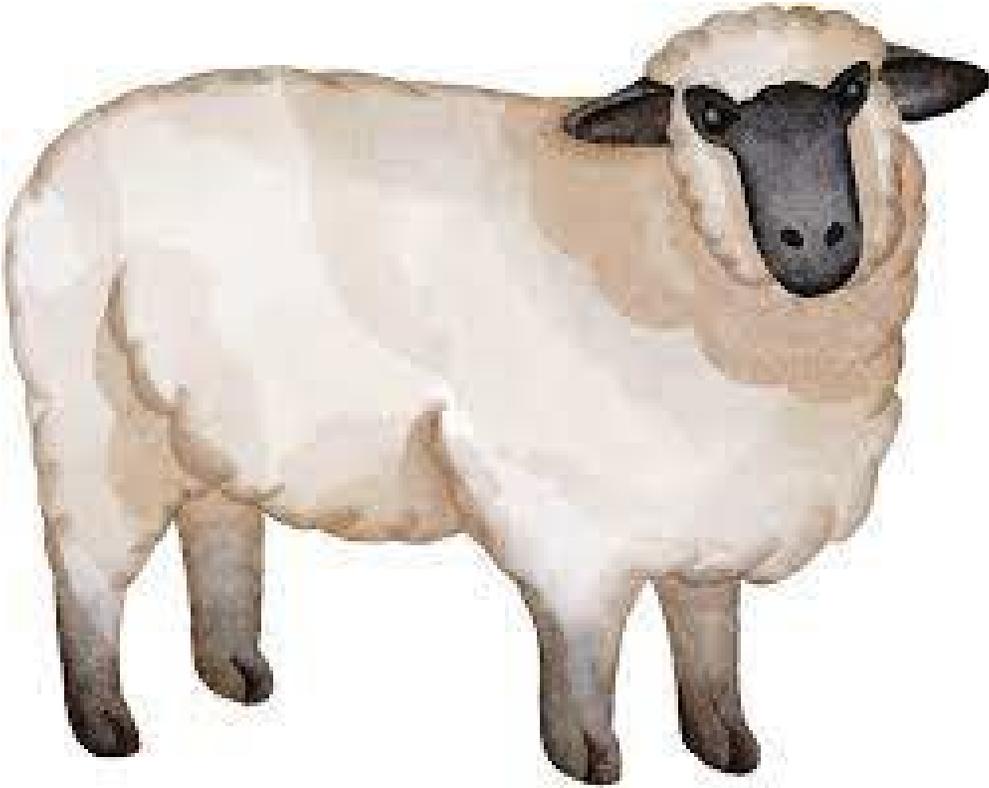


Market Sheep Knowledge Test Study Materials



Compiled by Trey Haag and Emma Fischer 2023

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Animal Welfare

Facilities and Components of Living Space

When preparing to bring your sheep project home, it is important to think about where you will keep your project. Sheep require a covered building to escape any poor weather conditions that may arise and an outside pen for light exposure. There are several factors that need to be included to provide a sufficient facility for your sheep project such as: electricity, ventilation, flooring and bedding, storage, convenience and accessibility, and waste disposal.

Electricity

Electricity is important to have for lighting, fans, and blower connections. Outlets should be in a safe location - out of sheep's reach to eliminate the potential hazard of extension cords running across the ground.

Ventilation

Proper ventilation in your facility can greatly reduce the risk of respiratory diseases that can affect your sheep. Ventilation can also help keep your sheep cool in the hot summer days. Good ventilation and ensuring your pens are clean and dry will significantly decrease the number of flies and smell of ammonia in your facilities.

Flooring and Bedding Type

Try to avoid slick surfaces in the walkways or aisles of your facilities. If you have a slick surface, consider putting rubber mats down to provide a surface that is safe and provides more traction for your livestock. Bedding for your sheep can be as simple as dirt or sand, as long as your animal is staying dry and comfortable. Wood shavings, straw, or bean stubble can be other options as bedding for your sheep. It is important to be cautious when using some of these options as they may contain mites that will heavily affect your sheep if unnoticed.

Storage

It is important to consider having adequate dry storage space to put feed, equipment, and supplies. Feed and hay should ideally be kept in a separate secure area closed off from the rest of the barn to aid in keeping rodents away from the feed and hay, preventing mold growth, and maintaining quality. To keep moisture out of an open bag of feed, it may be helpful to roll the top of the bag down to close it.

Drainage

Proper drainage is important so that water or urine does not build up in and around the barn. Standing water in and around the barn promotes a favorable environment for pests and bacteria growth, which can be harmful to you and your sheep project. It may be beneficial to have your feeding facilities on higher ground for drainage purposes.

Convenience and Accessibility

It is important to think about the accessibility of your facilities during poor weather conditions. It may also be beneficial to think about if trucks and trailers are likely to get stuck trying to access your facilities in the case of transporting.

Waste Disposal

Having a place to make a compost pile away from the livestock is key in the waste disposal. Manure is also a fly attractant which is why it is important to keep disposal a good distance from the living facilities of your livestock project.

Fencing

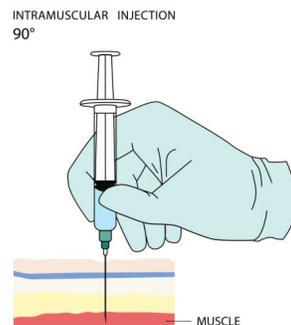
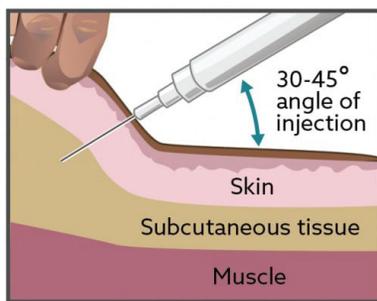
Fencing for your sheep pens is a very important aspect to provide for your sheep project. Fencing should be at least forty-two inches high and be predator proof to ensure a safe enclosure for your sheep that they won't easily jump over. It may be beneficial to cover fencing with mesh to keep your sheep from getting their heads stuck in the fence. To avoid any unwanted injury, stay away from barbed wire fencing or protruding wires.

Administering Medications

To ensure your projects stay healthy and happy, it may be beneficial to implement proper health care and management to prevent and treat if needed. For your sheep project, it is important to have scheduled administrations of vaccines, lice pour-on treatments, deworming, and hoof trimming. When dealing with any medicine or medically treated feed, always follow the treatment recommendations on the bottle and consult with your veterinarian before treating. Always be aware of the withdrawal time on any medications given to your sheep project to ensure a safe product for consumers after slaughter.

Vaccines:

When a vaccine is used correctly, it will increase an animal's resistance to disease. Always remember to read the vaccine label thoroughly prior to administration to ensure proper use of any medications. Vaccine injections should be given as described on the label. Injection sites include intramuscular (IM; in the muscle), subcutaneous (SQ; under the skin), and intravenous (IV; in the vein [only given by veterinarians or when instructed by veterinarian]). Injections should be given in the neck rather than over the hip of the animal.



Oral Medications:

The use of medications through an oral route is an important aspect of keeping your animal healthy. To provide anti-parasitic drugs orally to your sheep, the use of syringes with no needle or drenching guns are often used. Learning the correct way to administer oral medications is key to your sheep as they should be wormed multiple times throughout the year. Proper placement of the drench gun will ensure the animal's swallow reaction is triggered to keep drench from entering the trachea. The drench gun can be placed on either side of the mouth, but never in the front. The drench gun should be placed over the back of the tongue and medication should be administered gradually. Administering gradually and holding the animal's head slightly elevated will help reduce risk of drench running out of the animal's mouth.

