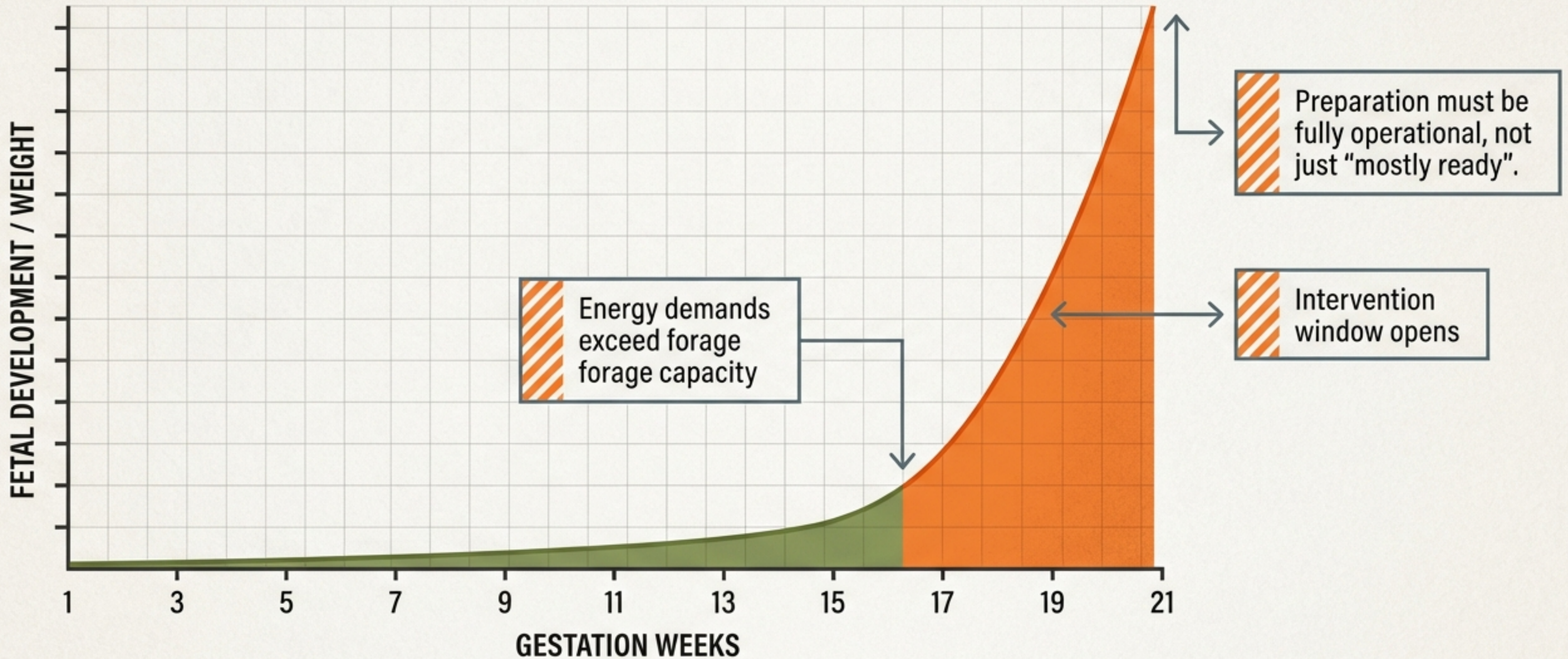




THE KATAHDIN LAMBING READINESS PLAYBOOK

A Shepherd's Field Manual for Calendar, Nutrition, and Facilities.

