Introduction to the New Hampshire 4-H Sheep Project

4-H Sheep members learn about the care and nutrition of sheep and lambs, as well as breed differences and wool production, whether they are interested in meat production or fleece production. While it isn’t necessary to own a sheep or lamb, there are opportunities for showing for those who want to.

The term ‘Sheep” refers to animals that are over one year of age. A yearling is a sheep between one and two years of age that may or may not have produced offspring. In 4-H, a sheep cannot be shown for more than two years. Some yearlings have had a lamb and can be shown as a yearling. Lambs are less than one year of age. They usually have not produced offspring. Lamb is also the term for the meat of a young domestic sheep eaten as food. A mature female sheep is called a ewe. A young female sheep is called a ewe lamb. The process of giving birth is called lambing. A mature male sheep is called a ram or buck. A young male sheep is called a ram lamb. A castrated male is called a weather.

There are more breeds of sheep than breeds of any other livestock species. There are more than 40 breeds in the United States alone. Sheep come in all different shapes, sizes, and colors. They can be differentiated by their primary purpose (meat, wool, milk), the type of fibers they grow (fine, medium, long, carpet wool; or hair), the color of their faces (black, white, red, or mottled), and various production or physical characteristics.

Required Participant Age: 8 -18 as of January 1 of the current year

Required Animal Age: 4 months of age or older to go to any 4-H fair or event. Sheep over two years of age cannot be shown at any NH 4-H Fair or at Eastern States. Some county fairs make exceptions for local members.

Recommended Animal Vaccinations: Rabies vaccination (recommended vet administered) 30 days and not more than one year prior to the date of the show.

Required Animal Identification: Permanent ID – The animal must have an ear tag or ear tattoo and an official Scrapie ID tag in their ear. They can have a microchip providing a reader is available.

Forms

4-H Online Animal Registration/ Intent to Show Form: Must be complete with animal information and all signatures.  
Due Date: June 1st.

Lease Form (if applicable): Lease form must be complete with animal information and all signatures.  
Due Date: June 1st.
University of Tennessee Sheep Activity Page:
Breeds of Sheep Page
Sheep 101 Page
USDA Scrapie Fact Sheet
Sheep Facts
MyLamb.org: http://www.mylamb.org/
Clemson University Showing and Fitting Your First 4-H Lamb:
Market Lamb Showmanship:
Texas A&M Market Lamb 4-H Show Guide:

If you have any questions or for more information:
Call Jolee Chase (603) 641-6060 or email at Jolee.Chase@unh.edu or Mary Davis (603)862-2188 or Mary.Davis@unh.edu

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