Modified from Texas 4-H Explore Book Series - Sheep and Goat

The 5 Freedoms

- 1) Freedom of Hunger and Thirst
 - a) By ready access to fresh water and diet to maintain full health and vigor
- 2) Freedom from Discomfort
 - a) By providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area
- 3) Freedom from Pain, Injury, or Disease
 - a) By prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment
- 4) Freedom to Express Normal Behavior
 - a) By providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind
- 5) Freedom from Fear and Distress
 - a) By ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering

Animal Health and Well-Being

The well-being of an animal is more than simply being healthy. Animal well-being is the ability of an animal to cope within its environment and living conditions. Well-being includes feelings of emotions, being able to behave naturally, and an animal's health and biological functions.

Three Circle Model of Animal Well-Being

1. Basic Health and Functioning

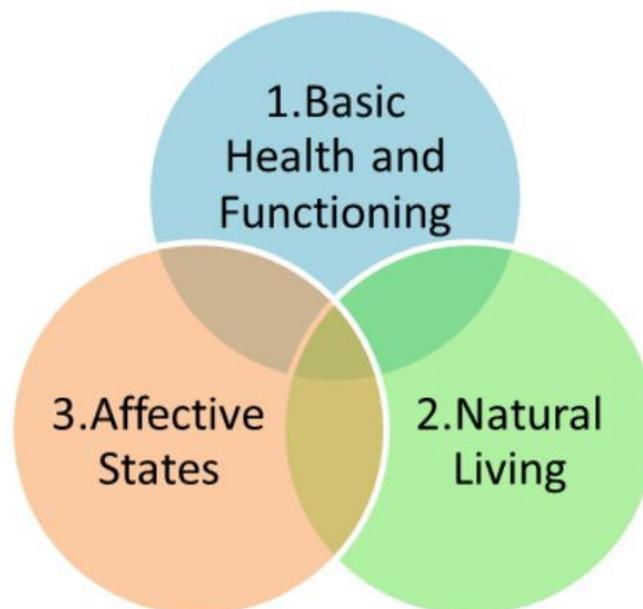
The basic health and functioning concept addresses the physical fitness of the animal. This includes good health, normal body function, and normal growth and development. Circle 1 relates closely to freedoms from hunger and thirst (Freedom 1); discomfort (Freedom 2); and pain, injury, and disease (Freedom 3).

2. Natural Living

The natural living circle emphasizes that animals should be able to lead reasonably natural lives. This includes the ability to perform important, natural behaviors and to have some natural elements in their environment. Circle 2 relates closely to the freedom to express normal behavior (Freedom 4).

3. Affective States

The affective states circle considers the emotional state of the animal. Animals should feel mentally well and not be subjected to excessive negative emotions that can cause unreasonable stress. Negative emotions may include pain, hunger, and distress. Animals should be able to experience positive emotions in the forms of pleasure or contentment through play or social contact. Circle 3 relates closely to the freedom from hunger and thirst (Freedom 1); pain, injury, and disease (Freedom 3); and fear and distress (Freedom 5).



Signs of Poor Well-Being

Sheep that are sick or in pain may display an array of behaviors or signs that may include: inactivity; loud bellowing; reduced social interactions; reduced feeding and drinking; increased huddling, shivering, sleeping, or resting; reduced grooming behavior; dull, dirty coat; open-mouth breathing or panting; inability to get up from a lying position; discharge from the eyes, nose, or other areas; drooping ears; swollen, red, or discolored udder.

Causes of Poor Well-Being

Sheep are not in control of their environment and therefore are dependent on actions that are or are not taken by their caretakers. Humans can have a negative effect on sheep in many ways : neglect, cruelty or abuse, abandonment, and crowding.

Neglect: Failing to care for an animal. Not providing adequate food or water. Restraining the animal in a way that causes pain or endangers health. Ignoring illness, injury or disease, and not providing veterinary care.

Cruelty or abuse: Causing physical harm and/or pain to the animal , such as prolonged periods of thirst, hunger, or restraint and immobility.

Abandonment: Deserting sheep without providing means for long-term care.

Crowding: Not providing sufficient room, especially room to stretch and turn around fully.

Feeding and Feedstuffs

Importance of Water

Water is the single most essential nutrient your livestock project(s) require in their diet. If your project does not have access to water their body will be unable to maintain itself. It is very important that you supply your project with clean, fresh water at all times. Your sheep requires 10% of its body weight in water everyday. It is important to consider how much water your animal will need when giving them a watering system in their living quarters. Your project may require more water depending on different influences including diet, temperature, climate, age, level of production, and even breed. In the hot summer months, it is important to remember to provide your sheep project with fresh, cool water everyday to help them regulate their body temperature and stay cool in the hot temperatures.

Feed Ration

Sheep are ruminant animals, meaning they have a four-compartment stomach (see pg. 15). Ruminant animals have an advantage because they are able to ferment forages at the beginning of the tract. This process of fermentation may cause problems if the animal is overfed diets that are high in starch (e.g., corn or other grains). Sheep rely heavily on forages, like hay, to get essential nutrients and to ensure a healthy rumen. If your sheep project is fed too much grain and not enough forage, it could get acidotic and bloat (see pg. 17). Common components of a feed ration for your sheep project may include but are not limited to: oats, corn, barley, soybean meal, cottonseed hulls, grass hays, alfalfa, and/or molasses.

When it comes to deciding on a feed for your sheep project, there are a few nutrient requirements within the ration you should look for to supply your project with a good feed. These components include proteins, energy, vitamins and minerals, fiber, and water (see pg 8 for Importance of Water).

Proteins

Sheep require protein for the repair of old tissues and to build new ones. This process is an important function of the cells within your sheep project. Examples of protein in your ration may include: soybean meal, sunflower meal, cottonseed meal, whole soybeans, fish meal, or alfalfa pellets.

Energy

Your sheep needs to consume feedstuffs that will provide them with energy to go about their everyday lives. Energy is required to graze, traveling, temperature maintenance, digestion, and voiding of body wastes. Examples of energy in your ration may include: pasture, hay, silage, and grains.

Vitamins and Minerals

Vitamins and minerals though make a small part of your sheep's ration, are very important to your project. They provide your sheep with the nutritional needs they require for proper bone development, immune functions, nervous system function, and muscle contractions. Vitamins and minerals you may see in your ration include calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, sodium, chlorine, sulfur, copper, iodine, iron, manganese, nickel, selenium, and zinc. It may be necessary to supplement your sheep project's feed with added vitamins and minerals by providing a salt or mineral block to their pen to consume at their will. It is important to note that even though copper is necessary in your sheep's diet, sheep are the most susceptible to copper toxicosis. Too much copper in your sheep's diet can be highly toxic for your animal.

Good Feedstuffs vs Bad Feedstuffs

The quality of feedstuffs you provide your sheep project will heavily affect your projects' performance, disease resistance, and health. Low-quality feedstuffs can contain pathogens that may be extremely harmful to your sheep project. These pathogens can easily be passed from your sheep project to you, low-quality feedstuffs may also contain harmful components that may also cause harm to you. Not only is it important to provide your livestock with the necessary nutrients, it is important to select a feed that is of good quality for your project, you, and consumers.

Providing a quality feed is important to ensure your project is receiving all the essential nutrients from their feed as possible. Bad feed may be stale, moldy, contain too much moisture, or have an unappetizing taste to your animal. Good feed will be high in nutritional content, have good flavor, will be appetizing in appearance, and will smell fresh.

The quality of roughage you provide your sheep project is another factor that will affect your project. Bad roughage may be dusty, moldy, contain thistles or large stems, contain a small amount of leafy bits, or be faded in color. Good roughage will be leafy, bright green, contain small stems, smell fresh, and be free of dust, mold, and foreign objects.