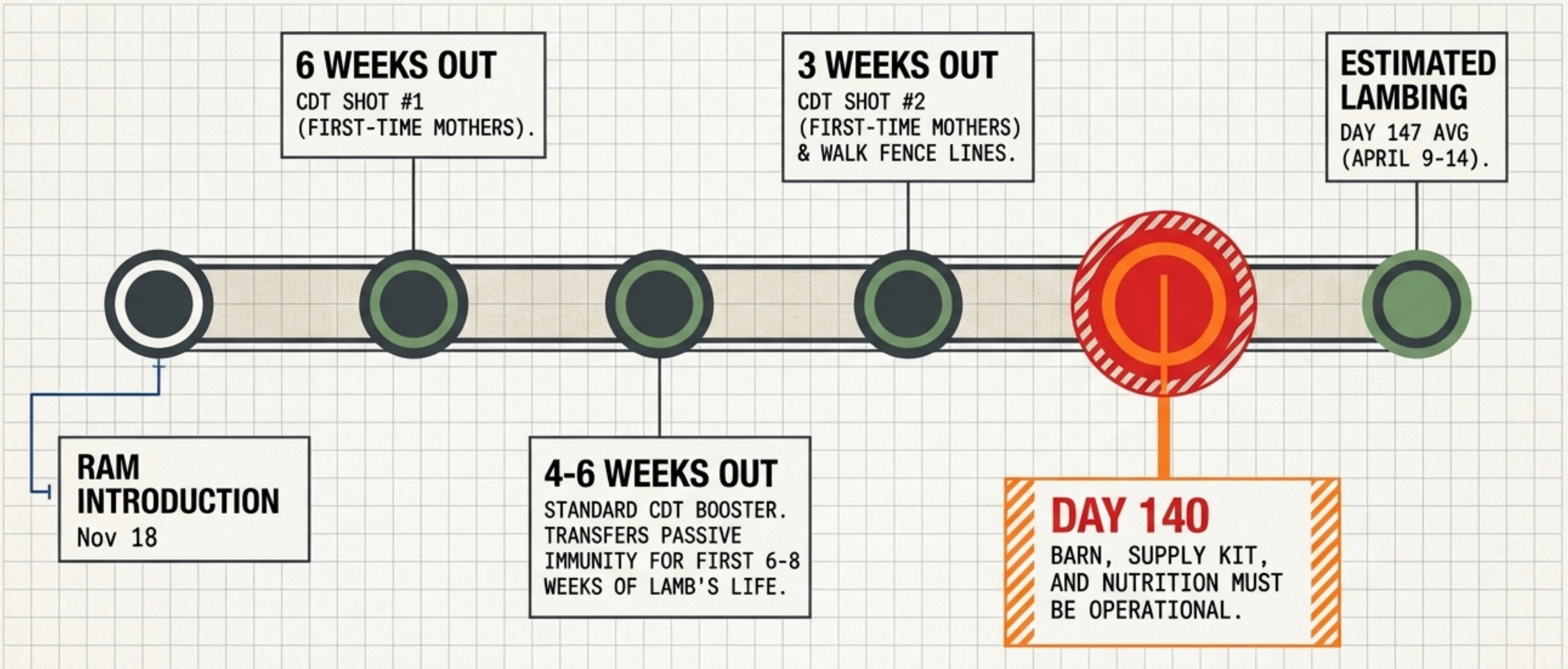
SEVENTY PERCENT OF FETAL GROWTH OCCURS IN THE FINAL SIX WEEKS



This single biological statistic dictates every facility, nutritional, and medical decision leading up to Day 140.

WORKING BACKWARD: THE OPERATIONAL READINESS TIMELINE

KATAHDIN GESTATION AVERAGES 147 DAYS (RANGE 142-152). WORK BACKWARD FROM DAY 140. THAT IS YOUR NON-NEGOTIABLE DEADLINE.



THE PRE-LAMBING EWE ASSESSMENT (DAY 133 CHECKOUT)

1. Body Condition Score:

Target 3.0-3.5 (singles),
3.5-4.0 (multiples).
Adjust feed.

2. **Udder:** Check for asymmetry/hard tissue (indicates mastitis history).

