

## “HYDRATION”

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With stock show season fast approaching, having a well-planned travel protocol is a MUST! Management of your animals is a priority and proper nutrition on the road is a cornerstone to your success. The number one ingredient you better have packed is good old H<sub>2</sub>O. There are lots of supplements and “wonder potions” out there but none have any merit if water is lacking in the diet. Nothing will crash your animal quicker than insufficient hydration with water. Generally speaking, you are not going to keep your sheep and goats on “free choice” water while traveling or at the show. Sheep tend to belly up on water supplied free choice and it is hard to maintain the look and handle your needing along with weight management concerns. Goats, on the other hand, are a lot more finicky and depending on the situation, I have had feeders maintain their show goats very well using a combination of “free choice” water supplemented with additional water, electrolytes and energy using a drench gun. A good rule of thumb when traveling is to hydrate your animals every 3-4 hours depending on the environment they are in. On sheep, they need 500 to 1000 ml of water every 3-4 hours. The size and condition of your animal will vary so this is a general range. I recommend having on hand a good general-purpose electrolyte and a high calorie supplement like dyne. Fat animals need very little supplementation with limited feed and moderate water. Show lambs and goats that are just right in terms of finish and handle will require plenty of water and some moderate use of electrolytes and energy to maintain a fresh handle. Thin animals will need plenty of water with electrolytes, plus energy to keep from crashing and feed may need to be their normal amount broken up into 4 feedings a day. Remember that going overboard on electrolytes and energy supplements can lead to bloat, scours and gastric upset.

**PRO-TIP----**The safe range on dyne is 60 to 120 cc per day on sheep and half that amount on goats. I like hauling on good quality bottled water in gallons and/or 16-ounce bottles. They are handy, sterile and pure. Easy to haul and worry free. **DO NOT USE TAP WATER AT THE SHOWS---**chlorine amounts vary from city to city and bacteria could be present in untreated waters. Keep them hydrated and good luck with your show stock!