Created Equal

Buy Rams with EBVs

Growth Potential

Milk Production

Reproductive Rate

Parasite Resistance

# Why?

LAMBPLAN

Analysis : **TERMINAL** , 1 April 2019

Breed 40   Flock 6024   Years 2018 to 2019

Dams Animal ID	Inbreeding	Progeny	BWT kg	MWWT kg	WWT kg	PWWT kg	PFAT mm	PEMD mm	YWT kg	NLW %	PSC cm	PFEC %	MCP	SRC	Sire Dam
406024-2010-005544		11	-0.5	1.4	3.8	6.7			5.9	0			**125.1**	118.1	*
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									35			35	42	*
406024-2011-006376		7		0.3	2.4	3.8			3.6	-2			**115.8**	108.3	*
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									34			34	39	*
406024-2011-006717		14	-0.6	-0.7	2.8	5.0			4.2	15	3.4	-13	**129.8**	123.0	406024-2009-005515
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									45			45	52	406024-2009-004142
406024-2011-006748		5	-0.4	2.8	4.8	7.3			7.0	-1			**127.8**	120.0	406024-2009-005515
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									33			33	42	406024-2009-004051
406024-2011-006762		9	-0.5	1.4	4.1	6.7			6.2	-3			**123.0**	115.2	406024-2009-001361
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									37			37	45	406024-2009-004068
406024-2013-007729		6	-0.7	-1.1	0.3	1.4			0.8	-4			**108.1**	100.2	*
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									32			32	39	406024-2010-005512
406024-2013-007735		6	-0.4	2.8	5.7	9.2			7.9	-1			**134.2**	122.6	*
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									32			32	39	406024-2011-006406
406024-2013-007740		6	-0.4	2.5	5.2	8.7			7.9	3			**131.2**	123.8	*
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									38			38	43	406024-2009-004070
406024-2013-007757		7	-0.5	1.0	3.1	6.5			5.0	7			**133.4**	122.5	*
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									37			37	42	406024-2010-005606
406024-2013-007758		6	-0.5	0.8	3.5	6.1			4.5	4			**130.0**	118.3	*
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									33			33	40	406024-2010-005606
406024-2013-007761		4	-0.6	0.0	2.4	4.6			4.4	-9			**111.1**	104.5	*
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									32			32	39	406024-2009-004238
406024-2013-007770		9	-0.4	2.8	5.8	8.5			7.8	8			**134.9**	128.5	*
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									39			39	45	406024-2009-004051
406024-2013-007796		6	-0.4	2.0	4.4	7.1			5.9	-3			**126.1**	115.6	*
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									32			32	39	406024-2011-006378
406024-2013-007808		7	-0.6	0.6	3.0	5.6			4.6	3			**129.9**	116.8	*
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									39			39	44	406024-2009-004040
406024-2013-007820		7	-0.5	1.2	3.7	6.2			5.7	4			**124.2**	119.2	*
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									37			37	43	406024-2010-005544
406024-2013-007904		6	-0.4	3.0	5.6	7.8			6.6	-1			**130.1**	119.8	*
TEXAS A&M	Acc.:									32			32	38	406024-2010-005571

Genetics

- **An animal's ability to resist parasites is heritable (~0.2 – 0.5)**

- **USDA, ARS sires are selected based on parasite resistance (low FEC) and tolerance (lack of anemia; low FAMACHA scores)**
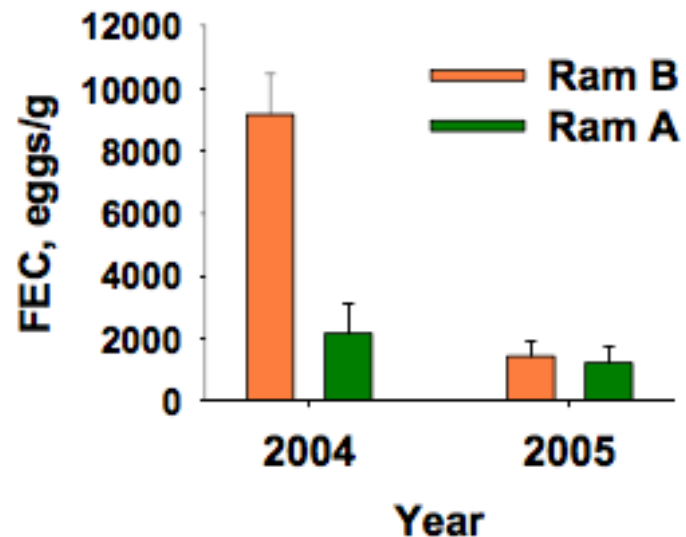
How Much Stock Can My Pasture Support?

