How to Body Condition Score
(Palpation Areas)

Palpation Areas

Fat cover
Spinous process
Eye muscle
Transverse process
Skin (hide)
Back bone
Body Condition Scores – Sheep/Goats

- Condition 1 - Emaciated
  - Spine prominent and sharp
  - No fat cover
  - Transverse process sharp
  - Fingers easily pass under

- Condition 2 - Thin
  - Spine prominent and smooth
  - Thin fat cover
  - Muscles medium depth
  - Transverse process rounded
  - Fingers go under with pressure

- Condition 3 - Average
  - Spine rounded and smooth
  - Moderate fat cover
  - Muscles full
  - Transverse process smooth and rounded
  - Fingers need hard pressure to find ends

- Condition 4 - Fat
  - Spine detected only as a line
  - Fat cover thick
  - Muscles full
  - Transverse process cannot be felt

- Condition 5 - Obese
  - Spine not detectable; fat dimple over spine
  - Fat cover very thick
  - Muscles very full
  - Transverse process not detectable

Adapted from “Body Condition Scoring of Sheep” by J. M. Thompson and H. Meyer (Oregon State University)

■ Changes in body condition score over the production cycle (sheep and goats):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
<th>Goats</th>
<th>Desired Condition Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open (not lactating)</td>
<td>134*</td>
<td>78*</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flushing</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gestation</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lambing (lactation)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>3+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(at lambing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Adjusted by length of lactation

Adapted from the University of Kentucky, Department of Animal Science.