

OntarioSheep
FARMERS

2026 Municipal Advocacy Priorities



Industry Overview

Ontario Sheep Farmers

is a producer-led organization representing and advancing the sheep, lamb, and wool industries in Ontario. For 40 years, OSF has served as the unified voice for the province's sheep farmers, advocating for their interests and promoting industry growth.

Our Vision

is to enable Ontario sheep producers to be the suppliers of premium lamb and sheep products.

Our Mission

is to educate, innovate, and strategically advocate on behalf of our membership, while maintaining high standards of professionalism and leadership.

OSF enhances marketing efforts through producer education, promotional campaigns, and raising consumer awareness. Originally established in the 1970s as the Ontario Sheep Association, OSF continues to evolve to meet farmers' needs and strengthen the sector.

Economic Impact

3,000

sheep farmers

285,000

lambs marketed

\$100 million

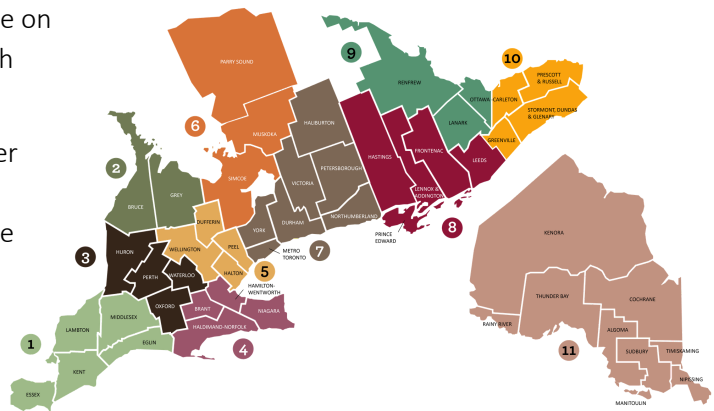
farm cash receipts

3,600

jobs created

\$200 million

contributed to Ontario's GDP



Exciting Market Opportunity for Ontario Lamb

Ontario is the third largest market for lamb processing in North America, processing over 50% of the sheep and lambs born in Canada. Ontario is also home to the country's largest sheep flock that contributes over \$200 million to Ontario's GDP.

Today, Ontario's 3,000 sheep farmers are fulfilling 35% of our domestic demand for lamb. As a result of increased immigration, domestic consumption of lamb per capita is increasing at a rate of 3% annually. The market opportunity for Halal lamb and goat meat is projected to grow from \$214 million to over \$300 million in the next five years. The first choice in meat for a significant number of new immigrants is lamb.

In light of this exciting market opportunity, Ontario Sheep Farmers has set a goal to fulfill 50% of market demand for lamb by 2040.



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1. Working Dog By-Laws

Predation by coyotes, wolves, and other wildlife poses a serious threat to Ontario's sheep farms. Sheep producers have faced this escalating problem for decades, and despite various efforts the situation is only getting worse.

Sheep farmers experience significantly lower predation risk in counties that define working dogs in their by-laws.

A 10% increase in municipalities that define Livestock Guardian Dogs (LGDs) or Herding Dogs in their animal by-laws is associated with a 21% decrease in predation claims through the province's Wildlife Damage Compensation Fund. However, only 30% of Ontario's sheep live in municipalities that recognize working dogs in their by-laws.

The financial cost of predation not only costs farmers, in terms of preventative measures, such as fencing and LGDs; it also costs Ontario taxpayers, with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA) paying sheep farmers over \$266,000 in the 2024-25 FY for losses caused by wildlife.

Recommendation:

- **Add provisions for Livestock Guardian Dogs (LGDs) and Herding Dogs to by-laws so municipal by-laws do not hinder the efficient use of working dogs on farming operations**



2. Improving the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program

The Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program (OWDCP) is a valuable resource to livestock producers in Ontario and OSF appreciates the responsiveness of government in the past when issues have been identified and addressed.

The current broad inconsistency in program delivery across municipalities, predator type and sheep breed has led to inequity between farmers.

Moving to online program delivery will reduce red tape and save the province and municipalities

thousands of dollars in administration time and the cost of investigators for every claim.

Recommendations:

- **Support OSF's recommendation to the province to administer the program through an online wildlife damage reporting form rather than through municipalities.**

