

## Short-Term Progestagen Treatment in Ewes during the Breeding Season

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To characterize the efficiency of oestrus synchronization with short-term progestagen treatment (stFGA), 20 Ile de France (IF) and 19 Churra da Terra Quente (CTQ) ewes were used during the mid-breeding season. At day 0 (D<sub>0</sub>), a 40 mg FGA sponge was inserted in all animals and 120 µg cloprostenol was injected. Five days later (D<sub>5</sub>), all sponges were removed and ewes were divided into two groups: group A (10 IF and 10 CTQ), treated with eCG (250 UI) at sponge withdrawal and group B (10 IF and nine CTQ), without eCG. Blood samples were taken biweekly for progesterone (P<sub>4</sub>) determination and four intact rams with harness markers identified the onset of oestrus (first mount). All ewes were cyclic at D<sub>0</sub> but oestrus was detected only in 32 (82%), with no difference ( $p > 0.05$ ) between group or breed. The remaining seven ewes had lower P<sub>4</sub> (< 0,5 ng/ml) between D<sub>-2</sub> and D<sub>0</sub>. The interval between sponge withdrawal and onset of oestrus was  $40.5 \pm 9.6$  h, with no difference between treatment or breed. However, for IF ewes, this interval tended to be shorter ( $P = 0.10$ ) than CTQ ewes ( $37.8 \pm 10.1$  h vs  $43.3 \pm 8.6$  h). The pregnancy rate (75%) and prolificacy (1.38) were also similar between treatments and breeds. The stFGA was a good method to synchronize the oestrus in sheep during breeding season: pregnancy rate and prolificacy were not affected by eCG administration.