



## **Day-Long Short Courses in Non-Surgical Artificial Insemination of Sheep with Chilled Semen**

*September 9, 2017 (southern Maine)*

*September 30, 2017 (University of Maine Research Farm in Orono, Maine)*

*Are you breeding ewes with a ram that you “borrowed” from another farm?*

*Have you imported an infectious disease through the purchase of a breeding ram?*

*Have you experienced a breeding season failure because you used a sub-fertile ram?*

*Are you using an on-farm ram that is becoming too closely related to your young stock?*

*Do you want to import genetics into your farm from another breeder in your region?*

*Would you like to earn an income from your top-breeding rams?*

*Are you interested in learning about estrous synchronization / out-of-season breeding?*

This course is targeted toward **experienced sheep breeders** (i.e., familiar with good flock management practices / completed one or more breeding / lambing seasons).

Participants will be provided with a comprehensive overview of a simple method of **non-surgical vaginal artificial insemination (VAI)** that has been proven on hundreds of thousands of sheep in Iceland, and that also might have promise for use in other sheep breeds. Other useful topics covered in the course will be; 1) reproductive evaluation of breeding rams, and 2) synchronization of estrus.

The course will be divided into a morning of lecture and an afternoon of hands-on labs on reproductive management of sheep (lunch will be provided):

- Comparison of laparoscopic (surgical) AI with a non-surgical (vaginal) AI technique developed by the commercial sheep industry of Iceland
- 2016 VAI research with dairy and Icelandic sheep breeds at the University of Maine
- Health and biosecurity advantages of artificial insemination
- Collection and evaluation of potential breeding rams
- Storage and transport of chilled semen
- Advantages and details of estrous synchronization / out-of-season breeding of ewes
- Use of a teaser ram for detection of estrus and timing of VAI in ewes
- Technique for VAI
- Economic models that might benefit from VAI
- Potential for use of frozen semen for vaginal VAI

For more information, please contact Jim Weber, DVM, PhD, Associate Professor, School of Food and Agriculture, University of Maine ([jaweber@maine.edu](mailto:jaweber@maine.edu)).

To register for either session, please contact Sally Farrell, 4-H Youth Development Professional, University of Maine Cooperative Extension ([sarah.s.farrell@maine.edu](mailto:sarah.s.farrell@maine.edu), [207-324-2814](tel:207-324-2814))