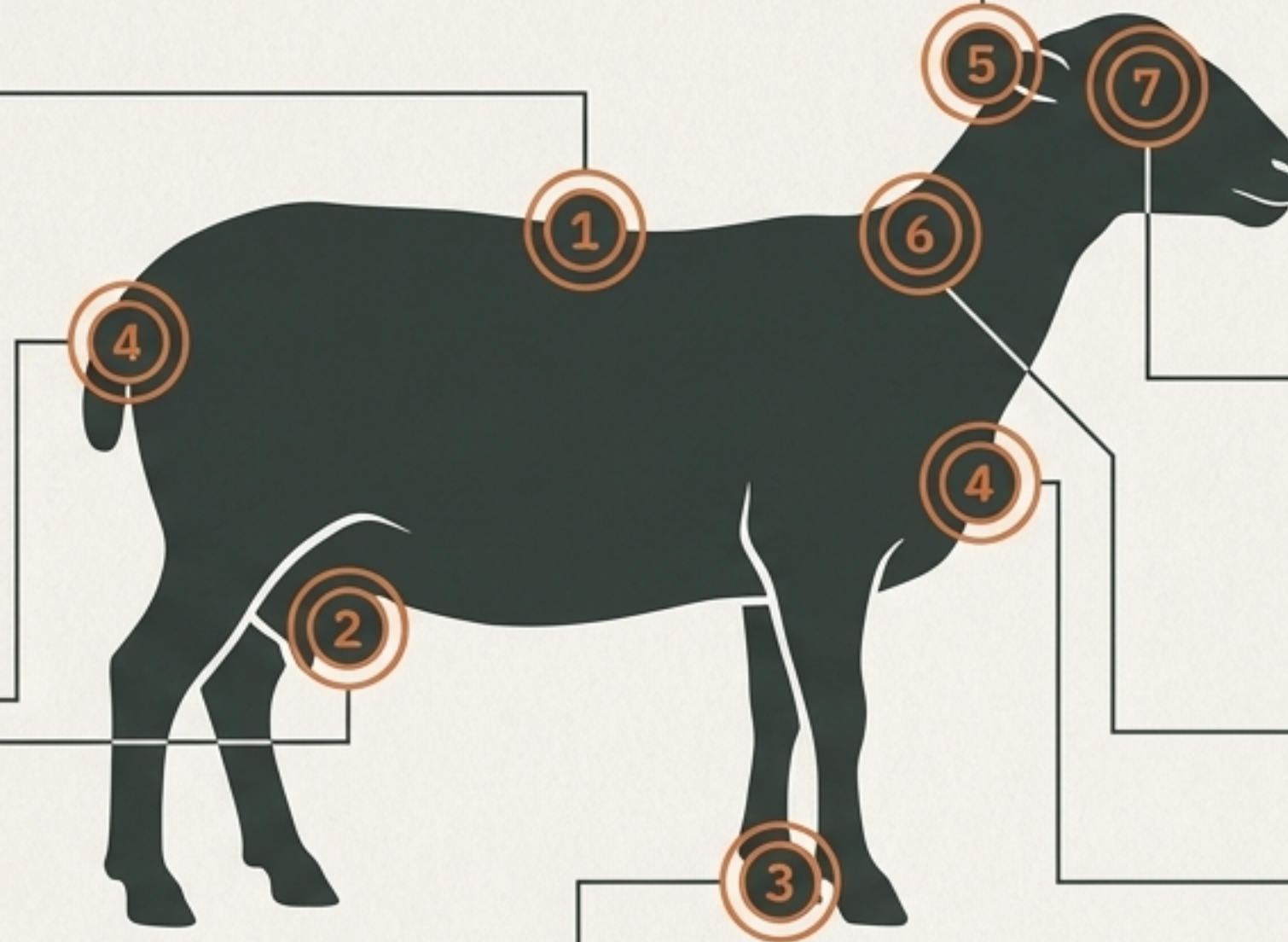
3. **Feet:** Trim hooves. Lamé ewes cannot position properly for delivery.

4. **Vulva:** Monitor for signs of vaginal prolapse.

5. **Tag:** Ensure ID is legible from a distance.

6. **CDT:** Confirm vaccination administered 4+ weeks ago.

7. **Eyes (FAMACHA):** Score and treat strategically, no blanket dosing.



SCALING NUTRITION TO MATCH FETAL DEMAND

FEED BREAKDOWN

GRAIN SUPPLEMENT: Start at 0.5 lbs/day (4-6 wks for multiples; 2-3 wks for singles).
Target: ~1 lb/day per lamb.

