

## SECTION VI-9: WHEN SHOULD EWES BE CULLED BECAUSE OF MASTITIS?

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Mastitis is one of the most common reasons for a ewe to be culled from the flock while still a potentially profitable ewe.

#### 9.1 INCURABLE INFECTIONS

When ewes are infected with incurable contagious infections, particularly *Staph. aureus*, culling these animals may be an option to improve udder health for the entire flock. *Pseudomonas* infected ewes should also be culled.

Ewes with incurable environmental infections or udder abscesses should also be culled because of risk to the healthy flock and lost milk production.

Ewes which have lost a gland to mastitis and / or teat injury – but which have a healthy gland, may also be good candidates for culling. Even though the other gland will compensate somewhat – it is difficult for that ewe to be as productive as a ewe with two healthy glands. Be aware that blind glands may contain abscesses which may break and drain.

#### 9.2 REDUCED MILK PRODUCTION

Ideally, most culls in a flock are because of low production rather than disease such as mastitis. Culling based on milk production is flock-dependent and is based on the number of profitable ewes in the flock, as well as the cost of production per ewe. If milk production is less than the cost of production for each ewe, it is in the producer's benefit to cull her from the flock. If milking numbers are to remain stable in the flock, room needs to be made for new ewe-lambs to enter the flock.