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ReviewArticle

Overview of Body condition score (BCS) in sheep

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Abstract

The body's Status Score (BCS) is a useful tool for sheep owners to assess the productivity and health of their own herds, as determined by the research. The subjective BCS method of assessing ewe energy reserves can shed light on the connection between body fat, milk output, and general health. The bodily condition of the ewes was assessed using a score method devised by Maurya et al. (2008).

Introduction

According to Murray's 1919 assertion, the proportion of fat to non-fatty matter determines an animal's bodily condition. Body Condition Score (BCS), a purely subjective metric used in sheep farming, is frequently used to help farmers decide what to feed and how to manage their flock. Assessing the degree of longissimus dorsi muscle and fat cover over the spinal and transverse processes of the lumbar vertebrae is done by palpating the loin region in sheep. The amount of soft tissue in this area is utilised to determine the live sheep's ratio of muscle to fat.and figuring out how much muscle and how much fat a live sheep has. The recommended goal scores have been established for various life stages of sheep production, and this method is used as a tool to assess changes in flock management and nutrition on the farm. In routine veterinarian clinical examinations and on-farm welfare assessment processes, body condition scoring is another significant animal-based outcome.

Procedure of BCS:

When evaluating body condition in sheep, the longissimus dorsi muscle and the fat layer covering the lumbar vertebrae are both assessed manually by palpating the loin area. This area is crucial because it displays quick changes in body fat. The amount of muscle covering the skeleton and the quantity of fat in the flanks below the loin are the two factors used to determine a sheep's body condition on a five-point ordinal scale. This makes it possible to evaluate the amount of fat that covers the lumbar vertebrae's transverse and spinal processes. The scale goes from 1 (obese) to 5 (emaciated), with intermediate numbers representing varied levels of bodily condition. Other scoring techniques rely on feeling the fat layer covering the ribcage.

Advantage of BCS:

Yes, that is accurate. Body condition scoring is a flexible, non-instrumental measurement that is simple to understand and apply. In late pregnancy, when the increasing foetus and fluids can make it challenging to evaluate changes in the ewe's live weight, body condition score might be very helpful. In such circumstances, BCS offers a more comprehensive assessment of the health and nutritional state of an animal.

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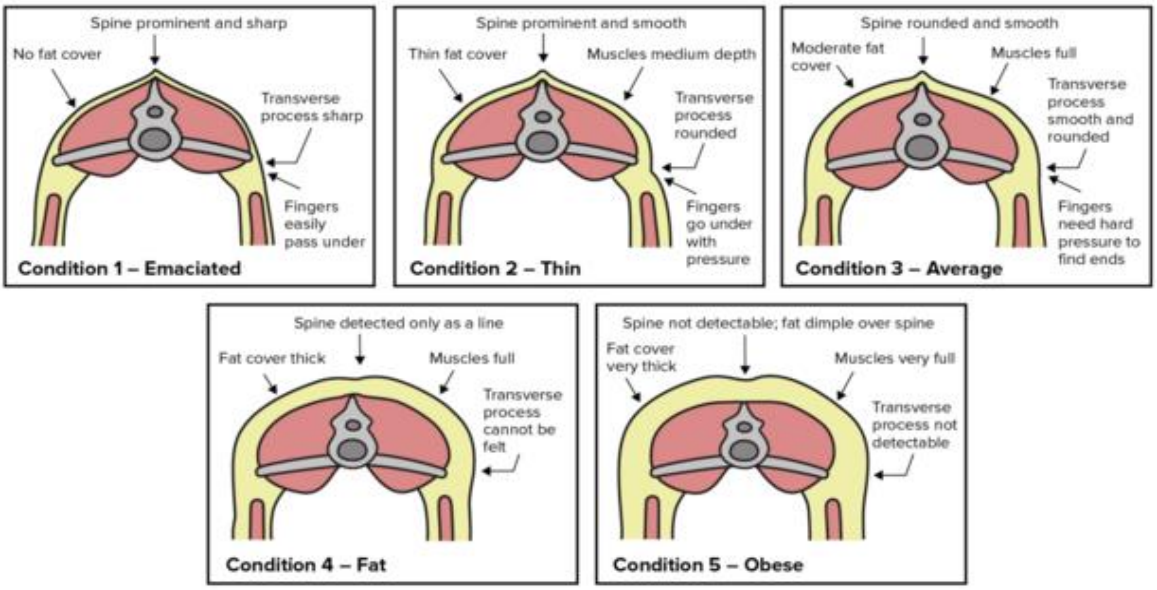

Uses of BCS:

The body condition score (BCS) is a crucial tool for sheep producers to efficiently manage their flocks. Farmers may improve productivity and maintain high animal welfare by making educated decisions about feeding and management by routinely measuring the BCS of both the flock as a whole and the individual animals within it. Maintaining an appropriate BCS in ewes is particularly important in the lead up to mating and during pregnancy, as it can significantly impact lambing percentages and the health of both the ewe and her offspring. BCS can also assist in early detection of potential health issues, enabling prompt intervention and treatment. For example, it can be used to decide on the proper food amounts during pre-lambing, a crucial time for guaranteeing the highest possible lambing rates. The efficiency and profitability of the entire flock can be increased by identifying ewes that may need to be killed because of low output with the aid of condition scoring. Farmers and veterinarians can maintain a healthy, sustainable flock by periodically checking and controlling the bodily condition of the sheep.

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