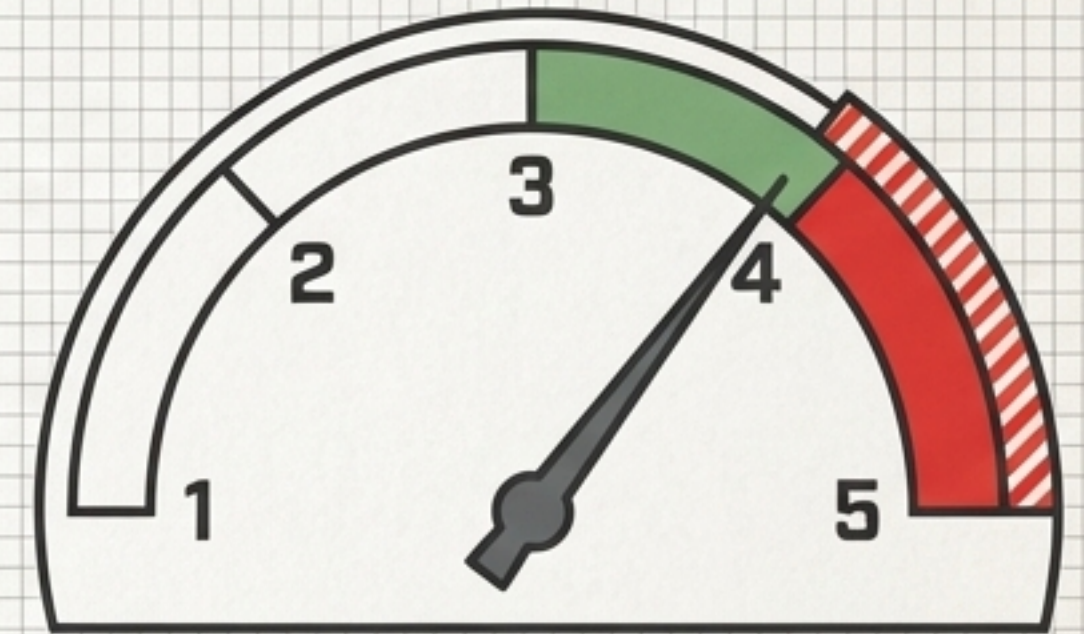
CALCIUM SOURCE: Alfalfa introduced around Day 90.

BASE: Good quality grass hay (free-choice).



WATER:
1-4 gallons/day (kept >40°F).
Inadequate water triggers toxemia.

BCS WARNING DIAL



BCS > 4.5 in easy-keeping Katahdins elevates pregnancy toxemia risk. The goal is adequate energy, not maximum energy.

CRITICAL RULE: NEVER INCREASE GRAIN BY MORE THAN 0.25 LBS/DAY. ACIDOSIS KILLS FASTER THAN TOXEMIA.

THE SELENIUM QUESTION: NAVIGATING DEFICIENT SOILS SAFELY

Context: Eastern US soil deficiency causes White Muscle Disease (stiff posture, sudden cardiac death in lambs).

SAFE DAILY SUPPLEMENTS

- ✓ - Free-choice sheep loose mineral (FDA max 90 ppm).
- ✓ - Vitamin E top-dress (100 IU/ewe/lamb).
- ✓ - Selenium/Iodine premix (1 lb to 50 lbs salt).

