

Ram Breeding Soundness

Presenters:

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Geri Parsons, CVT

Optimal Livestock Services

Host/Moderator: Jay Parsons

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This webinar is made possible with funding support from the Let's Grow Committee of the American Sheep Industry Association.



Ram Breeding Soundness Evaluation

(RBSE)

Cleon V.
Kimberling,
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Geri Parsons,
CVT

WHY DO BREEDING SOUNDNESS?

1. RAM UTILIZATION
2. INCREASE TWINNING
3. TIGHTEN YOUR LAMBING PERIOD



Gerri setting up the exam table

A group of sheep with large, curved horns standing in a field. The sheep are light brown and have thick wool. They are standing on a mix of grass and dry straw. The background is a blurred field with a fence.

Why is ram selection so important?

The ram contributes over 80% of the genetic change to the flock

Heritability Traits

- Scrotal Cir. 35%
- 120 day wt. 30%
- Retail cuts 45%
- Fiber Dia. 40%
- Staple length 55%

A Ram Breeding Soundness Examination (RBSE) includes a total physical examination with an emphasis on the reproductive tract.



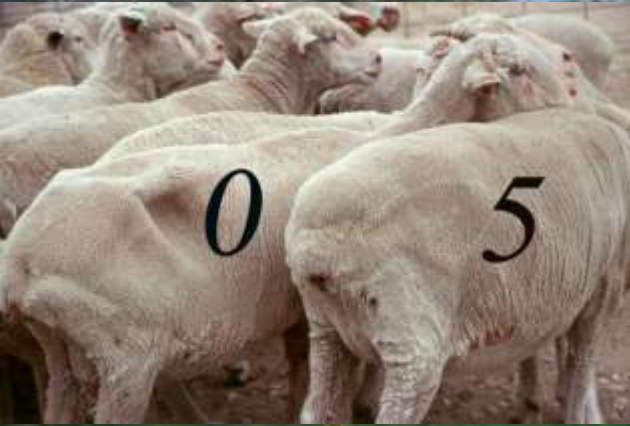
A rams POTENTIAL ability to impregnate a given # of ewes / defined period of time. NOT a fertility test.

Observe the animal when
undisturbed...

Note social behavior

BCS 3or4

Does libido exist?



10-15% of all rams do not have
any interest in ewes



Identification of each individual ram is a must.



General Health Condition



AGE

Mucous Membranes & Teeth

Pale may indicate parasitism



Bumble Foot



Ovine Contagious
Foot Rot



Foot Abscess

TESTICULAR PALPATION



Epididymitis



63'3167

Scrotal Circumference (SC)