- 50 Acre Ranch - Example
  - If, 25 Acres to the Animal Unit
    - 1 cow per Animal Unit = 2
    - 8 sheep per Animal Unit = 16

Table 1. Animal Unit Equivalents (AUE).		
Kind and class of livestock	**Approximate AUE***	**No. of head per AU**
Hair Sheep, 80-lb. ewe	.12	8
Hair Sheep, 40-lb. weaned lamb	.06	17
Hair Sheep, 125-lb. ram	.17	6
Goat, 100-lb. doe	.15	7
Goat, 45-lb. weaned kid	.07	14
Goat, 180-lb. buck	.24	4
Cattle, 500-lb. stocker calf	.6	1.7
Cattle, 1,000-lb. cow	1	1
Cattle, 1,800-lb. bull	1.7	.6

Livestock for Small Acreage Landowners. Machen and Lyons

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

Pasture Management

- Native Range or Improved Perennials
  - Take Half; Leave Half
  - 3,000 lb/acre: WebSoil Survey - NRCS
- Annual Forage Crops
  - Take it All!!!
    - Cool Season
      - 2,500 lb/acre
    - Warm Season
      - 10,000 lb/acre

Manure Management

- Predictor of Diet Quality
  1. Small, Hard Dry Pellets
  2. Large, Soft, Moist Pellets
  3. Cluster of Pellets
  4. Clumpy Feces
  5. Loose Liquid Feces
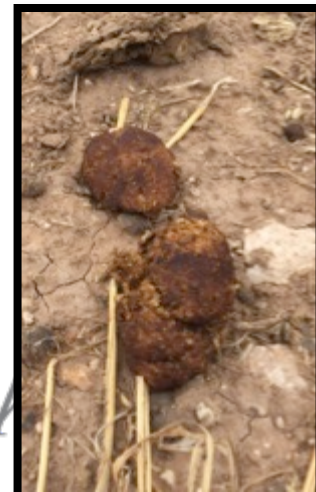
Year Round Lambing

- Pros
  - Low Breeding Management
  - Continues Cash Flow
  - Reduces Risk
- Cons
  - Predator Control
  - Parasite Control
  - Nutritional Management
  - Hard to Detect Issues

Seasonality of the Market

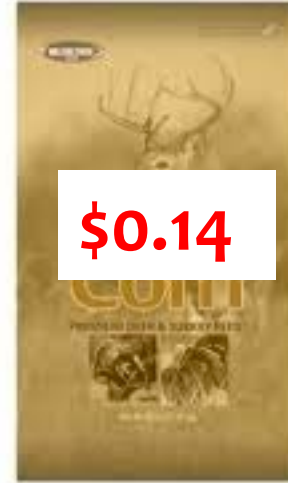Figure 2a. San Angelo Hair Lamb Prices and Average Monthly Volume; 2010-2017.

