Sheep Pregnancy Diseases
Chlamydia

- Chlamydia Abortus is the cause of EAE, Enzootic Abortion in ewes
- EAE is characterized by late term abortions, stillbirths, and weak lambs
- Transmitted from aborting sheep to other susceptible females
- Most common cause of abortion in ewes
Chlamydia Continued

- Specific bacteria is termed *Chlamydia psittici*
- This species is not associated with the Chlamydia that causes conjunctivitis or arthritis (*C. pecorum*)
- Can cause pneumonia in new lambs
Transmission

- Ewes do not abort more than once but continually shed the bacteria
- Infection is persistent
- Ewes shed *C. abortus* from their reproductive tract for 2-3 days before and after ovulation
- Rams can contract organism and transmit it to ewes
Symptoms

- Abortions occur during the last 2-3 weeks of gestation regardless of time of infection
- Aborted fetuses show placentitis
- Placenta is necrotic, reddish brown cotyledons and thickened brown intercotyledonary areas covered by exudate.
- Behavioral changes or vulval discharge 48 hours before abortion
- Few abortions one lambing season then an "abortion storm" the next
Cotelydonary Lesions
Placentitis
Diagnosis

- Chlamydial bodies can be seen on stained smears of placenta or vagina discharge
- The aborted fetus is usually well preserved, in contrast to an autolytic
- However, look the same as other abortion disease *Coxiella burnetii*
- Definite diagnosis is achieved through an ELISA test or PCR
http://www.drostproject.org/en_ovirep/10-31/itemtop5.html
Treatments

- Isolate infected ewes and lambs
- Treat in-contact ewes with long-acting oxytetracycline or oral tetracycline
Prevention

- Vaccinate!
- administered 60 days prior to breeding and repeated in 30 days
- annually just prior to breeding.
References

- http://www.sheep101.info/201/diseasesa-z.html