The difference between feeding good feedstuffs versus bad feedstuffs may be minimal sometimes, but it may also be drastic. Feeding low-quality feedstuffs can result in poor appetite, a higher feed conversion ratio, slow growth, and may even lead to death of your livestock. For these reasons, it is important to always trust in the feedstuffs you are feeding your project, and to know where the ingredients are being sourced from. If you plan to switch the feed your livestock is eating, it may be helpful to do some research to ensure it is a high quality feed that you can trust will be good for your project.

Reading Feed Tags

Nutrition is one of the most important things to have a successful 4-H livestock project. Understanding feed tags will help to make sure that your animals are getting the proper nutrition for the requirements that they need. The following list is the information that will be on a feed tag and a description of the item.

Product Name and Brand Name: This will always be on the label and generally has an unique name for it

Purpose Statement: This will explain which species and stage of production the feed is meant for. (Growing/Finisher Ration/Supplement)

Medicated Use Statement/Active Ingredient(s): This will not always appear in the feed tag. It will only appear if the word MEDICATED is below the name. Along with that it will state the purpose of the medication, list of active ingredients, and amount of medication within the feed.

Guaranteed Analysis: This will display the main ingredient percentages. Some of the more predominant percentages that will be present is minimum percent of crude protein, minimum percentage of crude fat (fat has an energy value around 2.25x the value of carbohydrates), maximum percentage of crude fiber (this is a measure of the indigestible or non-useful portion of a feed, a lower crude fiber is more desirable), minimum and maximum percentage of calcium, minimum percentage of phosphorus, minimum and maximum percentage of salt, and minimum vitamin A in International Units (IU) per pound.

Feed Ingredients: This is the list of ingredients used to make the feed. The list will always go in order of highest concentration/amount to lowest.

Directions for Use: Directs how the product should be fed.

Feeding and Management Instructions: This is a listing of how the product should be fed and how many feedings it will feed. The listing will reflect the amount that is to be fed to provide the full nutritional benefits of the product.

Precautionary Statements and Warnings: This will only be on the label if the feed is medicated.

Manufacturer/Distributor Information: This tells you the name of the company that is either making the feed or distributing it.

Net Weight: This tells you the weight of the feed in the bag.

Storage and Disposal: Instructions for storage, disposal, and container handling.

Feed Efficiency

Feed efficiency is expressed as the amount of feed required per pound of gain or the ratio of Feed:Gain. The average FCR for sheep is between 4 and 5 pounds of feed for every one pound of weight gained. It is ideal to have a lower FCR as that would mean it takes less feed for your sheep to put on one pound of weight. Feed efficiency/feed ratio of your livestock will be the driving factor of their Average Daily Gain(ADG). ADG is the amount of weight your livestock gains in a day's time. Sheep should average 0.35 - 0.5 pounds of gain per day.

Average Daily Gain is calculated by dividing the weight gain by the number of days on feed.

Example Problem: A whether weighs 140 lbs at 350 days of age. What is the whether's ADG?

$$AVD = 140 \text{ lbs} / 350 \text{ days}$$

$$AVD = 0.4 \text{ lbs per day}$$

The Feed Conversion Ratio(FCR) formula is: $FCR = \text{Feed Given} / \text{Animal Weight Gain}$.

Example Problem: You fed your market ewe 45 lbs of feed and as a result, it gained 10 lbs of weight. What is the ewe's FCR?

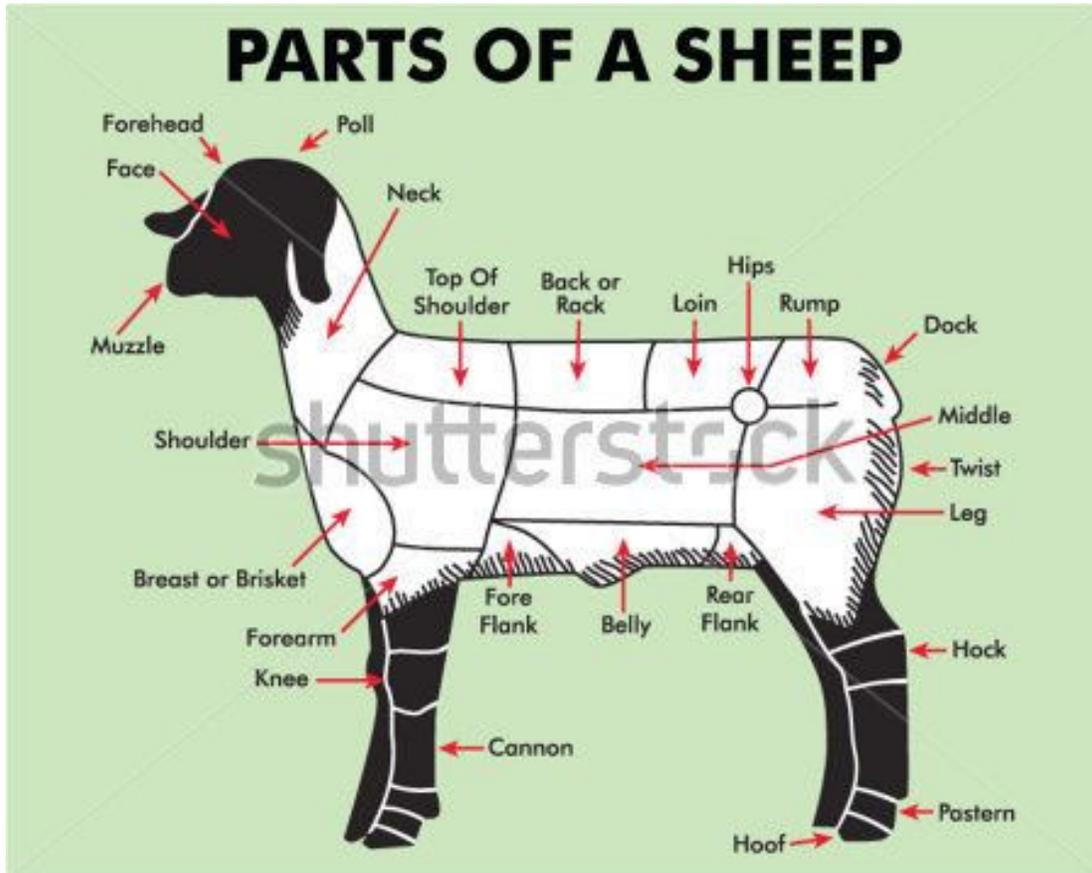
$$FCR = 45 \text{ lbs of feed} / 10 \text{ lbs of weight}$$

$$FCR = 4.5 \text{ or } 4.5 \text{ lbs of feed:} 1 \text{ lb of weight}$$

Some factors that could impact these numbers are genetics, age of the animal and quality of feed. Genetics can cause a difference as certain breeds have higher growth rates compared to other breeds. The age of the animal will have an impact as younger animals have a quicker growth rate compared to older animals. Quality of feed can determine a lot for your livestock project, if you have poor quality feed they will not gain weight and get the required nutrients that are needed for that animal.

