



SOP 9.01 Collection of semen: Artificial vagina method for sheep

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Purpose

- (1) The objective of this standard operating procedure is to provide guidance to the Charles Sturt University staff on:
 - a. Collection of semen with the use of a dummy mount ewe and an artificial vagina.

Scope

- (2) This procedure applies to any person who is involved in AEC approved projects involving semen collection from rams using an artificial vagina.
- (3) All researchers and teaching staff using animals for scientific purposes must be competent. For definition of competency refer to Charles Sturt University's Policy on [Animal Care Competency Training and Assessment](#)

Details of procedure

- (4) The artificial vagina (AV) is a hard plastic/PVA (or similar) tube approximately 25cm in length and 7cm in diameter with a rubber/silicone liner. The space between the liner and the tube is filled with warm (40-50°C) water and air, via a tap mechanism as necessary, to obtain a snug fit on the ram penis when it is introduced to the device. A glass, plastic or similar vial is fitted to the opposite end to which the penis is inserted to collect the ejaculate. The teaser or dummy mount ewe is restrained in an appropriate restraining device, and the ram allowed to enter the pen with the ewe. After appropriate sexual behaviour of the ram, he mounts the teaser ewe. The AV is inserted over the ram's penis by the operator, and the ejaculate collected. The ewe and ram are returned to their respective pens/yards.

Drugs, chemicals, or biological agents

- (5) Not required.

Impact of procedure on wellbeing of animals

- (6) No effect on the ram's health or fertility. The ram will not operate/ejaculate if conditions are not correct. The ewe should not be restrained for long periods of time.

Animal care

- (7) The procedure is usually well tolerated, and rams will recover completely without adverse effects. Routine management can resume.



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Pain relief

- (8) Not required.

Reuse and repeated use

- (9) The ram might be used up to three occasions on a day, but not more than five times in a week. Different teaser ewes should be used where possible.

Qualifications, experience or training necessary to perform this procedure

- (10) A sound knowledge of how to carry out the procedure.

Record requirements

- (11) Appropriate monitoring and recording of the use of animals must occur.

Associated documentation (including pictures if available)

- (12) None required.

Glossary

- (13) AV – Artificial vagina

References and relevant links

- (14) Australian Industry Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Sheep, 2016, Animal Health Australia, version 1. www.animalwelfarestandards.net.au
- (15) National Model Codes of Practice for the Welfare of Livestock, <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/animal-welfare/animal-care-and-welfare/livestock/livestock-files/national-model-codes-of-practice-for-the-welfare-of-livestock>
- (16) Sheep and Goat Welfare, <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/animal-welfare/animal-care-and-welfare/livestock-welfare/sheep-and-goats>