



# The 4-H Sheep Project:

## AN INTRODUCTION

UNIVERSITY  
OF WYOMING  
Cooperative Extension Service

12505C  
July 2002

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***Acknowledgments***

Some of the material (both information and illustrations) for this publication came from 4-H sheep project manuals published by Arizona, Colorado, Louisiana, Nebraska, Ohio, and other state Cooperative Extension Service presses. Information also came from material contained in the *Sheepman's Production Handbook* produced by the Sheep Industry Development Program, Incorporated. These contributions are greatly appreciated.

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## **Introduction**

The 4-H sheep project is an exciting and educational opportunity for 4-H members. It requires very little room, expense, or daily chore time. It is also a short-term project, especially when compared to the horse, beef cattle, or dairy cattle projects. Sheep are also much smaller and easier to control and handle.

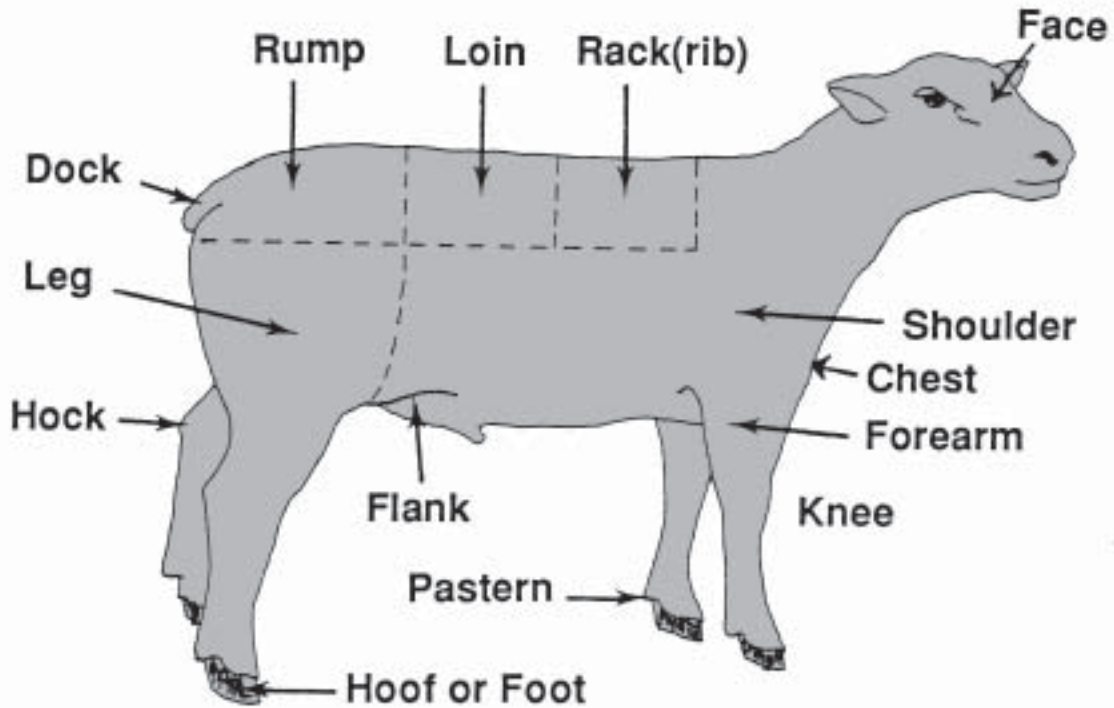
## **Selecting a sheep project**

There are three main types of sheep projects: (1) wool production, (2) breeding sheep, and (3) market lambs. The wool project is simply raising the sheep for its wool. This project is very minor in 4-H and thus will not be discussed in further detail. The breeding sheep project is designed for 4-H members with an avid interest in lambs, lamb/sheep/wool production, and the sheep industry as a whole. The market lamb project is designed for club members interested in sheep, but to a lesser degree. In keeping with the name of the project, the market lamb project participant purchases a young lamb, feeds and

cares for it, fits and grooms it, shows it, and finally sells the lamb.

The club member who chooses the breeding sheep project also feeds, cares for, fits, grooms, and shows the lamb. However, in contrast to market lamb project participants, breeding sheep project participants exhibit breeding sheep (rams and ewes), which are not sold at the county fair youth sale. The club member is able to return home with these sheep and continues to care for them to produce wool and lambs. These lambs are then kept to show, sell to market, and/or sell to other club members for their projects. The wool produced is sold to wool buyers.

The sheep project is one of the most popular 4-H projects in the United States. Lambs grow fast and cost less to raise than most other types of livestock and a lamb project can be quite profitable. A sheep project requires less room, less daily chore time, less expense (for both feeding and housing), and is a short term project (for market lambs).



### Parts of the sheep

Selecting a sheep to show is as important as the feed and care that you give the sheep once you bring it home. The sheep project should begin with a healthy and high quality sheep.

Before you can identify and select a high quality sheep, you must know what one looks like. The first step in this process is to learn the important parts of a sheep. The drawing illustrates the most important parts of a sheep.

### Sheep terms

Understanding the vocabulary used by sheep producers, exhibitors, and judges is also a necessary step in learning about sheep selection and production. Knowing the terms listed below will greatly assist you when communicating with people in the sheep business.

