

CAEV/OPP PCR Testing

ABOUT: Maedi-visna virus (MVV) in sheep and Caprine Arthritis Encephalitis Virus (CAEV) in goats cause chronic, slowly progressive diseases, including arthritis, pneumonia, mastitis, and encephalomyelitis. PCR testing detects viral genetic material, allowing for earlier and more specific detection of infection compared to serology.

SYMPTOMS: Goats with CAEV may develop severe arthritis of the carpal joint ("Big Knee"), weight loss, and poor milk yield. Sheep with MVV may show respiratory signs, mastitis, or progressive wasting.

PREVENTION: There is no effective vaccine. Control relies on eradication programs that emphasize colostrum management, separation of kids/lambs from infected dams, and reliable diagnostic testing. PCR can detect infections earlier, before antibody response develops.

GETTING TESTED: For PCR testing, collect 2 mL of EDTA whole blood (purple-top tube). Ship samples overnight on cold packs (do not place tubes in direct contact with ice packs).

A PCR-positive result indicates infection, but not all positives will show clinical disease immediately. Consult with your veterinarian on results.

CAEV/OPP PCR tests are processed and results reported on Wednesday.