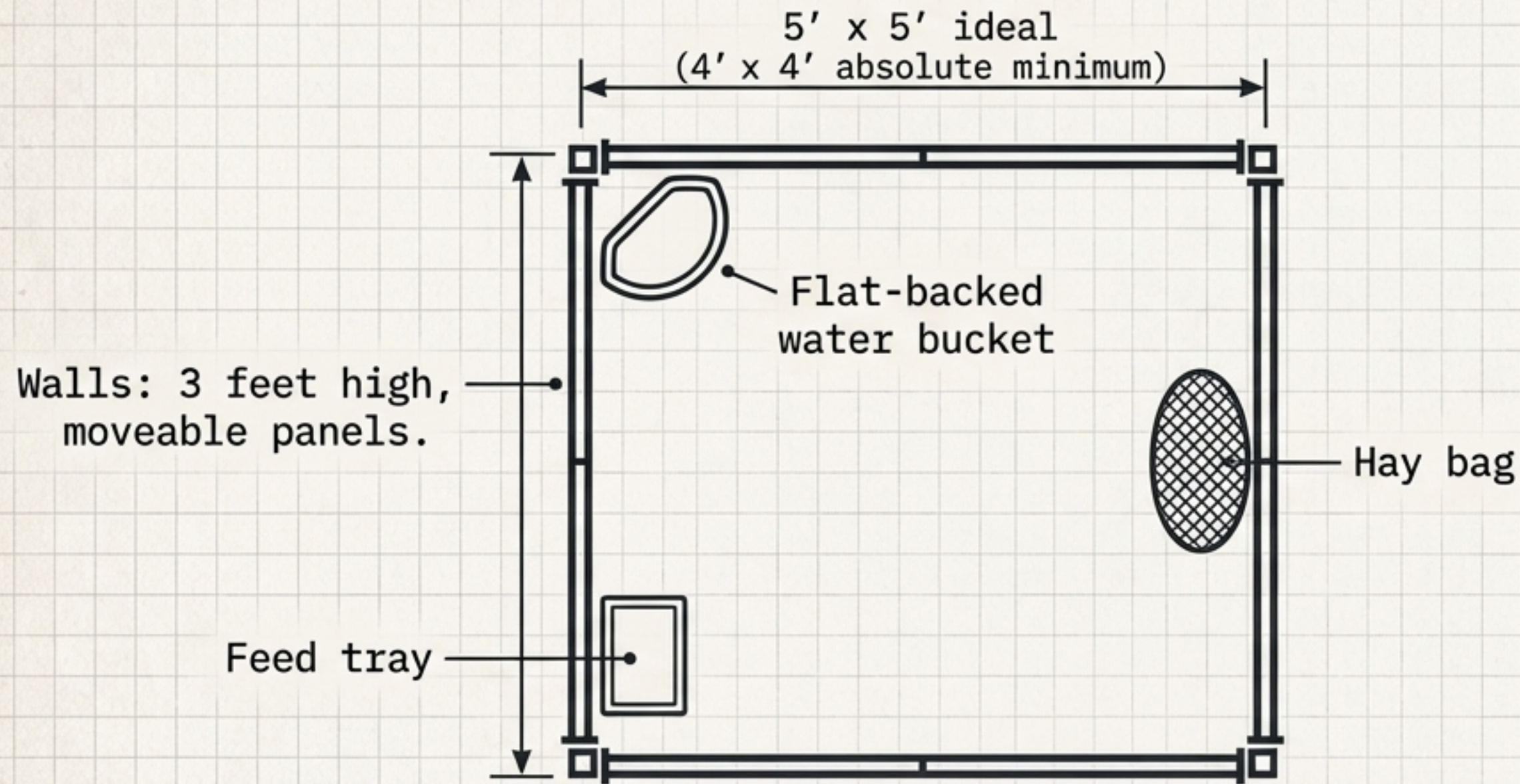
PROHIBITED - NEVER USE

**Injectable BO-SE in
Pregnant Ewes.**

(Documented cause of
abortions and death).

Exception: Permitted only in lambs 2+
weeks old, or at birth (1 mL/40 lbs).

CONSTRUCTING THE OPTIMAL LAMBING JUG



CAPACITY RATIO

1 to 2 jugs per
10 ewes.

KEY RULE: Prioritize dry conditions over warm conditions. Ensure predator protection (LGDs) and manage mud aggressively outside the barn.

ENVIRONMENTAL STRATIGRAPHY: BEDDING, AIR, AND LIGHT



Airflow: Ventilation must move above animal level. Lambs tolerate cold, not drafts/dampness.



Lighting: Use red or dim lights for night checks. Flooding laboring ewes with bright light increases cervical complication risks.



Top Layer (6-8 inches): Clean Straw. (Provides better footing for newborns and carries lower mastitis risk than shavings).

Middle Layer (4-6 inches): Granular Field-Grade Limestone. (Absorbs moisture and neutralizes pathogens. Do not use powdered).

Bottom Layer: Barn floor.