**breed:** a group of animals with common ancestry and with similar characteristics that are passed on from generation to generation

**breeder:** owner of the parents of the lambs when they were mated

**castrate:** to remove the testicles

**crossbred:** an animal with parents of different breeds

**dam:** the mother of a particular animal

**dock:** to remove a portion of the tail

**ewe:** a female sheep, of any age

**fleece:** the sheared wool of a sheep

**lamb:** a sheep of either sex, less than a year old and still has its milk (baby) teeth

**lambing:** the process of giving birth

**market lamb:** a lamb that is raised for meat and weighs within the market weight parameters – it must also still have its baby (milk) teeth

**ram:** an uncastrated male sheep, sometimes referred to as a “buck”

**polled:** an animal that does not produce or grow horns

**purebred:** an animal with same-breed parents and that could be recorded in an association registry

**registered:** an animal whose name and assigned number have been recorded in the record books of its respective breed association; this record also includes the name and assigned numbers of the lamb’s parents.

**sire:** the father of a particular animal

**wether:** a sheep that has been castrated

**yearling:** an animal between one and two years old

### Sheep breeds

Approximately 200 breeds of sheep exist in the world, but only about 15 are commonly raised in the United States. These 15 are as follows:

Cheviot	Dorset
Merino	Rambouillet
Southdown	Columbia
Hampshire	Montadale
Romney	Suffolk
Corriedale	Lincoln
Oxford	Shropshire
Targhee	

Each of these breeds has definite characteristics, color or colors, color or wool pattern, and other qualities which distinguish it from other breeds. Breeds of sheep are classified or grouped together according to



their use, purpose, and characteristics. The most common classifications are:

- Wool production
  - a. fine wool
  - b. medium wool
  - c. long wool
- Meat production
- Dual purpose
- Color of face
  - a. black
  - b. white
- Horned

Categories and classification of the 15 most prominent breeds in the United States are as follows:

**Fine wool breeds**

Merino and Rambouillet

**Medium wool breeds**

Corriedale, Columbia, and Targhee

**Long wool breeds**

Lincoln and Romney

**Meat (mutton) breeds**

Cheviot, Hampshire, Oxford, Shropshire, Southdown, and Suffolk

**Dual purpose breeds**

Columbia, and Montadale

**Black faced breeds**

Hampshire, Oxford, Shropshire, and Suffolk

**White faced breeds**

Cheviot, Columbia, Corriedale, Dorset, Lincoln, Montedale, Rambouillet, and Targhee

**Horned breeds**

Dorset and Rambouillet

What does all this mean to the 4-H member? It means that the breed selected by the 4-H member is a choice based on personal preferences, because each breed has its strengths and its weaknesses. When making your choice, consider the following questions:

- Are the breeds being considered available?
- Are feedstuffs and feed resources readily available?
- Is my preference for meat production or wool production?

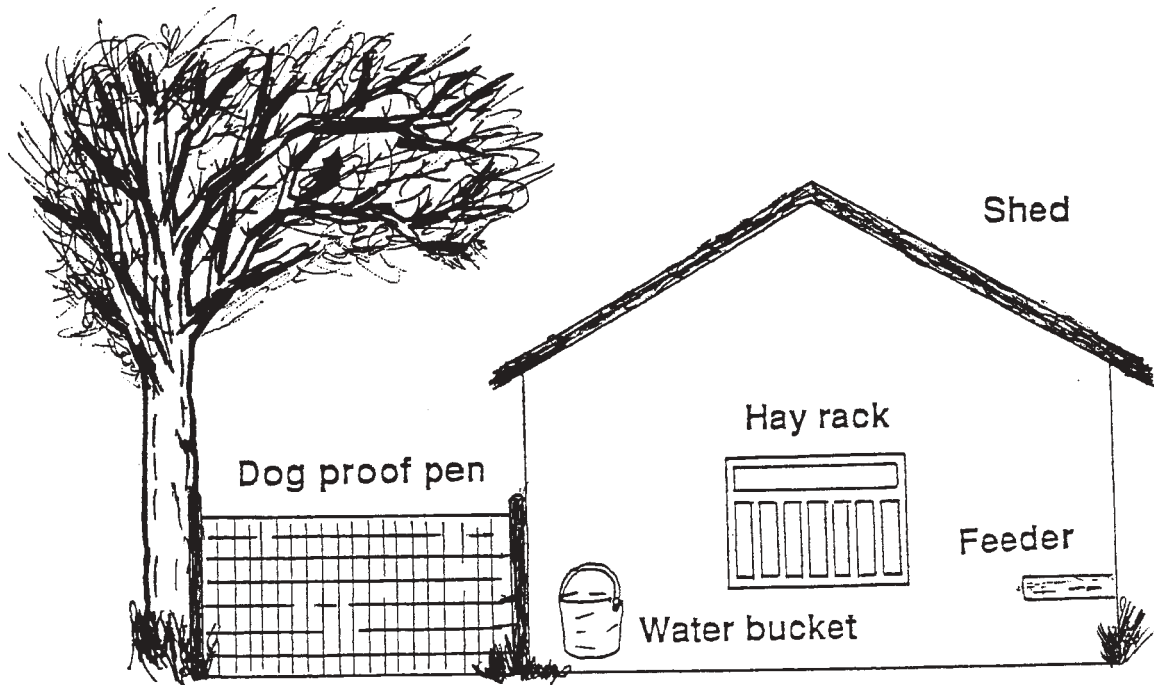
**Housing, care, and feeding**

Successful sheep and lamb producers have to take care of many details in order to ensure that their animals are comfortable. After all, a comfortable sheep and lamb is more likely to be healthy and grow efficiently. There are five main items that influence or affect the comfort level of the sheep: (1) high quality housing, (2) environmental control, (3) clean feed, (4) fresh water, and (5) the company of its owner because of the tender loving care (TLC) provided.