Feed Resources: Quantity vs Quality

$0.23

$0.30

$0.14

$0.44

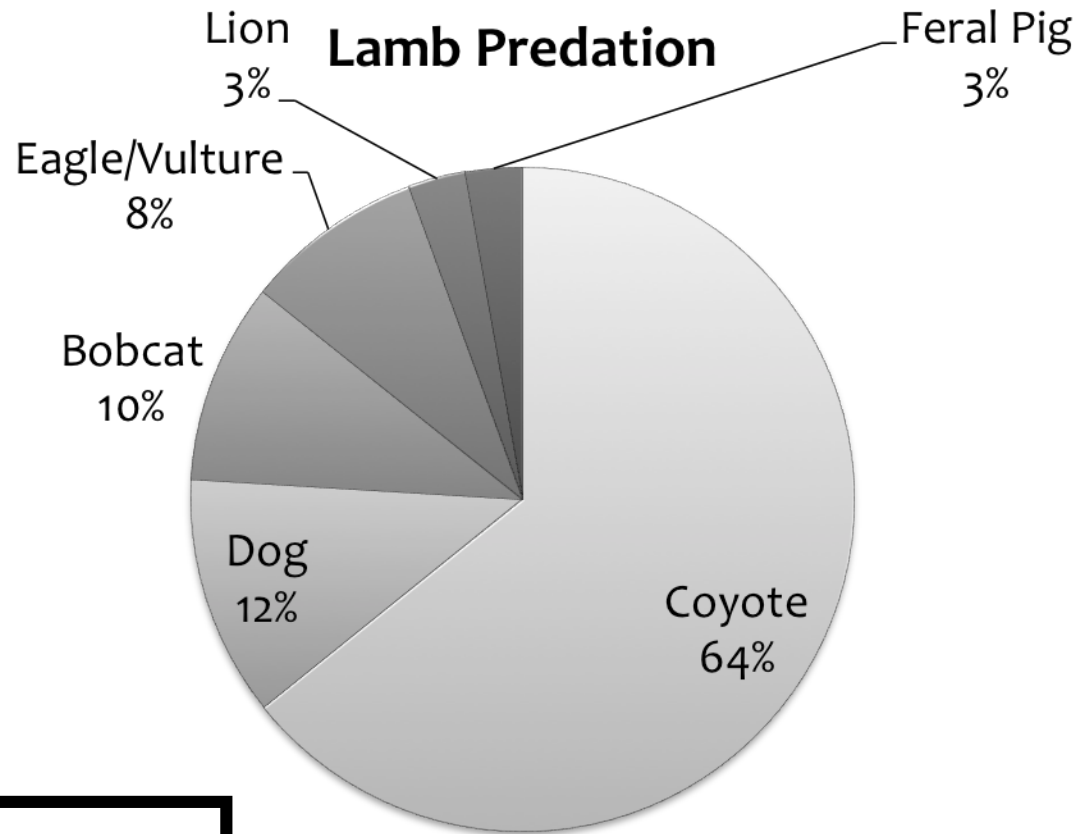$0.11

Texas Stats – 2015 USDA APHIS

Lamb Predation

- Lion 3%
- Feral Pig 3%
- Eagle/Vulture 8%
- Bobcat 10%
- Dog 12%
- Coyote 64%

10% of Lamb Crop
3% of Adult Ewe Flock
$10 Million Loss
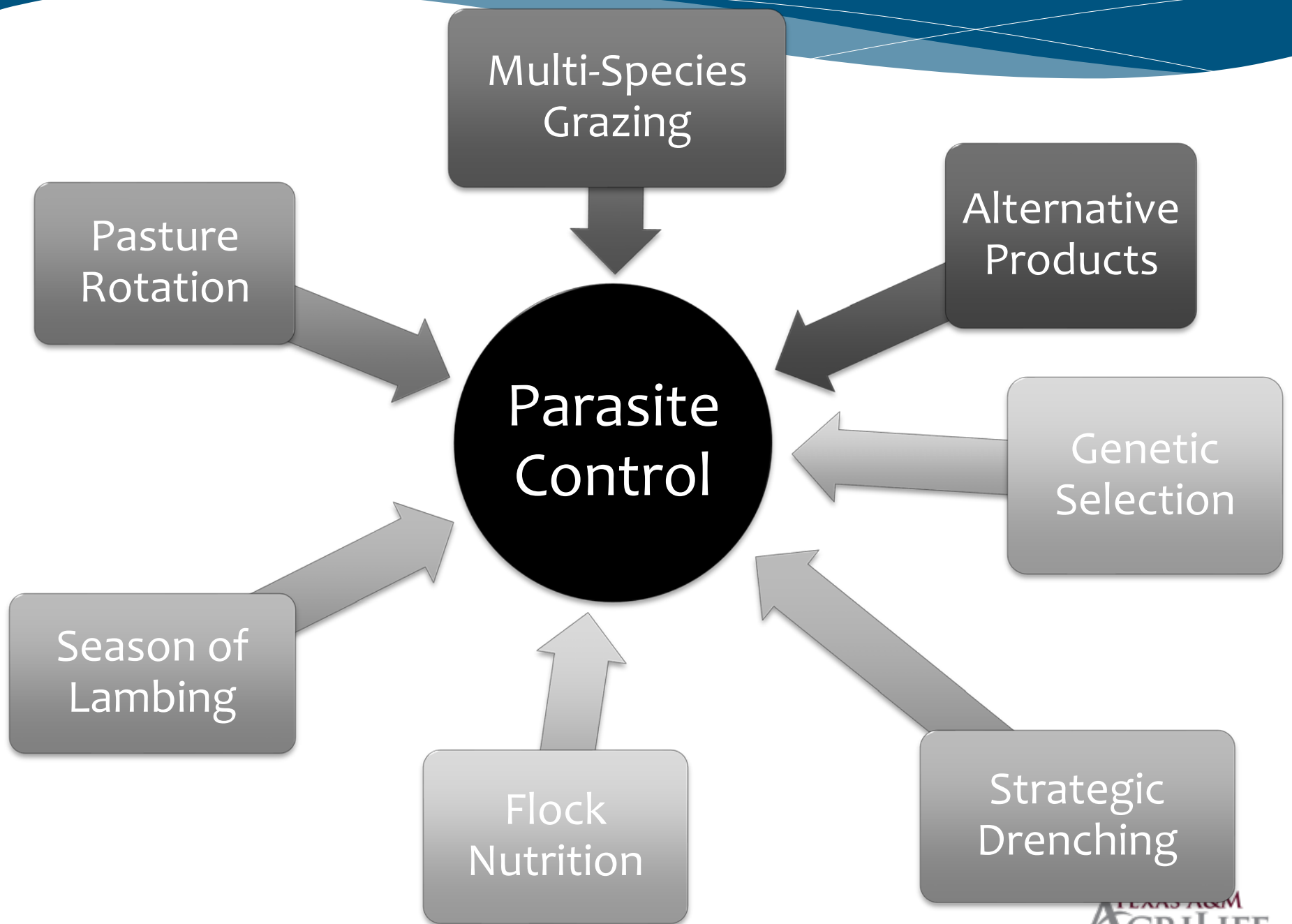
Questions

R. Reid Redden, PhD

Asst. Professor & Sheep & Goat Specialist

325.657.7324

reid.redden@ag.tamu.edu

@TAMUSheepandGoats