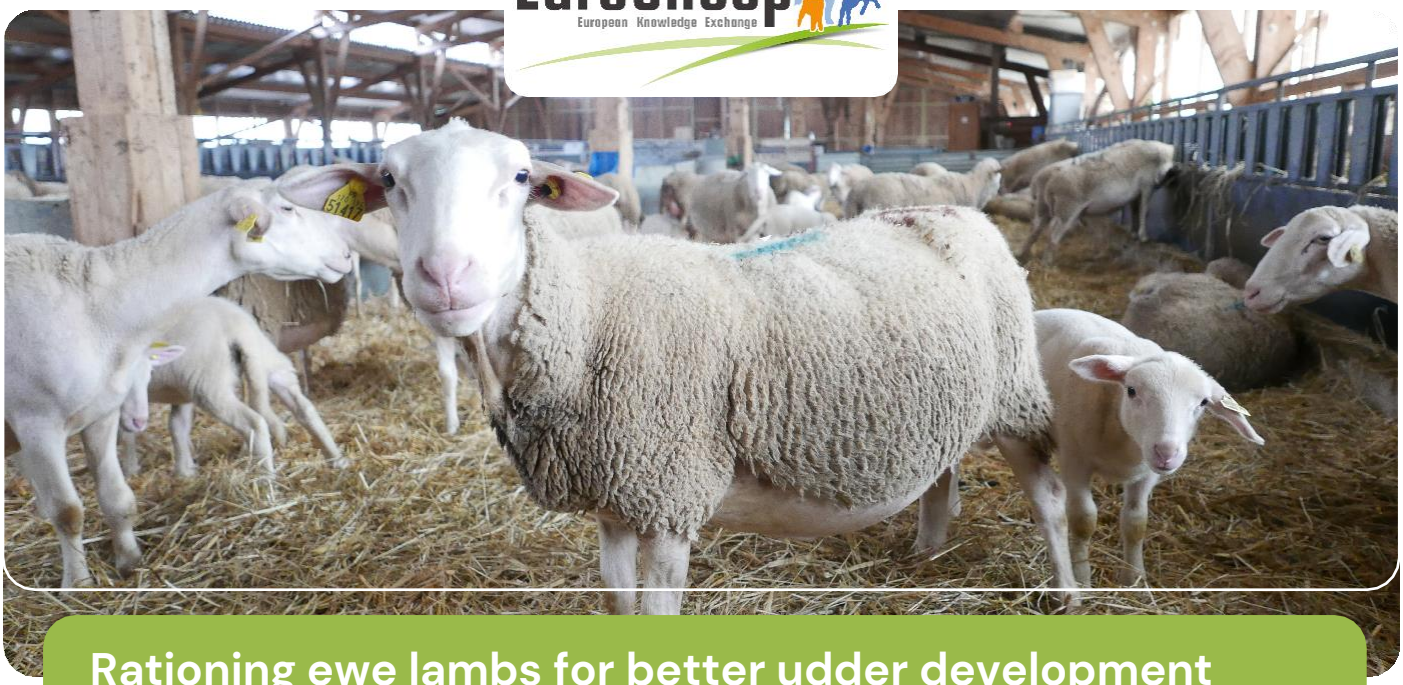

Rationing ewe lambs for better udder development

Need/issue: Weaning transition management

Aim: To adapt feed intake to the different growth stages of animal tissues, especially the udder, to encourage growth of secretory tissue and ensure the future productive capacity of ewes.

How to implement:

- If the animals can be weighed, create groups based on weight (+/- 5 kg max per batch).
- Ration the ewe lambs progressively and introduce a cereal to reach a maximum of 600g of concentrated feed.

Description:

- Development of the udder secretory tissue is equally important as development of the rumen and its papillae.
- Ewe lambs should reach 20% of their adult weight during the weaning stage and 33% at two months.
- Before 2 months- good quality straw or low graminate hay and around 800g/d concentrates
- Between 2 and 3 months- good quality hay and rationed at 600g/d concentrates

Expected benefits:

Mammary tissue start developing at 2 and 3 months of age: if their daily weight gain is too high (DWG > 170–180 g/d), they develop adipose tissue (fat) in the udder instead of secretory tissue, which has a negative impact on future milk production levels.

Better milk level of the ewes by ensuring a good development of secretory tissue and udders with low fat.

Prerequisites and/or limits:

- Must know the weight of the animals to make homogenous batches.
- Must have a cereal feed available.

Country: France

Dairy or/and meat sheep: Dairy and Meat sheep

Category of Animal (ewe, replacement, lamb): Replacement

Topic:

	Health
X	Nutrition
	Management

Level of solution:

	Knowledge
X	Practical

Source of information:

Guide pratique de l'Alimentation des brebis laitières (CNBL, 2019)

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