

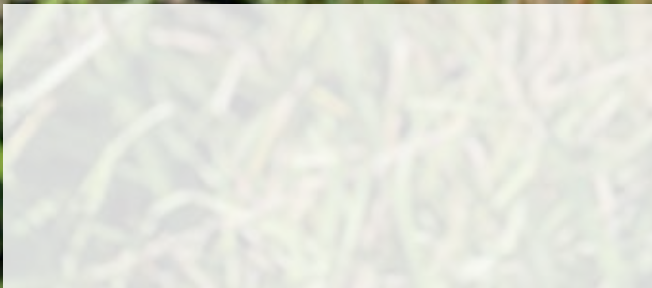
ONTARIO

Vol. 43 - Issue 2 Summer 2025

# SHEEP NEWS



Together  
We Can Go Higher



Field Day, July 24, Orono Fairgrounds  
Revitalizing Regional Wool in Quebec  
Chute-side test for GIN parasites

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# Field Day

Registration Now Open!

The countdown is on!

July 24, 2025

Orono Fairgrounds

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### ONTARIO SHEEP FARMERS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Provincial	Directors	Telephone
District 1	Art Alblas	(519) 317-9988
District 2	Jay Lennox	(519) 374-4055
District 3	Keith Todd	(519) 528-2650
District 4	Rafael Lara	(226) 622-8097
District 5	Ryan Schill	(519) 722-4146
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District 7	Ken Lamb	(905) 435-6027
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District 10	Devon Wensink	(613) 330-8014
District 11	Jenna Wight	(705) 622-1774

### ONTARIO SHEEP FARMERS STAFF

Erin Morgan	Executive Director <a href="mailto:emorgan@ontariosheep.org">emorgan@ontariosheep.org</a>
Jennifer Johanson	Office Manager / Bookkeeper <a href="mailto:jjohanson@ontariosheep.org">jjohanson@ontariosheep.org</a>
Anita O'Brien	On Farm Program Lead <a href="mailto:aobrien@ontariosheep.org">aobrien@ontariosheep.org</a>
Jan Smith	Administrative Assistant <a href="mailto:jsmith@ontariosheep.org">jsmith@ontariosheep.org</a>
Walker Ball	Industry Relations Specialist <a href="mailto:wball@ontariosheep.org">wball@ontariosheep.org</a>
Heather Johnson	Member Relations Coordinator <a href="mailto:hjohnson@ontariosheep.org">hjohnson@ontariosheep.org</a>
Michael Richards	Sponsorship - Advertising Coordinator <a href="mailto:mrichards@ontariosheep.org">mrichards@ontariosheep.org</a>

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

### ONTARIO SHEEP FARMERS

130 Malcolm Road, Guelph, Ontario N1K 1B1  
 Phone: (519) 836-0043  
 Fax: (519) 231-0445  
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**Photo submissions for use in publications (magazine, promotional/education materials).** Photo submissions are welcomed. Include the following information with your submission: name, mailing address, phone number, email address, expressed consent for Ontario Sheep Farmers to use the photo. If there are individuals in the picture, they should be identified and permission to print their picture must be secured either directly (if adults) or (if children) from a parent/guardian. Emailed photos must be a minimum of 300dpi and each photo should be clearly identified with the required information as outlined above. Photos will not be returned, and all submissions become the property of Ontario Sheep Farmers to be used or reproduced at the organization's discretion. Wherever possible, credit will be given to the photographer if used.

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## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

By Art Alblas, Chair, Ontario Sheep Farmers

# Together We Can Go Higher

Sheep producers in Ontario have never seen the strong demand and record market prices we have realized this year for our lambs. The potential for growth is very evident in our sector, our lamb customers prefer the quality of lamb we can deliver to their grocery basket. As an industry we must be aware that at some point we also keep a focus on price resistance due to increased sensitivity shown by consumers when the cost of our product leads to changes in spending habits. The OSF board of directors will update the strategic plan, 'Building Strength for a Stronger Future', to align with market opportunities and enhance producer value.

As we head into the summer months, OSF staff and board directors are looking forward to connecting with our members

at various events including the much anticipated sheep producer Field Day being held at the Orono fairgrounds July 24th including an OSF 40th year celebration, at OSF District AGMs and at our fall Policy Day, Annual Meeting and banquet on October 30th at the Cambridge Convention Centre.

The detailed dates and locations for the upcoming annual meetings are in this issue of the magazine and we hope you will take the opportunity to network with fellow producers and learn about the work the district and the provincial organization are doing under the leadership and guidance of sheep producers.

This year, for the first time, our organization will be holding a Policy Day ahead of our Annual Meeting. This meeting will be for district committee members or delegates to engage on topics important to the future of the organization where collaboration and unity are vital to success. This initial engagement with their districts ahead of the policy day meeting will ensure they represent the best interests of our membership and provide the board with grassroots insights.