Satisfactory

Rams 6-14 mo. 30-36 cm

Rams > 14 mo. 33-40 cm

Exceptional

Rams 6-14 mo. >36 cm

Rams > 14 mo. >40 cm

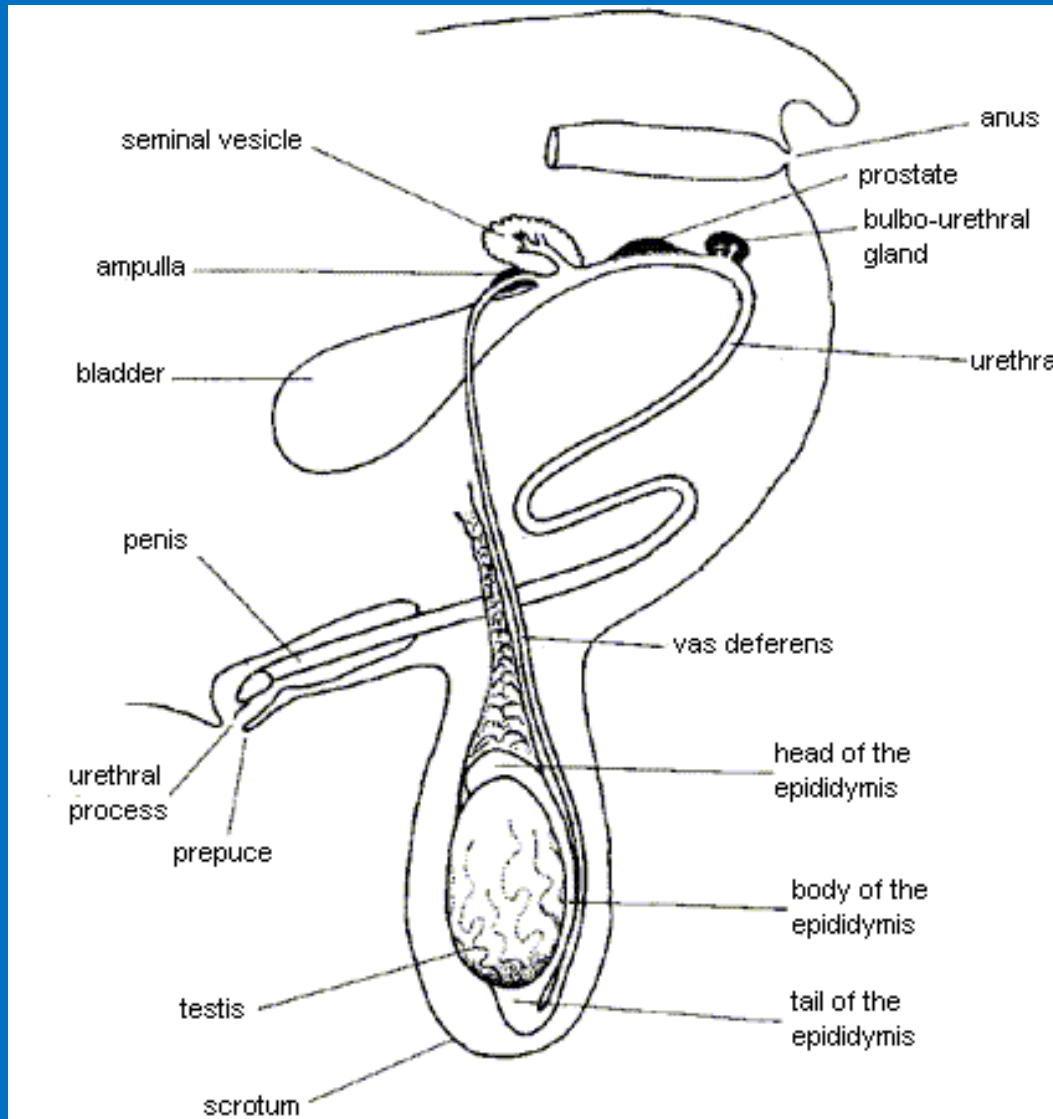
WHY THE EMPHASIS?



EXAMINE THE PENIS



Anatomy



Semen sample collection



Sample is viewed
under a microscope:
Motility & Morphology



Normal Spermatozoa



Abnormal Spermatozoa




Results recorded





Results are discussed with the owner

A close-up photograph of several ram heads with large, thick, spiraling horns. The rams are light brown or tan in color. The background is slightly blurred, showing more rams and a wooden fence.

This set of rams is from a sire with excellent semen quality & scrotal circumference of **46cm** ... Mated to **140** ewes **95%** conceived in the 1st estrus cycle



Utilizing Breeding Soundness you can increase your profit by \$20-30 per ewe

Group 1 was exposed to BSE rams
Group 2 was exposed to rams selected by ranch standards

Group 1 produced 17 more pounds of weaned lamb than group 2 ewes



Ram Cost / Year

Purchase of one \$800 ram
Salvage (Cull) value of \$170

Depreciation (4 years)	\$157.50
Interest (6%)	\$ 29.10
Death Loss (5%)	\$ 24.25
Feed & Maintenance	\$120.00

Cost / Year \$330.85

Ram Cost / Lamb

# of ewes / ram	# of lambs born / ram Assuming a 150% lamb crop	Ram cost / lamb @ \$330 ram cost	Ram cost / lamb @ \$355 ram cost w/ RBSE test incl.
30	45	\$7.33	\$7.89
50	75	\$4.40	\$4.73
85	127	\$2.50	\$2.80

202 lambs born in a 3 day period



SINGLES=58

WEANED=56

WEANED=34.8 LBS

TWINS=144

WEANED=134

WEANED=57.4 LBS

THE PRODUCTION IMPACT OF TWINS



58 singles vs 144 twins

Lbs marketed / single bearing ewe = 113

Lb. marketed / twin bearing ewe = 209

HOW MUCH RAM POWER?????