The housing for sheep and lambs may be simple and inexpensive, or it may be as elaborate and as expensive as you want to make it. Either way it must be functional – both for you and for the sheep. The housing must provide protection from the heat and sun, as well as protection from the wind, rain, and cold. It should also be large enough to accommodate both the lamb and the people who need to enter the pen to care for it. Some key items to remember when building the shed and pen are:

- The shed should provide both ventilation in the summer and protection from the cold winds and drafts of winter. It should also be well drained. If these conditions are not met, the lamb will not be as comfortable, not eat properly, and not grow as quickly or efficiently.
- Dirt floors that are well bedded and dry are preferred for lambs. Wood and other materials are also acceptable, but make sure that plenty of bedding is provided. Regardless of the floor you choose, or already have, change the bedding at least once a week.
- The shed, pen, and exercise area should be dog-proof.





- Design the feeding area so that you can easily re-arrange the feeding pens and/or divide them into larger or smaller units.
- Design the shed to allow for easy feeding and watering and to keep the area as clean and dry as possible. This helps lessen the chance of bacteria buildup, resulting in a healthier sheep.
- The shed should be built tall enough to accommodate both you and your parents. Also put latches and locks where you can reach them, but not where the lambs can get to them.

No matter how old or healthy the sheep is, it will not do very well without a proper place to live. A sheep needs a proper home as well as proper care, feeding, and watering.

As previously discussed, environmental control tends to go along with housing. Since sheep prefer temperatures of 50 to 60 degrees, there are two areas of concern when discussing environmental comfort:

(1) cold and/or wet weather and (2) hot and/or dry weather. In cold and/or wet weather, a place to get out of the weather (the shed) must be supplied. In extremely cold weather, a source of heat may also be required. Perhaps the easiest and most effective way to provide heat is with additional bedding and the use of heat lamps.

*Safety note: To avoid a possible fire hazard, an adult should set up the heat lamps.*

In hot and/or dry weather, a source of shade (the shed) must be provided. Also, double-check to make sure that the drinking water is cool, clean, and fresh. If the shade and drinking water are not providing enough relief, additional cooling must be provided. Usually an electric fan is all that is needed. However, if this is insufficient, a sprinkler or mister system used in conjunction with the fan should provide enough cooling.

*Safety note: Water and electricity are not a good mix. Therefore, an adult should set up the fan and sprinkler or mister system.*

**Table 1. Show lamb feeding table**

<b>*Weight of lamb</b>	<b>Crude protein percent - CP</b>	<b>Total digestible nutrients - TDN</b>	<b>Pounds of feed fed per day</b>	<b>Feed fed as % of body weight</b>
Birth to 20 pounds	14 to 15 percent	65 to 70 percent	less than 1.5 pounds	6.5 to 7.0 percent
20 to 45 pounds	14 to 15 percent	65 to 70 percent	1.5 to 2.5 pounds	5.5 to 6.5 percent
45 to 65 pounds	12 to 13 percent	65 to 70 percent	2.5 to 3.5 pounds	5.0 to 5.5 percent
65 to 90 pounds	10 to 12 percent	60 to 65 percent	3.5 to 4.0 pounds	4.5 to 5.0 percent
90 to 110 pounds	10 percent	60 to 65 percent	4.0 to 5.0 pounds	4.0 to 4.5 percent
110 to 130 pounds	10 to 12 percent	65 to 70 percent	5.0 to 6.0 pounds	3.5 to 4.0 percent

*\*Replacement rams and ewes need a ration of 8 to 9 percent CP and 50 to 60 percent TDN. They should be fed 3.5 to 4.0 percent of body weight. Gestating ewes need a ration of 8 to 8.5 percent CP and 50 to 55 percent TDN. They should be fed 3.5 to 4.0 percent of their body weight. Lactating (nursing) ewes need a ration that is 9.5 to 10.5 percent CP and 55 to 60 percent TDN. They should receive 4.5 to 5.5 percent of their body weight.*

Cool, clean, and fresh drinking water must be available at all times. If you use an automatic watering system, check the system daily. After all, if it isn't working, it isn't automatic. As a result, the lambs would be not getting the water they need. If you use a bucket, pan, or tank; make sure to change the water several times each day. The drinking water should never be allowed to get hot.

In the winter, make sure that the water does not freeze. This is important because sheep and lambs, like other animals, will not grow properly without sufficient water. Regardless of the season, all watering equipment should be checked and cleaned on a

regular basis to ensure that it is providing plenty of cool, clean, and fresh water.

Proper nutrition and feeding of sheep are the primary areas of concern for most 4-H members. However, with the commercial feeds that are available today, nutrition is not as much of a concern as it used to be. The biggest issues with feeding are making sure that the feed is clean and fresh, as well as making sure that the feed pans and feeders are clean.

To evaluate rations, you must first understand a few simple concepts and terms about feeds and rations. Ration is the total combination of foods that the animal is consuming. Feed is a mixture of feedstuffs.