Anatomy

Parts of the Animal



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Meat Cuts

Things to know about the meat product from livestock:

1. Dressing Percentage (DP) : determined by the quantity of carcass weight (HCW) divided by live weight (LW) multiplied by 100
 - a. Example: LW = 150 lbs and HCW = 78 lbs What is the DP?
 $DP = (78/150) * 100 = 52\%$ (the average DP for sheep is between 44-56%)
2. Calculating Ribeye Area: Ribeye area is calculated by placing a grid over the surface of the cut and counting all the dots surrounded by the meat of the cut. This number is then divided by ten. The result of this calculation is the ribeye area in square inches.
 - a. Example: You counted 125 dots within the cut ribeye. What is the ribeye area in square inches? $35 \text{ dots} / 10 = 3.5 \text{ square inches}$ (the average ribeye area is 1.5 - 4.0 square inches)
3. Quality Grades: quality grades are determined by the degree of marbling or intramuscular fat and the maturity or age at time of slaughter. The sheep quality grades include: Prime, Choice, Good, Utility, and Cull. Most lamb carcasses will grade Prime or Choice.

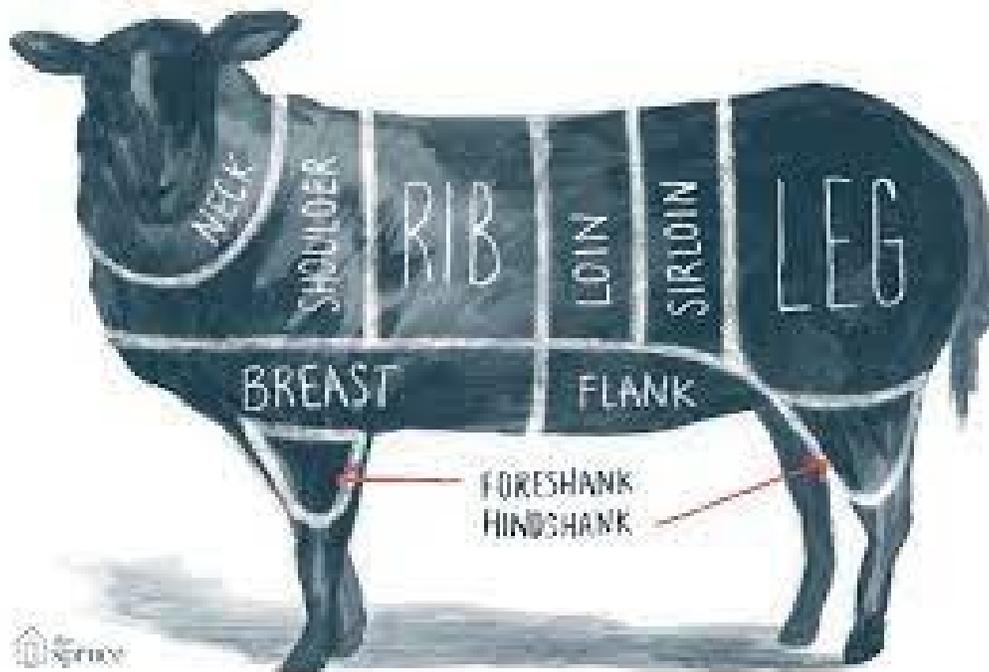
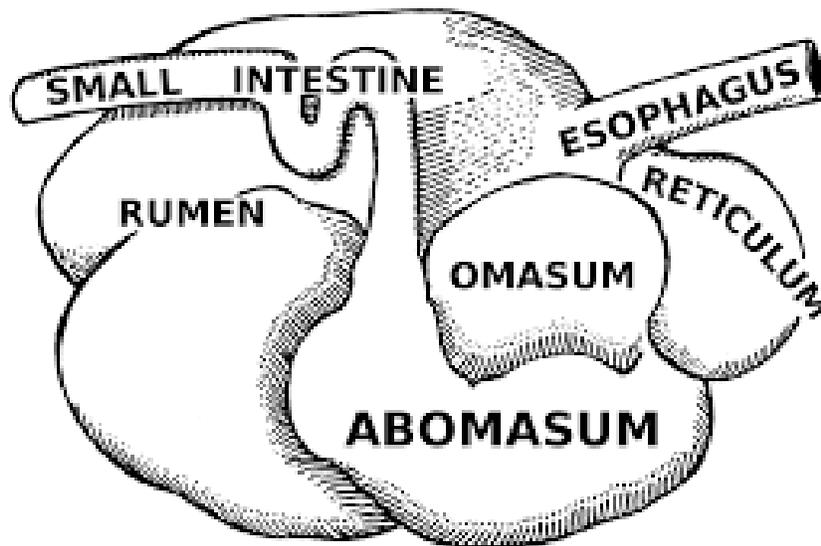


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Interior Anatomy

Sheep are ruminant animals, meaning they have a four-compartment stomach. The four compartments are named: the rumen, the reticulum, the abomasum, and the omasum. In the process of digestion, contents will pass through the rumen first. The rumen is the largest compartment of the stomach and is where ingested feed is broken down or fermented by bacteria and fungi that live in the rumen (ruminal microbes). Fermentation results in the production of the primary energy source and the primary protein source for ruminant animals. Ruminant animals depend on the bacteria and fungi in the rumen to be able to survive on diets that contain large amounts of fibers like grass. The next compartment of the stomach is the reticulum. The reticulum catches and traps foreign objects that may have been ingested by the animal. The reticulum also plays a role in a process where feed is regurgitated (returned to the mouth), re-chewed (this substance is often referred to as cud), and re-swallowed. The third section, the omasum, is primarily involved in water absorption and nutrient absorption. The fourth and final compartment is the abomasum, commonly referred to as the “true stomach”. This compartment closely resembles the functions of a human stomach. Partially digested food will continue to be broken down and digested in the abomasum.



Modified from Texas 4-H Explore Book Series - Sheep and Goat

Structure

If possible, it is beneficial to pick a project that is structurally sound. Soundness refers to having correct structure within the animal's skeleton or body. It is important to take notice and understand any structural issues your sheep project may have. In some instances, you may be able to mask the structural issues your project may have, but only if you recognize and understand the issue.

Leg Structure:

Sickle-Hocked - When viewing the rear legs from the side of the animal, the hock has too much angle, which causes the animal to stand too far underneath themselves.

Calf-Kneed - This is the opposite of buck kneed, where the animal stands "back at the knees". When viewing the front legs from the side of the animal, the legs appear slightly hyperextended.

Pigeon-Toed - When viewing from the front of the animal, the legs appear correct except for the feet toe (point) inwards towards each other very noticeably.

Weak Pasterns - Weak pasterned is a term used to describe when a lamb has too much flex in the pasterns on their legs.

Buck-Kneed - Full extension of the knee cannot occur resulting in the animal being "over at the knees". When viewing the front legs from the side of the animal, the legs appear slightly bent.

Knock-Kneed - When viewed from the front of the animal, the knees will appear close together and the feet toe(point) out and away from each other slightly.

Splay-Footed - When viewed from the front of the animal, the legs will appear correct, but the feet toe (point) out and away very noticeably from each other.

Cow-Hocked - When viewing the hind legs from the rear of the animal, the hocks are turned inward or appear too close together, which causes the toes to turn outward away from each other

Post-Legged - The hock of the hind legs has too little angle. The animal is too straight through the joint in their hind legs, resulting in very restricted movement because they lack the flexibility within their legs.

Bowlegged - When viewed from the front or rear of the animal, the knees are set too far out, which causes the toes to turn inward towards each other slightly.

Jaw Structure:

Undershot (Parrot Mouth) - Parrot mouth is an inherited trait that results in the lower jaw being shorter than the top. This structure issue can interfere with the sheep's ability to gather food.

Overshot (Monkey Mouth) - Monkey mouth is an inherited trait that results in the lower jaw being too long causing the teeth of the lower jaw to be in front of the upper mouth pad. This structure issue can interfere with the sheep's ability to gather food.