The 2-AM Arsenal: Staging the Supply Kit



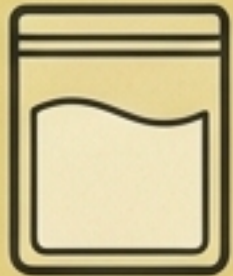
Assemble 14 days prior. Scrambling at 2 AM is a failure of planning, not a rite of passage.

THE COLOSTRUM HIERARCHY



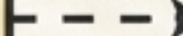
TIER 1 (OPTIMAL)

Mother's Milk.
Natural nursing.



TIER 2 (BACKUP)

Frozen Bank Colostrum.
Stored in 50 mL flat zip-lock bags
(lasts 6 months).



BRIX REFRACTOMETER

>26.5% is Optimal.
>22% is Adequate.
<22% is Poor.



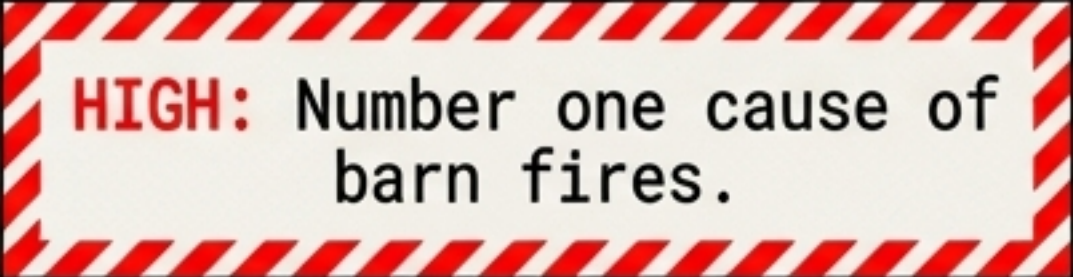
TIER 3 (EMERGENCY ONLY)

Commercial Replacer.
Shepherd's Choice/Colostrx.
Not adequately tested in lambs.

HARDWARE REQUIRED

- Tube feeder (60cc catheter-tip syringe + 6mm x 16-inch stomach tube)
- Pritchard nipples
- Milk-protein lamb replacer (never calf replacer)

Mitigating Hypothermia Without Igniting the Barn

Comparison Matrix		
Equipment	Fire Risk	Setup Safety
Traditional Heat Lamps	 HIGH: Number one cause of barn fires.	If used, secure with chain and locking connector. NEVER use twine, rope, or wire.
Ceramic Heat Emitters	Low	Requires standard socket, no glass bulb shatter risk.
Radiant Panels	Zero	Safe to touch, mount to walls.
Heated Mats	Zero	Waterproof, provides direct belly heat.

Warming Box Specs

Insulated, visible thermometer, ventilation holes. Must maintain 99-104°F air temperature. Have a hair dryer and old towels ready.

THE VET-DISPENSED MEDICAL CACHE & DIAGNOSTICS

THE CACHE

Antibiotics: Penicillin or Oxytetracycline.

Anti-inflammatory: Banamine (flunixin).

Metabolic: Calcium borogluconate 23% (Sub-Q),
50% Dextrose (Intraperitoneal).

Hormonal: Oxytocin.