Feedstuffs are classified as either concentrates or roughages. Roughages are forages such as clover, alfalfa, and other grasses. Concentrates are grains such as corn, oats, wheat, and etc., and they have more energy or calories than roughages, which are higher in fiber.

The Crude Protein (CP) content of sheep rations is the most practical and common measurement available to evaluate and compare the quality of sheep feed. The amount of protein in sheep rations is much more important than protein quality. Regardless of the quality of the protein fed, it is changed into a useable nutrients by the bacterial action in the rumen of the sheep stomach. For this reason, sheep can effectively utilize lower quality feeds and rations.

Properly harvested legume hays (clover and alfalfa) have a protein content of 12 to 20% and, when used as a complete ration, will provide adequate to surplus protein for most sheep. However, CP is not the only factor that must be considered when evaluating and comparing sheep rations. Total Digestible Nutrients (TDN) must also be considered. TDN is a measure of energy or calories in the feed. TDN is a more accurate measurement of the concentrates or grains in the ration because these feedstuffs are relatively low in CP (8 to 11%), but high in TDN (70 to 90%).

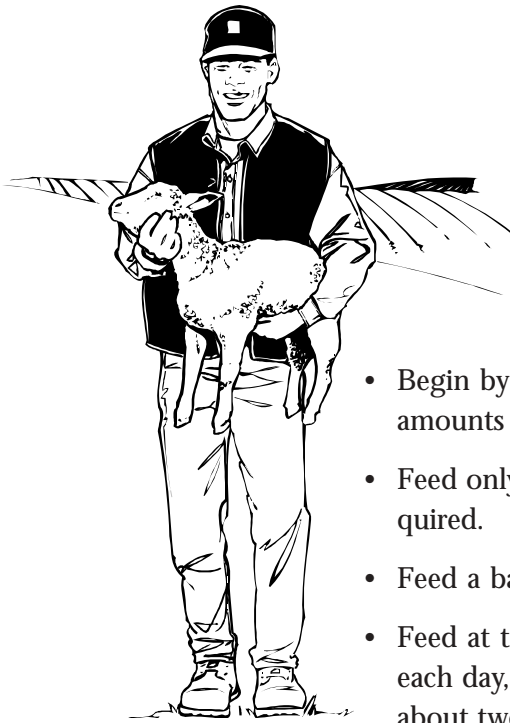
Therefore, in order for a sheep ration to provide a complete diet, it must have the correct balance of crude protein and total digestible nutrients. Thus, both roughages (hay and/or pasture) and concentrates (grains)

must be provided to ensure the proper nutrition for sheep. Most sheep producers also provide a mineral block as a safeguard against possible nutritional deficiencies.

Table 1 shows the relationship between lamb size, CP and TDN requirements, and feeding requirements. To simplify this table, consider the following example: if (for the last 60 to 70 days of the project) the lamb is on full feed (about 5 to 6 pounds per day), is gaining about three-quarters of a pound a day, is eating about 6 to 8 pounds of feed per 1 pound of weight gain, and appears healthy; the lamb is probably in good health. However, if the lamb is eating 5 to 6 pounds of feed per day, but is not gaining much weight; you may have a health problem to identify and correct.

If you feed according to the guidelines and recommendations shown in Table 1 and follow the items listed below, you should have very few feeding problems and a more successful and enjoyable lamb project. If you have questions or concerns regarding the care or feeding of the lamb, contact your local Cooperative Extension Service office for assistance and advice.





- Begin by feeding small amounts of the ration.
  - Feed only what is required.
  - Feed a balanced ration.
  - Feed at the same time each day, and try to feed about twelve hours apart.
- Do not skip any feedings or vary feeding times.
  - Gradually increase the amount fed. Do not increase feed by more than 1/4 pound per day.
  - Gradually change from one ration to another. Mix them together (first more of the original and then more of the new one) and make the change over a 5 to 7 day time period.
  - If the lamb goes off feed, start over by reducing the amount fed. Then, slowly bring the lamb back to full feed by gradually increasing the amount of feed given at each feeding.

## Health care

In order to have a successful sheep or lamb project, it is extremely important to start with a healthy lamb and to maintain the health of the lamb throughout the project. Therefore, you must be able to identify the difference between a healthy lamb and an unhealthy lamb.

A healthy lamb will be alert, frisky, playful, bright-eyed, and appear happy to see you. A healthy lamb will drink plenty of water and eat with eagerness. The stool (manure) will be pelleted, firm, and moist. The breathing will not be loud or labored. The normal body temperature of a lamb is about 102 degrees.

An unhealthy lamb will have a decreased appetite. It will not drink as much and not be frisky or happy to see you. The lamb will also appear listless, depressed, shrunken, and dull-eyed. It may also have a hump or arch to its back and will most likely be standing away from the rest of the flock. The stool may be very dry and hard (constipated) or just the opposite – very watery and loose (scours). The breathing may be hard, fast, and labored; and the body temperature may be higher than normal (any temperature higher than 103 degrees is considered a fever).

If you think the lamb is sick, there are two very important steps to follow: (1) tell your parents, and (2) separate the sick animal from the other lambs. After getting advice from a veterinarian or other professional, follow that advice very carefully.

