



FERTILITY INTERVENTIONS: Teasers

A teaser is a vasectomised ram – he will do everything that an entire ram does, but will fire blanks. Use of a teaser exploits the ‘ram effect’ and can be used to advance the breeding season by a fortnight. It will also synchronise, resulting in a more compact lambing period. Teasers can also be useful with young ewes, which don’t cycle as readily as older ewes. The teaser effect is most pronounced if they are used slightly ahead of the usual breeding season, which will vary by breed (for example Charolais will breed earlier than Hill breeds).

Choice of teaser is important:

- Easily identified (horns, long tail, different colour from other rams...)
- Young and fit!
- Breed – choose an early breeder (Charolais, Suffolk, Dorset). Cross breeds are good as they exhibit hybrid vigour – Finn x Dorset is a good choice

At least 7 weeks should be allowed between operation and use, to ensure infertility.

Teasers need to go in 2 weeks before the real rams, i.e. 5 ½ months before you would like to start lambing.

Therefore the teaser operation must be done at least 9 weeks before tupping.

In order to get the best results, 2 teasers per 100 ewes are required, but a flock of 400 may manage with 4-5 teasers.

When the tups are put in, a 25% increase in ratio is required e.g. 1:25-30

A few days exposure to the teaser is sufficient – this can allow a teaser to be used sequentially with different groups. Ewes will first have a silent heat, and then 17-26 days later ewes will have a true heat.

Any missed will cycle again 17 days later.

A simple rule of thumb is to put teasers in for a week, out for a week, then put the real rams in.

Teaser checklist

Action	Weeks pre-tupping (real rams)
Operate	9 weeks minimum
Separate ewes from sight, smell & sound of other rams (1 mile away). Don't forget neighbours' sheep!	6 weeks (minimum 4 weeks)
Teasers in	2 weeks
Ewes conceive	Usually 3-4 weeks after teasers went in