

Weighing and condition scoring small ruminants

Category

3. Minor conscious intervention

Objective

To record the live weight and body condition score.

Alternatives to animal use

There are no practical alternatives.

Equipment

Weighing scales and crate.

Drugs, chemicals or biological agents

Nil

Procedure

Walk the individual animal into the weighing crate.

The gates should shut to restrain the animal in the crate.

Record the weight.

Gently feel the degree of fat and muscle cover over the short ribs and spine.

Score the degree of cover using the standard 0-5 scale and record.

Release the animal.

If only condition scoring is being recorded, the procedure may be conducted with animals restrained as a group in a race.

Animal Wellbeing

Weighing and condition scoring has no impact on animals other than the restraint required to hold animals in the weighing crate or race for a short time. Handling by experienced operators will minimise that impact.

Pain Relief

Not needed. The procedure should not cause pain.

Animal Care

Animals will be observed for signs of distress during the procedure. The procedures will be conducted quickly to allow release of animals from the crate, minimising distress. These procedures have no after-effect, but animals will be observed immediately after release to ensure normal behaviour.

Reuse and repeated use

Animals are usually measured at periods no more frequently than once weekly, depending on the needs of the investigation.

Qualification, experience or training necessary to perform procedure

Competence in handling small ruminants.

Experience in use of equipment and condition scoring