Many diseases and health problems may affect the lamb. Most of these are fairly easy to control, once you know what the problem is and provide the proper treatment. Also, most health problems can be avoided or kept to a minimum by following these six steps:

- Buy only healthy lambs from healthy flocks.
- Purchase lambs that have been dewormed and vaccinated for enterotoxemia (overeating disease); then continue a de-worming program.

- Clean the shed and pen at least once a week.
- Clean the waterers and feeders at least once a week – twice a week is much better.
- Watch the lamb closely and on a daily basis for signs of sickness and ill-health.
- Inform your parents if you think the lamb is sick.

### Fitting and grooming

Fitting and grooming does not start at the show or even during the week of the show; it starts the day that you bring the lamb home. Fitting the lamb means feeding, watering, halter breaking, and otherwise caring for the lamb so that it achieves and maintains proper condition. Proper condition means that the lamb is not too fat nor too thin.

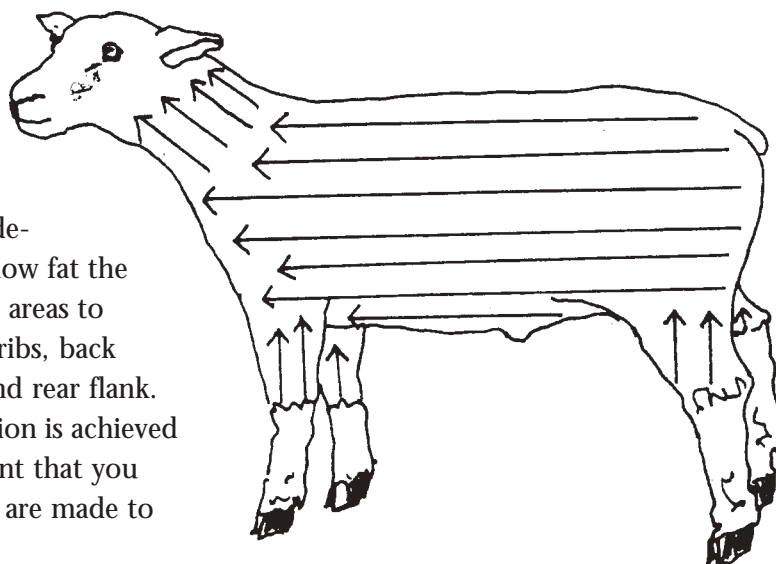
Proper condition has the same meaning for all market lambs, not over 0.2 (two tenths) of an inch of fat over the lamb's back between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> rib. Through experience you can learn what this degree of fat looks and feels like. Fat feels soft and loose. Muscle or meat feels hard and firm. Bone feels very hard and concrete. Fat, also known as cover or finish, gets deposited on the lamb in specific areas.

By knowing the areas of fat deposit, it is possible estimate how fat the lamb is or is not getting. The areas to check for fat deposit are the ribs, back bone, tail head, fore flank, and rear flank. To ensure that proper condition is achieved and maintained, it is important that you learn this before adjustments are made to

the lamb's feed, feeding, or exercise routine.

Even though two tenths of an inch of fat cover is the desired goal or standard for all market lambs, they do not all achieve proper condition at the same time or in the same manner. Some lambs will start to get fat at a young age and others will remain lean all the way to market weight. Lambs that start to get fat at a young age must be removed from full feed and put on a restricted diet (less feed per day). These lambs should also be exercised at least 10 to 15 minutes each day in addition to the 15 to 20 minutes per day that they were receiving to achieve and maintain show condition. Lambs that naturally stay lean can be left on full feed throughout the whole project, but they should also receive the normal 15 to 20 minutes of exercise needed per day to achieve and maintain show condition.

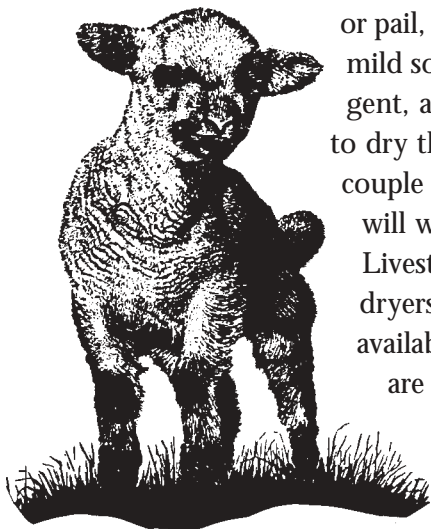
Regardless of the condition of the lamb, limit hay for the last thirty (30) days before the show. The reason for this is that hay causes the lambs to appear wasty in the middle, because of the gases created in



the rumen of their stomach. Do not reduce the hay before this time because if hay is removed from the diet for more than thirty (30) days, wool biting may occur – especially if the lambs are confined to a small area.

Grooming a market lamb for show is a fairly simple and easy process. Grooming breeding sheep is more involved because they must be blocked instead of simply shearing off all the wool, as is done with market lambs. Regardless of the project you have chosen, grooming, like fitting, does not start at the show or even during the week of the show; it starts the day that you bring the lamb home. Grooming consists mostly of washing it, drying it, and shearing it (market lambs) or blocking it (breeding sheep). Since most young 4-H members exhibit market lambs (not breeding sheep) this introductory manual will concentrate on market lamb grooming. Grooming of breeding sheep will be discussed in the intermediate manual.

