



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 47 breeds in the United States alone divided into the following breed types:

- meat
- fine wool
- long wool
- dual purpose
- hair and
- minor breeds

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.

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.

Animal Vaccinations: Rabies vaccination – initial vaccination must be at least 30 days prior to shows or events and must be current (not more than 1 year). Animals must be healthy/free from signs of communicable disease prior to attending any show or event. Certificate of veterinary inspection may be required by some events and is required to bring an animal outside the state of NH.

Recommended Animal Vaccinations: Check with your veterinarian as vaccination and biosecurity recommendations change frequently.

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. For information on Scrapie ID tags, call the State Veterinarian's Office at the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food in Concord, 603-271-3551.

Forms

4Honline Animal Registration/ Intent to Show Form: Must be complete with animal information and all signatures. If you own the animals and the registration papers are in your name only you do not need to fill out an Intent to Show Form. **Due Date:** June 1st in 4HOnline (or paper form received at county office)

Animal Borrowing Form (formerly Lease): Borrowing form Lease form must be complete with animal information and all signatures. **Due Date:** June 1st

Policies

NH 4-H Policy on Replacement Animals - If a 4-H member's ONLY project animals dies, is critically ill to the point of being "unusable", or is deemed unsafe for the 4-H member to use as a project, after having been properly listed on their Intent to Show form, the 4-H County staff member may verify the loss or condition, and allow the 4-H member one replacement project animal. A new Intent to Show form is to be submitted. In this instance, the replacement animal can be shown at all fairs (except Eastern States).

If a 4-H member's animals are unable to be exhibited for any reason (illness, death, etc.) and they have other project animals listed on their Intent to Show form that are eligible, then there is no substitution allowed. They may show the remaining animals on their Intent to Show form only. Should a county have a member who misses an appropriate deadline, due to their not owning an animal at the time of the deadline or their only project animal(s) is (are) sick the county may make an exception for their county only. When a County makes the exception the youth's Intent to Show form must be marked that these animals can be shown at their county fair only. Replacement animals are not eligible for Eastern States.

Rabies Requirements for NH 4-H Animals - Upon the recommendation of the New Hampshire State Veterinarian, all mammals shown or exhibited at New Hampshire 4-H events *including fairs, shows, clinics, 4-H club meetings, county 4-H Presents day, or any other event sponsored by 4-H*, must have a current inoculation for rabies given at least 30 days prior to the event. A licensed veterinarian administered rabies vaccination is recommended. All 4-H project animals must be at least four months of age by show day to be shown, exhibited, or brought to any 4-H event.

Other health requirements vary by species and show. Individual shows and fairs may have additional vaccination and health requirements as recommended by the New Hampshire State Veterinarian's office. Always check the fair book for additional health requirements.

4-H Livestock Auction

If you are interested in raising, showing, and selling a market lamb check out the information on the [NH 4-H Livestock Auction](#)

Resources

[Ohio 4-H Sheep Resource Handbook](#) (available for purchase)

[University of Tennessee Sheep Activity Page](#)

[4-H CCS Sheep Project Activity Guides](#) (available for purchase; may be available at county office for loan)

Oklahoma State University [Breeds of Sheep Page](#)

[Sheep 101 Page](#)

[USDA Scrapie Information](#)

If you have any questions or for more information:

Call Michelle Bersaw-Robblee, email michelle.bersaw@unh.edu, for 4-H Livestock information; For general project information, contact Mary Davis, 6-3-862-2188 or email Mary.Davis@unh.edu

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March 1, 2021