1:85

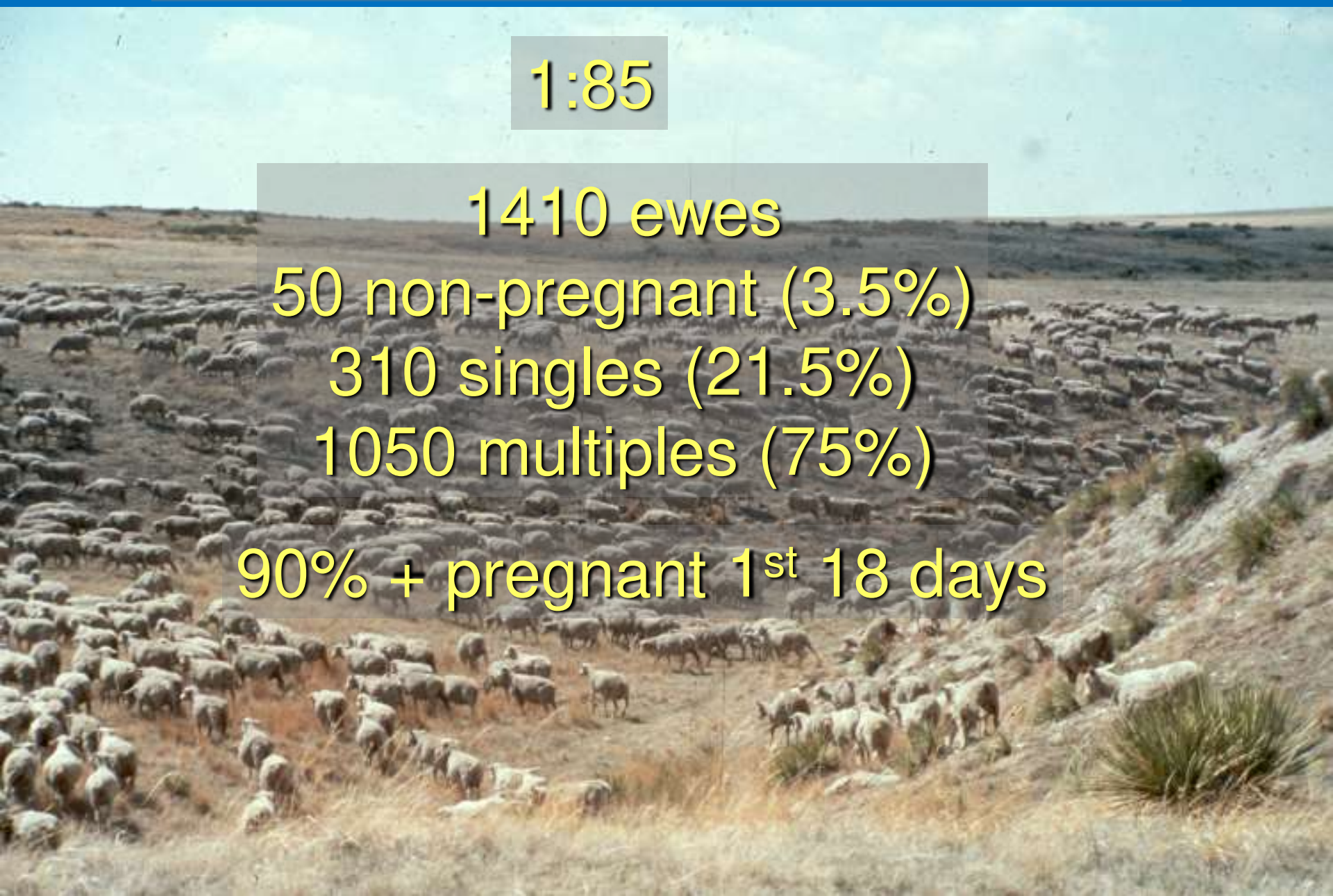
1410 ewes

50 non-pregnant (3.5%)

310 singles (21.5%)

1050 multiples (75%)

90% + pregnant 1st 18 days





Average Weaning wt of a single = 113 lbs

Average combine wt. of twins = 209 lbs



50 open ewes income from lambs \$0.00

310 singles @ 113 # = 35,030 # X \$1.60 = \$56,048

1050 with twins @ 209 # = 219,450 # X \$1.60 = \$351,120

Open ewes grossed \$0/hd

Single bearing ewes grossed \$180.80 / hd

Twin bearing ewes grossed \$334.40 / hd

DO LIST

- Select rams with EXCELLENT SEMEN QUALITY & LARGE SCROTAL CIRCUMFERENCE
- Select HEALTHY rams
- Select for GENETIC SUPERIORITY
- Purchase only B.OVIS & OPP NEGATIVE rams
- Use RR or QR rams
- Keep RAM LAMBS & MATURE RAMS SEPARATE

TAKE CARE OF YOUR RAMS & THEY
WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU

Results: It pays!