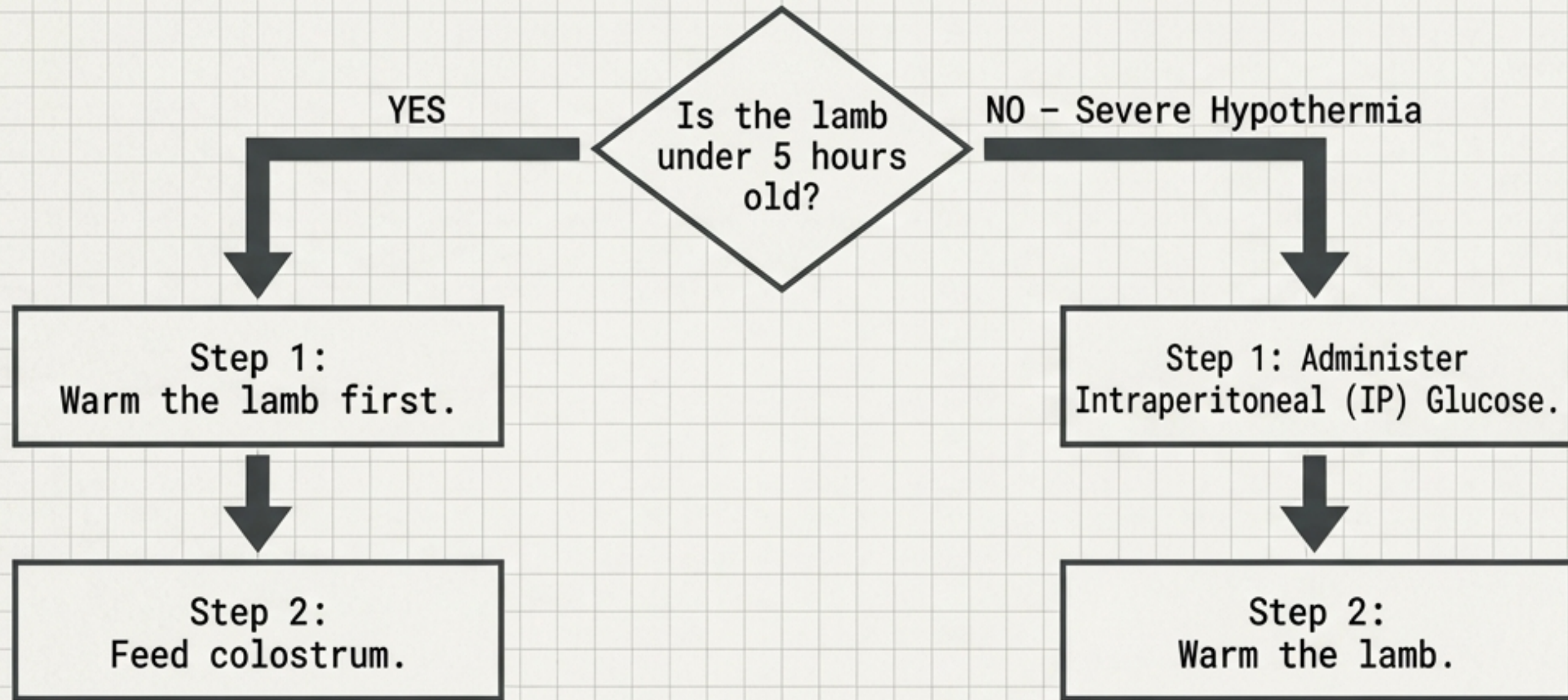
Hardware: 18/20-gauge needles, 3cc to 60cc
syringes.

PREGNANCY TOXEMIA VS. HYPOCALCEMIA

Visual Presentation:
Identical.

Rule: Treat for both
simultaneously. The
treatments do not interfere
with each other.

THE AGE-DEPENDENT HYPOTHERMIA PROTOCOL



WARNING: Warming an older lamb without energy causes fatal seizures. Glucose must precede heat.

DIGITAL OVERWATCH: BARN MONITORING TECHNOLOGY

1. Tech Tiers (\$30-\$50 range):

- Reolink Argus 3 Pro
- Eufy SoloCam E40
- Wyze (via hotspot)

2. Required Features:

- Night vision (infrared LEDs)
- Audio (critical for distinguishing genuine labor vocalizations from restlessness).



THE GOLDEN RULE

Cameras do not replace night checks.
They merely allow you to assess whether
a trip to the barn is warranted at 2 AM.

POST IN THE BARN: THE 5 IMMUTABLE SAFETY LAWS

1. **No BO-SE** for Pregnant Ewes. **Causes abortion/death.** **Use oral minerals.**
2. **Age Dictates Hypothermia Protocol.** <5 hrs = **Warm then feed.**
>5 hrs = **Glucose then warm.**
3. **Toxemia = Hypocalcemia Visually.** **Treat for both simultaneously.**
4. **Never Pull a Retained Placenta.** **Risks fatal uterine hemorrhage.** **It will pass.**
5. **Pregnant Women Must Not Assist.** **High risk of toxoplasmosis, enzootic abortion, and Q fever.** **Everyone wears gloves.**

The preparation ends here. Part 2: Fieldwork begins.