Diseases and Disease Management

Common Species Diseases

When caring for your sheep project, it is important to familiarize yourself with some of the diseases that are common to your project. Livestock can often get sick and show little symptoms, so ensuring you look closely at your animal everyday could be the difference between being able to help your livestock versus losing your livestock. Being able to recognize/diagnose, know how to treat, and know the prevention of these diseases is an important skill to obtain to care for your sheep project.

Foot Rot: An infection that originates from a lesion in the interdigital skin (between the toes). *Fusobacterium necrophorum* is the major cause for foot rot. This organism, along with others, are often passed to the animal through feces.

Signs/Symptoms: inflammation, swelling, moist and pasty scum between digits, foul smell, lesions, loss of appetite, fever, and pain.

Treatment: Parenteral(injection) antibiotics administered for three to five days or antiseptic and bandage applied after cleaning and trimming the foot.

Prevention: Remove sources for injuries and keep feet clean and dry.

Ringworm: One of the most common skin diseases in sheep and is commonly referred to as Club Lamb Fungus. Ringworm is a transmissible infectious skin disease that is caused by a spore forming fungi called *Trichophyton verrucosum*. Ringworm is a zoonotic disease, meaning it can be passed between people and animals. Direct contact with infected beings is the most common method of spreading.

Signs/Symptoms: gray-white areas of skin with an ash like surface, usually circular in outline, most commonly found around eyes, ears, back, chest, and legs.

Treatment: ringworm can heal itself without treatment, but a topical treatment of medication applied directly to the lesion is advised.

Prevention: to prevent the spread of the infective fungi it is important to maintain a clean and disinfected environment.

Parasites: Parasites can be an internal or external threat to the animal. Heavily stocked pastures and overgrazing can lead to increased exposure to infective parasite larvae. Internal parasites include: roundworms, nodular worms, whipworms, or lung worms. External parasites include: flies, ticks, lice, and mites.

Signs/Symptoms: fly strike (predominant fly bites on the skin), diarrhea, decreased appetite, rash, excessive itching, exhaustion, abdominal pain, or gas/bloating.

Treatment: to treat external parasites, the use of insecticides is the most reliable. For treatment of internal parasites, administering a dewormer can fight against many internal worm parasites.

Prevention: maintaining a clean environment can significantly reduce the liveliness of many common parasites. Spraying insecticides for pests and parasites everyday can help lower the number of external parasites in your sheep project's environment. It may be helpful to implement a worming protocol to help prevent the development of worms within your sheep.

Warts: Warts are caused by an infection and contagious virus called papilloma virus that can spread through contact.

Signs/Symptoms: warts are usually dry, white/tan colored growths that protrude from the skin and may have a horny surface.

Treatment: surgical removal of the warts is highly suggested when warts reach near their maximum size. Warts can also be crushed/removed at the first sign, but may need to continue until the immunity has been developed. Warts can also be allowed to run their course.

Prevention: isolating affected animals can help contain the spread of warts from animal to animal. A vaccine for warts can be given to help prevent the development of warts.

Abscess: A swollen area within the fleshy tissue that contains pus. Caused by bacteria implanting within the subcutaneous tissue following a flesh wound.

Signs/Symptoms: heat radiating from the infected area, pain, swelling, redness, reluctance to use, or foul smell.

Treatment: abscess should be drained of pus and allowed to heal. An oral antibiotic or injection antibiotic should be given to reduce chances of further infection while the wound is healing.

Prevention: although it may be hard to prevent all abscesses, removing potential injury causing hazards can reduce risk of wounds that will develop wounds. Ensuring you take a good look at your livestock everyday can help catch injuries before abscesses form.

Bloat: Bloat is a build up of gas in the rumen. Gas is produced as a normal part of the digestion process. Usually the gas is lost by belching. There are two types of bloat: gassy and frothy. Gassy bloats happen less often and are caused by an obstruction in the gullet(esophagus) or when the animal can't burp. Frothy bloats are more common and are a result of foam developing on top of the liquid in the rumen.

Signs/Symptoms: distended left abdomen, pain/discomfort, in some cases death.

Treatment: Gassy bloat - passing a stomach tube to release gas. Frothy bloat - provide antifoaming agents through a stomach tube.

Prevention: Management and planning of pasture use. Reduce the amount of roughage available to the animal.

Coccidiosis: Sheep can become infected by a single-celled parasite known as coccidia when they are placed in contaminated environments. Poor hygiene, high stocking density, poor health and nutrition can contribute to a lamb contracting coccidiosis.

Signs/Symptoms: diarrhea, depression, loss of appetite, weight loss, dysentery (blood in feces).

Treatment: Most cases do not require treatment. Treatment is better given to exposed animals who have not started showing signs.

Prevention: To control coccidia, good management and hygiene is key. Ensuring that pens are well drained and cleaned often will reduce the ability of the coccidia to thrive in the environment.

Tetanus/Lockjaw: Tetanus is caused by toxins produced by a bacterium called *Clostridium tetani*. The bacterium can be found in soil and guts of animals and

humans. The bacteria produce toxins which spread along the nerves to the brain of the animal.

Signs/Symptoms: stiffness and reluctance to move, twitching and tremors of the muscles, lockjaw, unsteady paces while walking with stiff held out tail, anxious and easily excited by sudden movements or handling, bloat, collapsing, and death.

Treatment: No effective treatment.

Prevention: Performing surgical procedures properly, in a clean environment, with sterilized instruments and area can reduce the risk of tetanus. A three dose course of vaccination can offer protection from tetanus for over three years.

Spider Lamb Syndrome: Also known as Ovine hereditary chondrodysplasia, is a recessive inherited disorder that is associated with severe skeletal deformities. Young lambs with Spider Lamb Syndrome will have abnormal bone and cartilage growth. This disorder is mostly seen in black-faced sheep breeds. Lambs with this syndrome will have trouble walking, standing, and nursing.

Signs/Symptoms: facial defects, abnormal spines, long/bent/or splayed legs, flattened ribs, lack of body fat, underdeveloped musculature, or death.

Treatment: There is no treatment.

Prevention: Since Spider Lamb Syndrome can be prevented by avoiding matings between two carriers. DNA testing is available to determine which sheep may be carriers of Spider Lamb Syndrome.

Scrapie: Scrapie is a member of a family of diseases known as Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs). These diseases are caused by an infectious protein(prion) that is ingested and enters the lymphatic system(part of the immune system) and affect the central nervous system. Prions make their way to the brain where they cause “holes” in the brain giving it a sponge-like appearance.

Signs/Symptoms: weight loss, behavioral changes, excessive itching/rubbing, wool biting, loss of coordination, easily startled, tremors, swaying at back end, unable to stand, or death.

Treatment: There is no treatment.

Prevention: Since certain genes play a role in the development of scrapie, testing for resistance or susceptibility is the only way to prevent the spread of scrapie in your flock. Try to avoid introducing sheep from another farm that may be susceptible to scrapie.

Sore Mouth: A highly contagious disease affecting the skin around the mouth and nostrils. This disease can survive on the ground for years and is a zoonotic disease, meaning it can be passed to other species such as goats and humans.

Signs/Symptoms: clear sticky discharge and brown scabs around the nose and/or mouth.

Treatment: Sheep can recover without treatment within 3 weeks.

Prevention: A vaccine containing the live sore mouth virus can effectively prevent the disease from occurring.

Enterotoxemia: Also known as pulpy kidney or overeating disease. It occurs in young animals with a sudden change in feed from high carbohydrate diets or lush green pastures.

Signs/Symptoms: abruptly going off feed, lethargic, stomach pain, laying down and getting up, laying on their sides, diarrhea, may lose ability to stand, lay on their sides, and extent their legs

Treatment: Mild cases with analgesics and probiotics. Severe cases with intravenous fluids and antibiotics.

