

ABORTED LAMB NECROPSIES

Equipment and Materials Needed

Knife, scissors, scalpel, forceps, garden secateurs
Two plastic pottles
Three red top Vacutainers.
Medium sized plastic pot half-filled with formalin



1. Inspect the outside of the fetus and the placenta if present. Note any gross abnormalities. If desired, weigh the fetus and measure the crown rump length (enables estimation of gestational age).
2. If placenta is present, put one button in formalin and place one in a pottle for microbiology.
3. Lay the fetus on its back with the head pointing away from you. Cut into the axilla on both sides and abduct the front legs to hold the body from falling over. With the knife held horizontally cut a flap from the thoracic inlet caudally through the costal cartilages bilaterally, through the diaphragm and on to the umbilicus.
4. Use one of the Vacutainers to collect 3 mL of blood from the atria of the heart, or the dorsal vena cava. If blood cannot be collected from the heart, you can collect pleural or peritoneal fluid if it is present. Label the tube.
5. Use the other syringe to collect 3 mL of stomach fluid from the stomach/rumen. Do this by lifting the stomach to allow fluid to collect at the bottom and then inserting your needle into the fluid at the bottom. Label the tube.
6. Collect a sample of lung (one lobe) and place into one of the sterile pottles; label.
7. Into the pot of formalin place a section of heart, lung, liver, kidney & thyroid.
8. Collect the tip of the ear. Roll up and place in a vacutainer; label.
9. Remove the head from the fetus. Skin the top of the skull using a knife or scalpel, then use the secateurs to remove the calvarium from the skull. Place the entire brain in formalin, even if it is mushy!
10. Fill out a submission form, package up the samples and send them to us. Typically we will check stomach contents for *Campylobacter* and serum for *Toxoplasma* antibodies first. Because the tests are not 100%, sensitive samples from up to four fetuses may need to be tested to confirm a diagnosis of *Campylobacter* abortion. If the *Campylobacter* and *Toxoplasma* tests are negative, depending on the history we will recommend further tests such as histopathology or serology for Border disease.