

Reproduction general discussion

Yearling hinds

Low conception rates in yearling hinds is a common issue

Target mating weights 80% of mature weight on average

Can't have individual hind cut off weights, have to go on mob averages because can't know what the weight of an individual hind will be at maturity. Minimum and range should reflect range of mature hind weights.

Have to keep resetting the target if breeding hinds are getting bigger. Some straight reds now around 130kg so yearlings need to be over 100kg.

Mating ration 1:15, 1:10, 1:6

Mate separate from MA hinds

Introduce stags as early as possible, by January

Spikers versus 2+ yo stags

Younger stags speed up genetic progress

Can get good, high BV young stags or breed own stags from AI

Social hierarchy is important and easily bullied by older hinds.

Need to fawn separately.

Use standard growth curves to ensure replacement hinds are growing to targets.

Conception

Targets

Farm specific. Aim to continually improve or maintain high results under variable weather conditions year on year.

MA hinds: 95% + pregnant with mean conception date 1 April (mean fawning date 20 November)

R2 hinds: 90% with mean conception date 15 April (mean fawning date 5 December)

Reproduction efficiency

Fawns weaned/hinds to the stag (-sales + purchases)

Targets

MA: 90% +

R2 80% +

Feed requirement (consumed) during mating

MA: If weaned maintenance + a little bit. Approx. 2.2-2.4kg medium quality feed/day, minimum post grazing pasture covers 1200kgDM

MA lactating 3.0-3.2kg high quality feed/day. Minimum post grazing pasture covers 1600kgDM

R2 hinds: 2.2-2.5kg high quality palatable feed. Need to be gaining weight during mating.

Cost benefit of scanning and fatal ageing

ID early/late can intervene and start management practices earlier. E.g. tagging

Wapiti/Elk

Is there evidence to prove an issue?

Wapiti/Elk breeders so it is a myth

Twinning

Related management to cope

Use of drugs to induce

What is the difference in growth rates and slaughter dates of twin fawns

Timing of weaning

Pre versus post rut weaning

Depend on overall goals and feed situation

Genetic effect on reproduction performance

Maternal traits (see venison genetics)

Sexed semen

For velvet breeding or stud herds, there might be a cost benefit in more stag fawns

Effect of different forage types?

Unknown

Red clover? Plantain? Oestrogenic pastures

Animal Health

Facial eczema

- Potentially decrease conception rates

- No proved evidence

Selenium deficiency

- Possibly effect conception rate, early abortion, weak born fawns

Leptospirosis

- May be associated with late term abortion but no clear evidence

- Human health risk

- A trial showed higher weaning rate in yearlings vaccinated against leptospirosis

Toxoplasmosis

- ?

Copper deficiency

- Fawn death due to lameness and can't suckle. Hinds with swayback after fawning