Prevention: Vaccinations and ensuring diets are not switched over quickly

Rectal Prolapse: Rectal prolapses often happen as a result of pre-existing conditions that cause intrapelvic pressure of abdominal straining. The pressure or strain results in the large intestine's lowest section being pushed outside the muscular opening at the end of the digestive tract(anus).

Signs/Symptoms: large cylindrical mass of dark, congested, friable tissue protruding from the anus.

Treatment: small prolapses can be reduced manually using caudal epidural anesthesia to reduce straining. Using soapy water or lubricant, the rectum can be inserted into the anus. Inserting a purse-string can prevent recurrence while the swelling and underlying condition resolve.

Prevention: Proper prevention and treatment of underlying diseases and conditions will greatly reduce the risk for rectal prolapses in sheep. Reducing factors that may cause a cough in your sheep can also reduce risk such as dry feed or too much ammonia in the air.

Copper Toxicity: Copper poisoning or toxicity occurs when there is a buildup of copper in the liver. Copper builds up in the liver of sheep when they are given too much copper in their diet.

Signs/Symptoms: diarrhea, red/brown urine, dehydration, jaundice, loss of appetite, or death.

Treatment: for acute cases, treatment may be possible but highly unlikely to be available in time. For chronic cases, there is no effective treatment for copper toxicity.

Prevention: To minimize the risk of copper toxicity, it is important to watch the amount of copper in your sheep's diet. Try to avoid feedstuffs with extra copper.

Acidosis: Occurs when sheep consume too much high-risk grain that results in damage to the microflora in the rumen. Acidosis can lead to damage on the rumen wall and large amounts of whole grain sitting in the stomach.

Signs/Symptoms: diarrhea, loss of appetite, tender-footed, grinding of teeth, getting up and down frequently, lying down for extended periods of time, or death.

Treatment: Remove animals from the grain and feed high quality roughage and allow access to water. If given quickly after overconsumption, sodium bicarbonate can be helpful. Antibiotics may need to be given to an animal that survives acidosis to help with rumen damage.

Prevention: High-risk grains should be introduced slowly, and avoid sudden changes to diets.

Breeding and Breeding Cycles

Gestation

Gestation refers to the process or period of time of fetal development inside the womb between conception and birth. A sheep's gestation period or pregnancy lasts about 138-159 days or 4-5 months. There are many factors that can affect the length of gestation including: diet, number of lambs, or a number of complications. Many producers rely on planned impregnation to control birth times of their sheep. This is helpful to many producers as they know when to begin checking their ewes and when to begin expecting signs of labor in their ewes.



Sheep Gestation Table

based on 147 day gestation period

January Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
May / Jun. Delivery	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
February Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28				
Jun. / July Delivery	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23				
March Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
July / Aug. Delivery	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
April Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
Aug. / Sept. Delivery	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22		
May Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
Sept. / Oct. Delivery	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
June Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
Oct. / Nov. Delivery	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23		
July Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
Nov. / Dec. Delivery	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
August Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
Dec. / Jan. Delivery	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
September Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
Jan. / Feb. Delivery	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
October Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
Feb. / Mar. Delivery	24	25	26	27	28	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
November Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
Mar. / Apr. Delivery	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25		
December Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
Apr. / May Delivery	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	

Source: <http://www.raising-sheep.net/sheep-gestation-calculator-and-table.html>

Producers can use a table like this one as it provides a suspected due date for a doe determined by its service date or breeding date. This table is based on a 147 day gestation period

Modified from RaisingSheep.net : Sheep Gestation Calculator & Table

Estrus Cycle

Estrus or “heat” refers to the period of time when the female animals are signaling they are ready for mating or breeding. Estrus is the result of estrogen (female reproductive hormone) being produced within developing follicles on the ovary. Ovulation occurs shortly after the beginning of estrus. Sheep will cycle into estrus seasonally in the fall, which is referred to as being seasonally polyestrous. The estrus cycle of sheep lasts 14-20 days while estrus itself will last for 20-42 hours, and ovulation will happen at or near the end of estrus.

As a producer it is important to be able to recognize the signs of estrus to increase conception rates for the herd or flock. The primary sign of heat in sheep is seen when the ewe actively seeks out the ram and stands to be mounted (“standing heat”). Secondary signs may include: nervousness, walking the fence, increased vocalizations for the ram, and decrease in appetite. Looking for these signs is called heat detecting or heat checking. There are certain times when to heat check that would give you the best results when doing so. Generally it is checked twice a day and you want to do it at least 8-12 hours apart. Heat checking during the cooler hours of the day is ideal.

Nutritional Needs

The nutritional needs of both the ewe and lamb during gestation and after birth are very important to consider prior to breeding season in order to minimize complications related to breeding soundness and nutrition. In order to determine if a ewe is ready for breeding, a quality check of livestock should be performed. A quality check should be conducted 2-6 weeks prior to breeding to ensure time to prepare the livestock for breeding season. While conducting a quality check, there are many factors to check in your livestock including: body condition score, up to date vaccinations, overall health, and weight.

Body condition scoring (BCS) is an important management practice that helps to optimize production, evaluate health, and assess nutritional status. By scoring body condition, you are evaluating the amount of body reserves an animal has. By using the 1-5 scale for ewe body condition scoring, producers can accurately determine if their flock is in good condition to excel during the breeding season. Does should be at a BCS of 3 prior to lambing.

Body Condition Scores for Sheep

- Condition Score 1 - Very Thin
- Condition Score 2 - Thin
- Condition Score 3 - Average or Normal
- Condition Score 4 - Fat
- Condition Score 5 - Very Fat

Not only is it important to continue to monitor the body condition score of the ewe throughout the breeding season, it is also important to monitor their score after birth. There are many nutritional needs that need to be met after the birth of the lamb. When ewes enter breeding season in good condition, the production of colostrum and milk are generally not a problem, but if they do not have the ideal BCS, they may have a hard time producing colostrum and milk after lambing. Colostrum is the “first milk” and is high in fat, energy, vitamins A and D, white blood cells, and growth factors. Since lambs are born with little to no antibodies, colostrum is important to newborn lambs as it provides them with immunoglobulin (antibodies that help fight off bacteria and viruses) rich nourishment.

Artificial Breeding Methods

Although natural breeding has been proven to work effectively, many producers choose to use artificial breeding in their breeding programs for a number of reasons. Use of artificial breeding can: aid in genetic improvement, allow for access to many more genetic gene pools, and control specific mating pairs. Because of these reasons for artificial breeding, it can often make the cost of artificial breeding worth it in the long run. The three methods of artificial breeding used in sheep are artificial insemination (AI), embryo transfer, and out of season breeding. AI is most commonly used in both stud and commercial herds, and embryo transfer is more commonly used in specifically stud herds. Stud refers to breeding stock or a herd that was established for selective breeding of livestock to maximize the success of the stock. Out of season breeding is widely used in many flocks.

Artificial Insemination (AI): A process in which farm managers or employees insert semen from frozen straws into the ewe/yearling for impregnation. This process allows for improvement of genetics within the flock, saves time observing traditional breeding, and can allow for more chances of pregnancy.

Embryo Transfer: A process in which cows receive a hormone treatment to produce more than one egg. Ewes are then AI'd to impregnate the multiple eggs. Seven days after insemination a veterinarian recovers the embryos to be transferred to another ewe. This process allows for superior genetic pairings to produce more than one offspring in a single breeding season.