Lamb grooming can be divided into three categories or uses: washing, shearing, and foot care. Equipment and items needed for washing are a halter (for leading and tying



the lamb), hose and/or pail, scrub brush, mild soap or detergent, and some way to dry the lamb—a couple of towels will work just fine. Livestock blow dryers are also available, but they are expensive.

Items needed for

foot care are foot trimmers and foot care medication for after the trimming. Trimming the feet, like fitting and grooming, is a fairly simple process. The feet should be trimmed a time or two before the final foot trimming is undertaken. This allows both you and the lamb to learn what is happening and what to expect. The final trimming for the show should be done approximately 14 to 21 days before the day of the show. This allows time for healing.

Items recommended for shearing include livestock clippers and/or sheep shears (use 20 to 22 tooth combs in the sheep shears), small animal clippers (for use on the ears and face), oil for the clippers, scissors or small 6 to 8 inch hand shears (for hard-to-reach places), a sharpening stone (for keeping the hand shears sharp), a spray bottle (for wetting the wool), a wool card (a #2 usually works the best), a shearing or trimming stand (for holding and controlling the lamb while it is being sheared and groomed), and an extension cord.

*Safety note: Livestock clippers (not sheep shears) are recommended for use by younger exhibitors because they are less likely to cut themselves or the lamb.*

After completing the shearing and other grooming, protect the work with a sheep blanket. Lamb and sheep blankets are commercially available, but can be expensive. Pillow cases and burlap sacks can be used by cutting a hole for the head in one of the corners, slitting the bottom seam, and adding tie straps. Old sheets, left-over sewing fabric, and spandex can also be easily made into blankets.

Finally, if the lamb has not had its final shearing, this should be done a day or two before show day, either before leaving

home or at the show. If you have sheared the lamb a time or two before the final shearing, both of you will have a better idea of what to do and how to do it, the final shearing and grooming will look presentable for the show ring.

The first step in shearing a lamb is to wash it. Washing involves wetting the lamb, soaping and scrubbing (gently, but firmly), and thoroughly rinsing the lamb.

*Washing note: The cleaner the lamb, the easier it will shear and the longer the clipper blades will stay sharp (because they are not getting dulled by dirt particles). Therefore, make sure that the lamb is extra clean.*

After washing the lamb and drying it (damp dry), place it on the shearing stand and completely shear it (remove all the wool). Remember, market lambs are shown slick sheared. When shearing the lamb, use vertical strokes on the legs and horizontal strokes on the body and flank areas (see the drawing). Following these guidelines will result in the lamb having a more uniform appearance.

Some exhibitors prefer to remove all of the hair and wool on the legs, and other exhibitors prefer to leave the wool and hair below the knee on the front legs and below the hock on the back legs. Either method is acceptable; it is simply a matter of exhibitor preference. If you choose to leave the wool and hair on the leg, use a wool card to shape and comb these areas.

The final grooming step is to use the small clippers to remove the hair and wool from around the lamb's ears, eyes, and face. Also, use the hand shears or scissors to touch-up any hard-to-reach places, to blend in areas, or to smooth out any rough

spots. Following these guidelines will result in the sheep having a more uniform appearance.

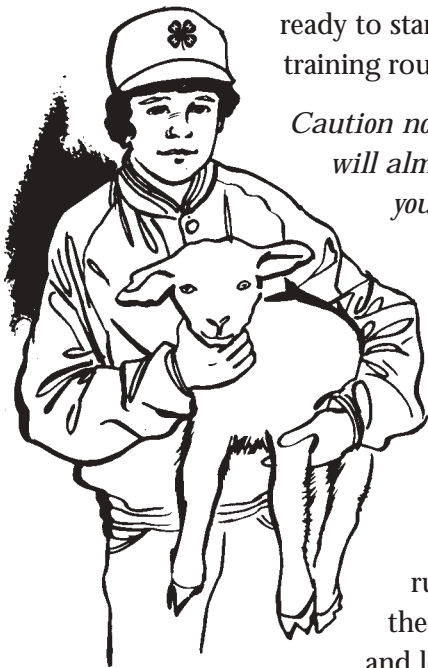
*Grooming note: No amount of grooming can correct or make up for a poor job of feeding, care, and management of the sheep or lamb.*



## Showing the sheep

Showing the sheep, like fitting and grooming, does not start at the show; it also starts at home. It begins with the feeding, exercising, washing, brushing, shearing, halter breaking, and other tasks that you should be doing from the very first day that the lamb arrives at its new home. Proper feeding gets the lamb to the desired show weight. Exercising the sheep gets it in show condition (lean, not fat) and in show ring shape (able to walk and be in the ring for a long period of time without tiring). Washing, brushing, shearing, and other grooming techniques makes the sheep or lamb neat, clean, and otherwise presentable to the judge.

Training the sheep or lamb to work with you begins by earning its trust and confidence, and by making friends with it. This is accomplished by playing with it, brushing it, and otherwise spending time with it. When the sheep or lamb stops running from you when you enter the pen, it is



ready to start the exercise and training routine.

*Caution note: Sheep and lambs will almost always run when you enter the pen, you need to learn if they are running in fear or in play and excitement.*

The first step is to catch the lamb. This is followed by holding it and rubbing it: rub down the back, sides, neck, and legs – this is to get

the lamb used to being touched. The third step is walking with the lamb. (Some exhibitors prefer to reverse steps two and three; either way is permissible.) After the lamb is accustomed to being caught, walked, and touched; the next step is to teach it to set up.