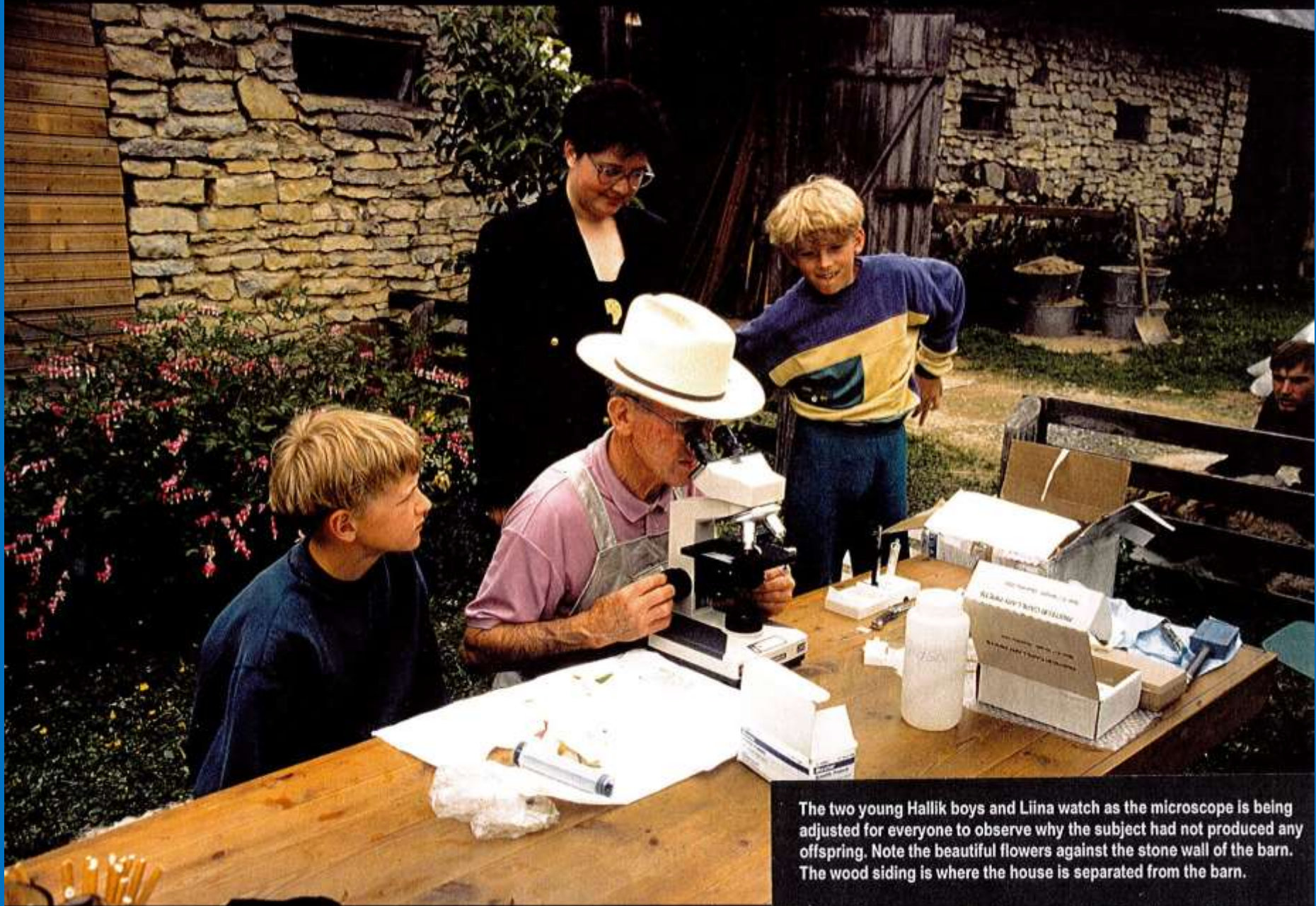
- Increased lamb crop in flock w / tested rams:
- Economic advantage of \$20-30 / ewe
- Reduced expenditure on additional ram power
- Shorter lambing season
- More lambs born early in the lambing season
- Increased size and uniformity of lamb crop





Dr. K demonstrating a breeding soundness examination of an oxford down ram imported from Denmark by Mr. Karju Hallik (extreme right). His son Peep and two grandsons watch as Mr. Anto Pahn restrains the ram.

This Estonia Seed Stock producer purchased an expensive ram from Denmark. No ewe conceived. It was a good educational opportunity. Without RBSE a Single sire system is a disaster!



The two young Hallik boys and Liina watch as the microscope is being adjusted for everyone to observe why the subject had not produced any offspring. Note the beautiful flowers against the stone wall of the barn. The wood siding is where the house is separated from the barn.

Back to Denmark!



A group of people are gathered inside a traditional ger (yurt) for a training session. In the foreground, a man in a light-colored sweater and blue gloves is operating a white microscope on a wooden table. Another man in a grey t-shirt and white face mask is looking on. To the left, a woman in a green jacket and a tan cap is seated, looking towards the microscope. In the background, a man in a dark jacket is leaning over the table, and another man in a dark jacket is standing and holding a wooden pole. The interior of the ger is decorated with colorful patterned fabrics. A solar panel is visible in the background, providing power to the microscope.

Students training
on the solar powered
microscope inside
a GER

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