Out of Season Breeding: Since sheep are seasonally polyestrous they will only be fertile during the fall when the days are shorter in length, but you can attempt to breed your flock out of season. It is very costly to operate but a benefit from this is that you could reach a market that is not as popular. When doing this you can possibly get more money for your market sheep when out of season. You can achieve this through artificial lighting. Ewes and rams must be housed separately indoors to allow control of light exposure. With using artificial light, you can use this to mimic the normal pre-breeding/early breeding season that would allow the doe's to go into estrus. You can also use injectable hormones to achieve out of season breeding as well that forces the ewe into estrus.

Identification System

Importance of IDing

Animal identification is an important part of keeping accurate records of your lamb project and flock. By having accurate identification, producers have easy access to important information and can easily and quickly identify an animal. Identification is also used to show ownership of a particular animal or to indicate where it came from. Being able to determine where an animal on your farm came from is important when it comes to pinpointing the origin of a particular disease that may have been exposed to your herd/flock after previously being on another farm. When it comes to the use of identification on your farm, it is important to maintain the same system to ensure accuracy of records.

The use of scrapie tag identification in sheep is regulated by the USDA called the Scrapie Eradication Program. To comply, sheep producers must insert an official scrapie tag in the ear of show sheep, sheep over 18 months of age, any sexually intact sheep under 18 months of age not moving directly to slaughter or to a terminal feedlot.

Different Forms of ID

Although there are many forms of identification, not every form is entirely beneficial or efficient to every operation. When selecting a form of identification it is important to consider the needs of the operation and the effectiveness of each form of identification. In any case, two forms of identification can be used to ensure permanent identification. The different options for identifying sheep are: ear tags, freeze or hot branding, electronic ID, nose printing, paint branding, and tattooing.

Ear Tagging: Ear tags come in a variety of sizes and colors. Selection of a tag type depends on the size, age, and environment of the animal. Tags are pierced through the animal's ear, and allow for an animal to be identified from the front and rear. Information on each side of the tag can be identical or differ depending on operation preference. An ear tagger that corresponds with the type of tag should be used for application of the tag. Ear tags are a good identification option that is easy to use, inexpensive, durable to all kinds of weather, and easy to read. The downside to using ear tags is that they can be ripped from the animal's ear, can become too dirty to read, or can be worn to the point of being unreadable.

Nose Printing: Nose Printing is a form of permanent identification that is most commonly used for sale or exhibition of sheep. Nose printing is a good form of identification because, like fingerprints, it cannot be changed. The lines and bumps of the nose create a unique pattern specific to each animal. Nose prints are created by placing a small amount of ink on the animal's dry nose and transferring it to an index card with sufficient support behind it by pushing the animal's nose to the index paper. Nose prints have to be clear and free from smears to be acceptable.

Paint Branding: This method of identification is a temporary form of identification. Paint branding is mainly used for separating animals into specific pens, when offspring need to be identified with their parents, in the sale barn to visibly see what animal you want to purchase and many more purposes. Generally the left side of the animal gets "painted" for consistency purposes. Make sure to apply the brand evenly with a slight rocking motion back and forth and perpendicular to the animal's backbone. Also make sure that you do not have too much paint as it can run down the animal's back and become illegible.

Tattooing: Tattooing is a permanent form of identification commonly used among many species. An identifying number and letter combination is imprinted into the skin of the animal using a type of ink that cannot be removed. The tattooing tool uses numbers and letters made of sharp, needle like structures that are secured on the application pliers. After the tattoo site heals, it will be more visible. The identifying tattoo can be placed in the ear of sheep so it does not interfere with the use of ear tags. The disadvantage to tattooing is the animal must be restrained for application and to read the identifying tattoo and can be very hard to read against dark-colored ears. It may be beneficial to use tattooing in conjunction with another form of identification that is more visible.

Modified from Purdue Extension : AS-556-W

Breeds

Finnsheep

Imported to the United States from Finland in 1966. Finnsheep are fine-boned, produce medium grade wool, will reach maturity earlier, and have higher lambing numbers, producing 2-4 lambs each lambing season.



Corriedale

This breed was developed in New Zealand and Australia from crossing Lincoln/Leicester rams with Merino females. These sheep are large-framed, produce good quality carcasses, and yield heavy, medium wool fleeces. Corriedale sheep have white faces with woolly heads and legs.



Columbia

Developed in the United States by crossing Rambouillet ewes and Lincoln rams. This breed is known for its large size, wool producing ability, and productivity in range conditions. Columbia sheep are also proved adaptable to lush grasses and farm flock management. These sheep are white-faced and polled. Columbias are white-faced, with wool on the legs and head, and are noticeably tall.



Shropshire

Developed in central western England. Shropshires are large, growthy, meaty sheep with wool cover on the head. They are heavy muscled and have high milkability. These sheep are recognizable by their dark faces and legs with wooly heads and sleek, slightly woolled legs.



Suffolk

This breed is a result of crossing Southdown rams and Norfolk Horned ewes. They are known for their meatiness and carcass quality. Suffolks are polled with sleek black heads and legs with little to no wool on either places.



Southdown

This breed was developed in England during the late 1700s to early 1800s. They are medium to small sized with gray to mouse-brown face and lower legs. Southdowns are credited for being an early maturing breed with good lambing ability, average milking ability, meaty lamb carcasses, and adaptability to varied climates.



Cheviot

This breed originated in Cheviot Hills, on the border of England and Scotland. These sheep are credited with ease of lambing, well developed maternal instincts, fast maturity, and weather resistance. Cheviot sheep are white-faced, with wool-free head and legs, black nose, and black hooves. They are a long-wool breed, hornless, and moderate frame.



Dorset

The exact history of the 1st place spring ewe is unknown, but it can be guessed that they were developed in Southwest England. Dorsets are an all white sheep of medium size, and have good body length and muscle confirmation producing desirable carcasses. Dorsets are credited for being good out-of-season breeders, good maternal instinct, high milk ability, and multiple births during lambing.



Rambouillet

This breed was developed in France with the use of Spain's famed Merino flocks. These sheep are large framed, long lived, rugged, and fine woolled. Rambouillet sheep are white-faced, have wool on the head and legs, and are horned.



Hampshire

This breed was developed in Southern England in the county of Hampshire. Hampshires are credited with the genetic ability to convert forage into meat, geographical adaptability, multiple birth traits, increased muscling, and freedom from unsoundness (structural issues). These sheep are black-faced with wool on the face and legs.



Polypay

This breed was developed in the United States using the gene pools of four existing breeds. Finnsheep, Rambouillet, Targhee, and Dorset gene pools were used to produce this cross that has a large lamb crop, ability to lamb more frequently, rapid growth rate of lambs, high milkability, and maternal instincts. Polypay sheep are white-faced and slightly woolly on their heads and little to no wool on the legs.



Montadale

This breed was developed in the United States by crossing a Columbia ram with a Cheviot ewe. Montadales are a dual-purpose breed, producing both high quality carcasses and excellent wool fleeces. They also are credited with having increased growth rates and high lambing percentages. Montadales are average framed, tall, white-faced sheep with black noses and black hooves.



Modified from Oklahoma State University Extension, *Breeds of Livestock - Sheep Breeds*

Showmanship

Appearance

When entering the show ring, it is important to present yourself and your project to the judge in the correct manner. To do so, your animal should be clean, well-groomed, and possibly clipped if allowed and in a way that is acceptable for your particular sex or breed of sheep.

To present yourself along with your project, you should look neat and clean just as the lamb looks well-groomed. It is highly recommended that an exhibitor wears the proper attire. Boots or leather shoes, jeans, belt, and a tucked-in sleeved shirt are the typical show attire for sheep exhibitors. It is good to avoid jeans that may be faded and/or ripped and t-shirts (unless directed by the show coordinators). It is always good to check dress code for a show if you are uncertain in case of any specific clothing requirements. Along with your appearance, it is important to practice good posture and attitude in the ring as well. Be sure to stand with your back straight, trying to not lean back. It is very important to stay calm and have a good attitude in the show ring, by being upset and nervous you can make your lamb upset and nervous as well.