Setting up means getting each leg to come straight down from the body. Many new exhibitors get this only half right. Remember, straight not only means straight when the lamb is viewed from the side, but also when it is viewed from the front and the rear. When this is performed correctly, it is referred to as having the feet and legs squarely under the body or standing square. It does not matter if you set the front legs first and then the back legs or the other way around; either method is acceptable.

When placing or setting the front feet and legs, raise or lift the lamb's head (very slightly) by lifting on the jaw (this is to cue the lamb so that it knows the front feet and legs). When the front feet and legs are

set, return the head to its normal position. To set the rear feet and legs, lower the lamb's head (very slightly) by pulling down on the jaw (to cue the lamb). When the back feet and legs are set, return the head to its normal position.

Now that the lamb has all four feet and legs in the desired position (this is fairly easy, if it was practiced at home), they must be kept in the proper position. This is done by standing on the left side of the lamb and keeping your left hand under the jaw of the lamb. This also allows you to keep the back, neck, and head of the lamb in a straight line by simply moving your left hand in or out.

Following the instructions in the preceding paragraph results in the right hand being free to do whatever else might be required such as re-setting a foot, calming the lamb, wiping off dirt that may have gotten on the lamb, or other things that might need done to keep the lamb calm and presentable to the judge.

Do not place either of your hands on top of the lamb's back or neck when the judge is looking at it. You should stand so that the judge can see the lamb (not you) – keep the lamb between you and the judge. The only exception to this is when the judge crosses in front of the lamb. At that moment, for a split second, you will be between the judge and the lamb because the exhibitor always shows from the left of the lamb. This split second is impossible to avoid.

*Showing note: While you are setting up the lamb, keep an eye on the judge. You must keep the lamb between you and the judge. Also, it is important to listen to the judge's instructions.*



This may seem like a lot to do and remember; but if you practice at home, it is not very difficult. However, even with all this to do, there still is one more thing to learn: the brace. During bracing, a lamb pushes forward against your leg and tenses its back and leg muscles. This shows the muscling, which makes the lamb look lean and muscular to the judge. The brace is only performed while the judge is handling (feeling) the lamb. When the judge moves to the next lamb, let the lamb relax and reset the feet and legs and/or head and neck if they have moved. One way to teach the lamb to brace is to stand directly in front of it and place your knee on its chest. When pressure is applied to the chest, the lamb will push forward, which makes it brace.

*Bracing note: Setting up the lamb and/or bracing it involves using the feet and legs of your lamb to make it look its natural best. Therefore, make sure that all four feet remain on the ground.*

As you practice each of these steps, you and your lamb will become a team. Market lambs must have their milk (baby) teeth in order to show and they do not lose these until about a year of age, so you will have many months to bond with and train the lamb. When you feel confident and comfortable, ask someone to act as the judge. He or she should walk around the lamb, handle it, and do anything else that you think might benefit you and/or the lamb.

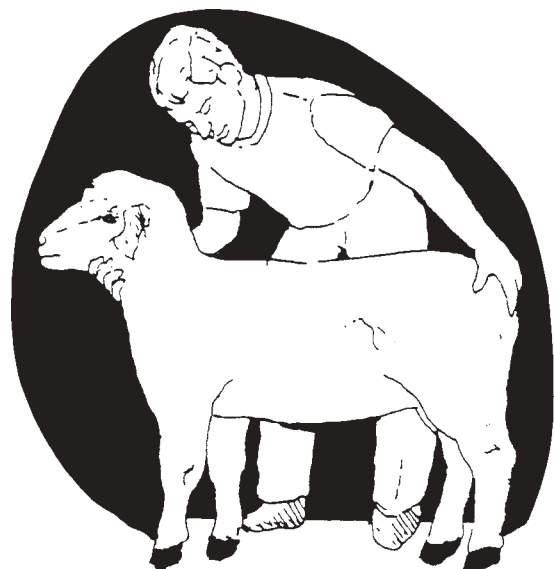
*Showing tip: Attending showmanship clinics and workshops is a good way to learn more about recommendations and techniques. However, do not just attend – go home and practice what you have learned.*

Training and practicing for showmanship involves preparing yourself as well as teaching the lamb. You must know what to do and how to do it. You must also mentally prepare yourself. If you lack poise and self-confidence in the show ring, the lamb will sense that something isn't right and will become confused and uncomfortable. Consequently, the lamb will not respond to your cues. This will lead to further frustration on your part and the result is a cycle of confusion and frustration between you and the lamb.

*Showing hint: Remember, showing involves the appearance and attitude of the exhibitor, the appearance of the lamb, and the showing or showmanship of the lamb. Also, be on time for your class and be courteous – not only to the judge and ringmaster, but also to your fellow exhibitors.*

#### **Preparing for the show ring includes:**

- Wear clean, neat, and appropriate clothing.
- Wear boots or hard shoes, not soft shoes.
- Carry a small brush or rag in your pocket.



