

# Sheep Artificial Insemination Fact Sheet 7: Collecting a Ram

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## Basics of Collecting a Ram with an AV

What you will need:

- Ewe in heat
- 2 people
- 2 lead lines
- 2 collars (sheep sizes)
- Access to hot water
- Warm water bath
- Clean and dry 15 ml centrifuge tube
- 15 ml centrifuge tube that fits onto the 50 ml tube
- Thermometer
- Sterile Lubricant (non spermicidal)
- Artificial Vagina
  - See factsheet on building an artificial vagina (AV)

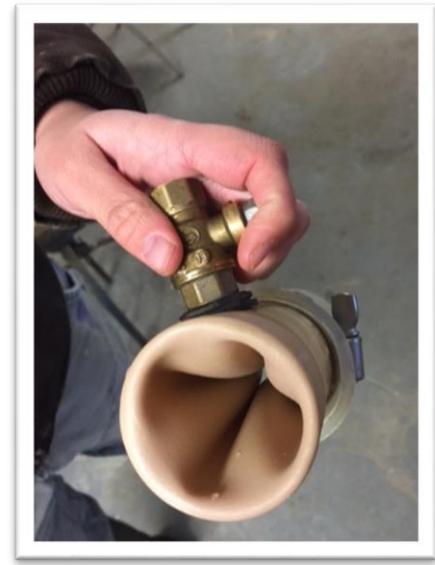


*Artificial Vagina*

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➤ Tie the ewe in standing heat with a short lead next to a wall or gate so that one side is against a surface.

➤ Fill the AV with warm water so that it has some pressure inside and is around 110 F (43 C). (Easiest way to do this is with a large syringe (20cc))  
*(See pictures to the right)*

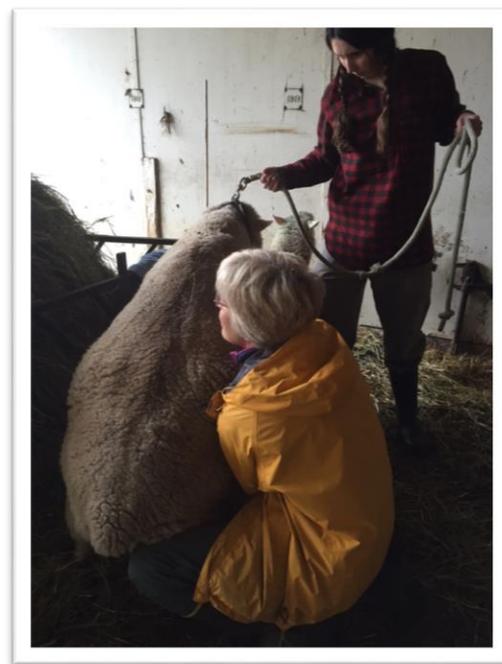


➤ Fill 50ml centrifuge tube with 110F (43 C) water and place empty 15ml centrifuge tube inside it (*see AV picture*) and attach to AV

- Ensure that the water bath is around 104F (40 C)
- Lubricate the inside edge of the AV with sterile non-spermicidal lubricant (not too much)
  - Tip: keep the bottle of lubricant in your pocket to warm it prior to use
- One person will hold the AV and one person will handle the ram for safety
- Introduce ram on a lead to the ewe. Keep him on a short lead to protect the person with the AV
- Watch for ram excitement behavior
  - Flehmen response
  - Pawing
  - Chortling
- If ewe is in true standing heat she will:
  - Allow ram to mount
  - Wiggle tail
  - Urinate for the ram
- When the ram mounts, quickly deflect the penis into the AV instead of the ewe and allow him to ejaculate in the AV (this happens really quickly)
- Be careful not to allow ram to breed the ewe
- Once ram has ejaculated swing the AV to encourage semen to collect in the 15 ml centrifuge tube at the bottom.
- You may try to collect the ram again quickly, as long as the semen already collected doesn't get cool.
- Once collection is completed return ram and ewe to their pens
  - Maybe give them a treat as a positive reinforcement of the experience
- Quickly get the semen into the warm water bath to ensure that it does not get cold shock.
  - It can still be inside the 50 ml tube



*Collecting Ram with AV*



*Note: Rams can also be collected using an electro-ejaculator. We don't recommend trying this on your own. Find an experienced veterinarian to teach you the appropriate way to use the electrical stimulation.*

