



78 Sunset Road
Springvale, Maine 04083
207-324-3733
noon@gwi.net

Organic Management Calendar – Jean Noon

Sept. 1-- Ewes are turned into a third crop hay field for flushing. (Very clean of parasites)

Sept. 20--Ewes sorted and checked using FAMACHA system and dosed with garlic juice if needed. Records kept of ewes that need treatment. Rams are introduced to the flock(s). I usually have 2 rams and separate the group's pastures. Ewe lambs are integrated with ewes this year but sometimes have their own ram.

Nov. 10--Rams are removed from the flock.

Nov. 15 (or when the ground freezes and ewes begin to need hay and water)--Ewes are brought into the open barn off pasture and are fed hay.

Dec. 20-- Ewes start to get supplemental organic grain, gradually increasing from 1/10 pound to ½ pound per head over a week. Thin ewes are sorted into a separate group and are given more grain. Lambs are in their own group.

Dec.-Jan.--Sheep are shorn. Six or seven lambing pens (4' x 4') are set up. Sheep are in flock groups of less than 20 to minimize the risk of hernias from pushing. (Without the wool they are less padded) I shear before lambing for cleaner wool, more space and access to grain trough, dryer sheep (they stay in the barn when it snows or rains), so I can see their udders, and because they are more careful to lamb inside, out of the wind.

Feb. 5--Lambs start to be born. Ewes lamb in the flock group and are moved into a lambing pen for two to three days, then are moved into a pen with up to five other ewes with lambs for a few days before joining the larger groups of lambed ewes. Lambs are given free choice grain in a creep feeder.

April 1--All lambs have been born. Ewes with Feb. lambs are taken off grain and are fed only hay in early April. Lambs have access to a creep pen with grain and hay.

April 25 to 30--Feb. and early March lambs are weaned. Ewes are removed from lambs and dried off. Lambs never go with ewes onto the grass.

May 10-- Ewes are moved to permanent pasture. They are rotated very early in the season and then allowed several sections as the grass growth slows. Weaned lambs are moved into dry lot with free choice grain, hay and access to winter cleaned, ungrazed pasture. Lambs' pasture access is moved every day by "strip grazing" with portable fence. The lambs never go on ground that the ewes have been on (since November). Most of the lamb pasture is mowed for hay in early June before their "strip" moves up to it. When the lambs are still small it takes a few weeks before they begin to eat much grass and I provide them with free choice hay and grain while they become accustomed to the new grass diet.

May-Sept --This year (2004) I purchased two long sections of *Flexinet* and moved one section out on new grass ahead of lambs about 10-24" a day or twice a day as they began to eat more as they grew. The other section was moved up behind the lambs the same distance providing a strip of about 15 feet between sections for the lambs to romp. This worked well for 70 lambs. As lambs reach finish they are retained for replacement or sent to the butcher. I sort out finished lambs every two to three weeks. They usually weigh between 90-105 pounds. I have a permanent sorting set up made of wooden pens with a squeeze and a narrow chute that makes checking sheep and treating feet and using FAMACHA system to check for parasites quite quick and easy. Ewe lamb replacements are moved to a separate pasture and taken off grain as they reach finish. My first trip to the butcher is in mid May.

Sheep and lambs have access to water, shade, feed and salt mineral mix year round. Rams are housed separately except during breeding season.