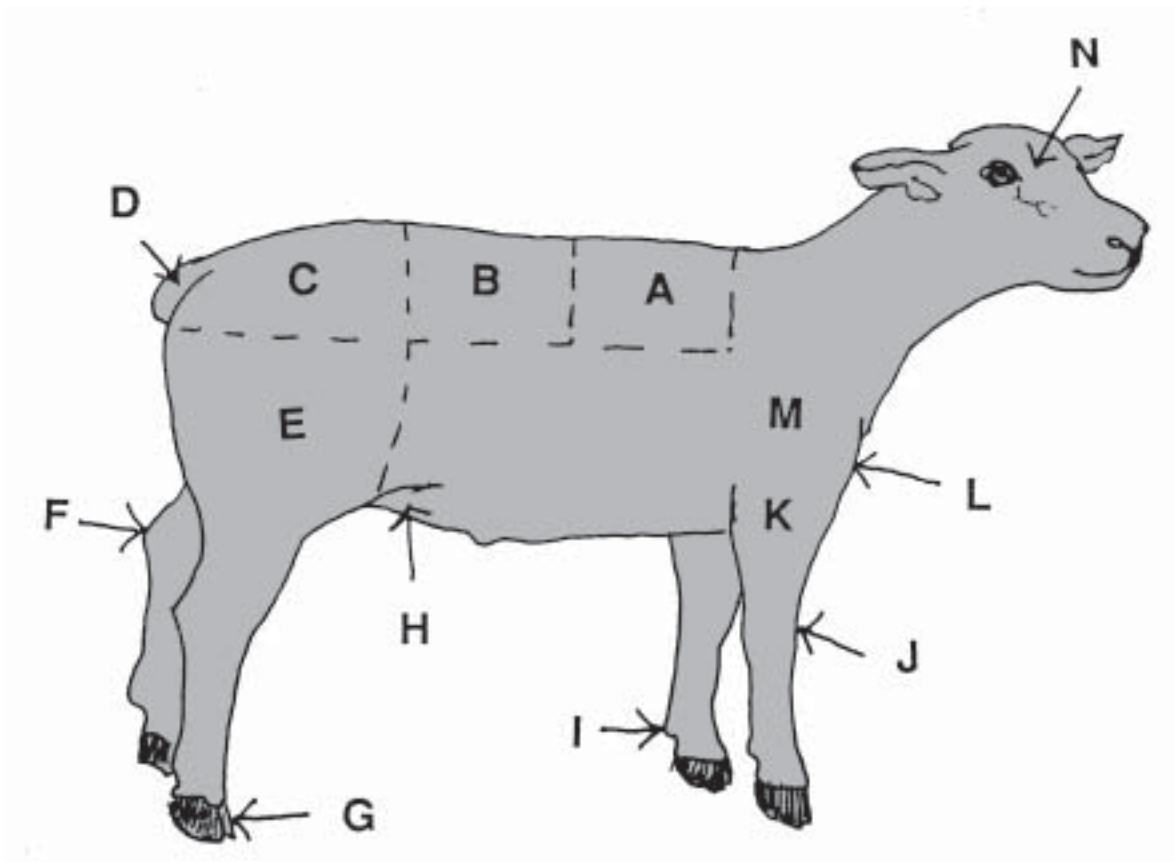
- Arrive on time for your class.
- Know the lamb's tag number, weight, breed, and date of birth (lambing date).
- Know other relevant information such as the average daily gain, ideal body temperature, protein percentage of the feed, etc.
- Know what the judge looks like and/or is wearing.
- Know what the ringmaster looks like and/or is wearing.
- Be courteous to the judge, ringmaster, and other exhibitors. Be sure to say "yes sir" or "no sir," "excuse me," and "thank you."
- Know the lamb's location at all times, especially in relation to yourself and to the judge.
- Keep the lamb between you and the judge.
- Keep the proper distance (about a lamb length) between your lamb and the other lambs.

**Preparing the lamb for the show ring includes:**

- Wash the lamb, either the night before the show or the morning of the show.
- On show day, feed the lamb at least two hours before show time, but only feed approximately half of the usual amount. This keeps the lamb attentive and alert.
- On show day, give about half the amount of water usually provided. This prevents the lamb from having a large girth and helps keep it active and alert.
- Groom and brush the lamb at least twice before show time. This brings out the natural oils and removes the dust and dirt, resulting in a cleaner coat.
- Before leaving for the show ring, give the lamb a drink of water and a final brushing.
- Be calm and gentle with the lamb while on the way to the show ring and while in the show ring.
- When walking the lamb, walk slowly.
- Walk by the left side of the lamb's head and keep your body even with the lamb's head.
- When setting up the lamb, do it quickly, confidently, and smoothly.
- If a judge touches your lamb or if your lamb rubs against another lamb, use the brush or rag to re-smooth the wool and wipe off any dirt.
- Maintain eye contact with the judge.
- Smile, relax, and enjoy what you are doing.
- Keep yourself cool, calm, and collected; this helps to keep the lamb under control.
- Be humble when you win and gracious when you lose.
- Remember to thank the judge and congratulate the winners after the final placing.

**Working as a team in the show ring includes:**

- Be aware of the location of both the judge and the ringmaster, as well as any instructions they may give.



Identify the sheep parts

A. \_\_\_\_\_

H. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

I. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

J. \_\_\_\_\_

D. \_\_\_\_\_

K. \_\_\_\_\_

E. \_\_\_\_\_

L. \_\_\_\_\_

F. \_\_\_\_\_

M. \_\_\_\_\_

G. \_\_\_\_\_

N. \_\_\_\_\_