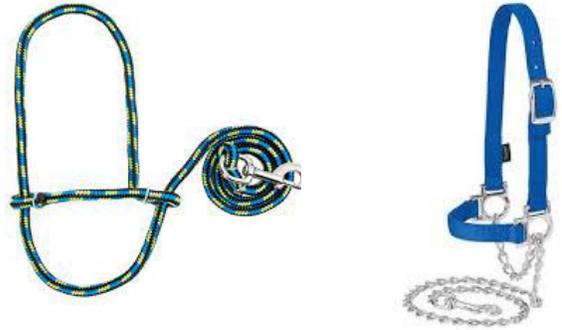
Tools Taken into the Ring

Before entering the ring, it is important that you are prepared and have all the tools necessary to exhibit your animal. When entering the ring you should have an exhibitor number. A halter can be used on the animal IF necessary.

Exhibitor number



Halter (if needed)



Training your Animal

It is important to keep in mind that showmanship should not start at the fair or day of show. In order to have the best chance of your animal behaving while in the ring it is important to work and train your animal months prior to the fair or show. To excel in showmanship working on your sheep by walking(exercising), bracing, setting up/setting legs, and washing/working leg wool prior to entering the ring is recommended.

Halter-breaking and leading should be taught to your sheep project very early on to ensure that they are comfortable with the halter and you leading them. Nylon rope halters are the most common to use to break a lamb. When first halter-breaking, lambs should be tied with their head slightly elevated, but not too much to make them uncomfortable. While your lamb is standing tied up for 10-15 minutes at a time, you can touch the sheep all over and allow them to get used to you, do not leave the sheep alone while it is tied up. The next step in halter-breaking is beginning to walk your sheep. The first few times of leading, you should be leading them to something they want to go, such as their feed or water. Do not pull on your lamb to get them to move, instead allow them a slight leeway on the halter when they move in the direction you are wishing to go. Once your sheep is comfortable with the halter and leading, you can begin to tie your animal up for longer amounts of time and go on longer walks to exercise your sheep. It is important to exercise your sheep prior to the show as it will be a lot of physical exertion for them during their time in the ring. To ensure your sheep is in shape for the show, halter-breaking early and walking for exercise is recommended.

Teaching your sheep to brace, or flex their muscles in the leg and loin areas is an important aspect of being show ready. To brace your lamb, stand in front and hold its head firmly without grasping it too tight, making the sheep uncomfortable. The sheep's nose should be elevated slightly in your hands, but not too far to obstruct the airway. By gently pushing your knee or side of your leg into the lamb's breast/shoulder area, you will engage your sheep's muscles. When you first begin bracing your lamb, they may not respond as you wish, but it is important to stay calm and continue trying. You can help teach your sheep to brace by backing them slowly off a ledge. Do not push the lamb off the ledge entirely, rather slowly back one leg off, by doing this they will become scared of falling off and push back against you. Another method for bracing is backing the lamb into water or a fence/wall. These methods will give them nowhere else to go except to push back against you. You can also set your lamb up on a steep hill with the front end on the top of the hill making the lamb brace.

Setting up your lamb is important during the show to make your sheep look the absolute best it can. Setting up your lamb refers to the proper placement of the lamb's legs while being exhibited. Your sheep will not automatically know where to place their legs so it is important for you to teach them the proper placement. The lamb's legs should be placed on all four of its corners so that its weight is evenly dispersed. Always set the legs closest to the judge first. If you are tall/long enough, holding the sheep's head in your left hand, you can reach across the back of the sheep to the showside rear leg and across the shoulders to the showside front leg. Holding the sheep's head with your left hand, you can also easily reach both front and back legs on the non-showside of your animal. However, if you are not quite tall enough to reach the back legs, pushing into the lamb with one knee can cause the animal to move its foot into place.

Working with your sheep to become aware of the process of washing and drying is important too. Not only does this keep your animal clean, but it will also stimulate hair growth on their legs making them look bigger boned. Once you have established all of these habits with your sheep, you can practice a mock show. When practicing for the show ring, don't forget to be aware of all your surroundings. It is important to know where the judge is in the ring at all times, to be aware of your animal and other animals, and to recognize how the ring is set up for particular shows.

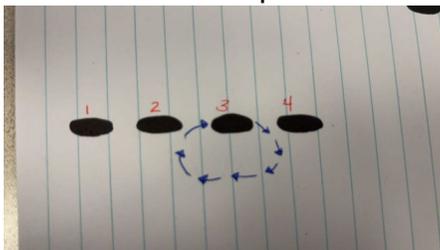
Ring Setup

Although every judge's ring procedure may vary from judge to judge, there are some basic ring procedures that you should be aware of prior to entering the ring. If you are not exhibiting in the first class, it can be very beneficial to watch and observe how the judge sets up his/her ring and their likes/dislikes. If you are in the first class, you can always look for and pay attention to the ring stewards and judge to make sure you're lining up where the judge wants you to.

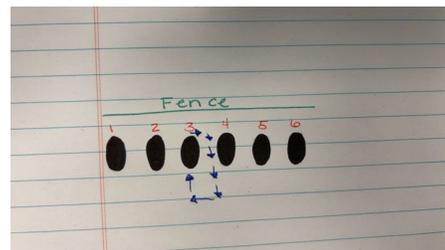
One of the most important things to remember in the show ring is to be courteous to those around you. Ensuring your line up with the first person in the line will help to keep from "burying" or covering the line of view from the judge to another person. If another exhibitor's animal stops in front of you, it can be helpful to assist the other exhibitor as best you can. In the instance of vacant spots directly in front of you, you should pull your sheep ahead to fill those spots to condense the area the judge has to cover to examine the livestock.

It is important to be aware of where the judge is at all times, as you do not want to obstruct a view he/she may be trying to see. If the judge is walking past the head of your animal it is important to stand off to the side to allow the judge to see more of your animal. When the judge approaches the front of the animal, you should be standing on the opposite side they approach from to ensure you are out of the view of the animal. This means if they approach from the right, you stand on the left and vice versa. If the judge walks past your animal and is now on the opposite side they approached from (the same side you are on) wait until they are a couple sheep away and pivot to stand on the other side.

When standing side by side or head to tail, there may come a time where you need to reset your animal. To do so, you have to pull your animal out of line and re enter your place in line again. When in head to tail lineup, it is fairly easy to reset yourself as you simply pull your animal out and loop around re entering the line where you came out of, as straight as you can. Be sure to watch out for anyone else who may be resetting or being pulled into a place by the judge. Resetting while in side by side lineup may be a little more difficult as you are closer to one another. To reset your sheep you will have to push your animals head away from you and turn them right, to get out of line. In an instance like this, you want to keep your animal between you and another animal for as long as possible to avoid injury from accidentally spooking another exhibitor's sheep.



Head to tail reset



Side by Side reset

Modified from Oklahoma State University Extension : Sheep Showmanship

Common Asked Questions in Showmanship Classes

What are the offspring called?

What is marbling?

How by looking at your animal can you tell the age?

Age/Weight/Breed

Where's (insert body part) located on your animal?

Parts of the ruminant digestive system?

What is something you like about this animal?

What can you change about this animal?

What percent of protein and fat is your feed?

Name some cuts of meat.

What is your animal's daily rate of gain?

Name 3 other breeds besides the breed that you are showing.

Why did you choose the feed you are feeding your animal?

What was your target weight for the fair and why?

How did you prepare your animal for the fair/show?