The moderated Policy Day workshops will engage members on three topics under the marketing umbrella – carcass grading, price discovery and alternative marketing models. Each topic will be introduced by an expert and members' opinions and guidance will be captured for future consideration by the board.

We will bring more information to the district annual meetings on each topic, but in the meantime, we hope you will consider volunteering for your district committee or as an AGM delegate this year so you can join us in Cambridge for this important meeting. Even if you are not on the committee, as an OSF district member there will be opportunities to meet with your district representatives ahead of October to ensure your ideas and opinions are carried forward.

In conclusion, Henry Ford's quote captures the essence of Ontario Sheep Farmers' opportunity: "Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success."

On behalf of OSF, we wish you an enjoyable summer with your friends and family. We look forward to meeting you at your District Annual Meetings in August and September. **OSN**

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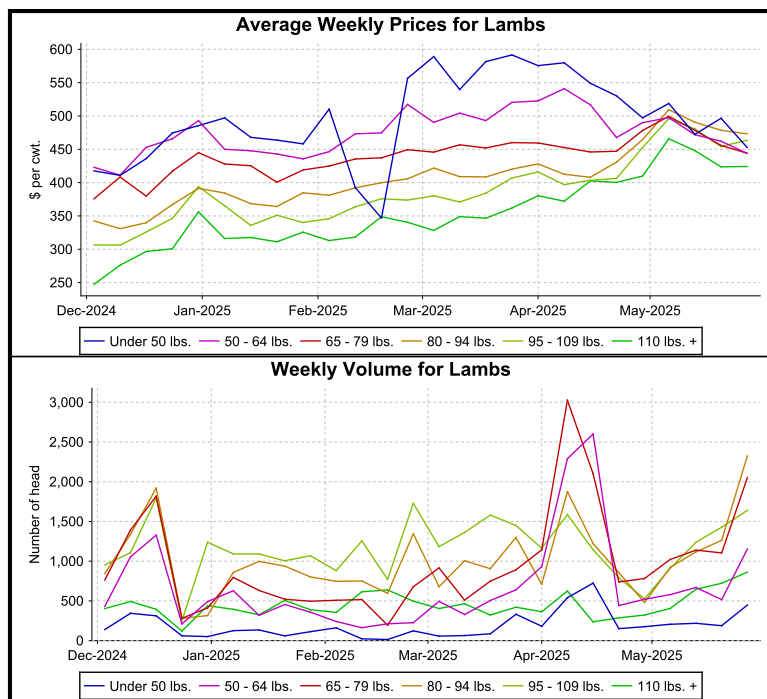


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# THE ONTARIO MARKET REPORT

Full market information can be found every week in the Ontario Farmer and online at [www.OntarioSheep.org](http://www.OntarioSheep.org) under "Market Information" The graphs here show the trends in pricing and volume of the last six months in Ontario. **OSN**



You can also listen to the weekly information by calling 519-836-0043 and press 4 to go to the market line.

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# Simple Blood Test Could Help Farmers Target Sheep Parasite

By Olds College of Agriculture & Technology

A Canadian study of a parasitic roundworm that is increasingly threatening the profitability of the world's sheep producers could lead to a new diagnostic device to quickly detect the infection days before any symptoms are visible.

"What we are planning to do in the future is something similar in shape to a lancing device for diabetes," said Dr. Desiree Gellatly, who is a Senior Research Scientist at the Technology Access Centre for Livestock Production (TACLP) at Olds College of Agriculture & Technology.

"The device would take a drop of blood, and it would indicate whether sheep have the parasite. Producers could pinpoint much earlier, even without animals showing clinical symptoms, which of their sheep need to be treated with dewormers to prevent the parasite from spreading."

The study found that small molecules called metabolites have the potential to serve as blood biomarkers in sheep for detecting *Haemonchus contortus* infections – commonly known as the barber's pole worm, said Gellatly.

Detections can be made up to two weeks before the parasite begins shedding its eggs in sheep feces, she said. "The biomarkers act like a kind of

chemical fingerprint as they are specific molecules produced or altered as a result of the host-parasite interaction." The finding could pave the way to the creation of a handheld diagnostic device that could allow sheep producers to affordably and accurately test for the worms themselves, she said. This technology could also potentially be used to detect the parasite in other ruminant livestock, such as cattle and goats, pending further research, she added.

The study was co-led by Dr. Gellatly; Dr. Yaogeng Lei, Research Scientist at TACLP; and Sean Thompson, Director

of TACLP, in collaboration with Dr. Ghader Manafiazar of Dalhousie University and Dr. John Gilleard of the University of Calgary.

The life cycle of barber's pole worms in sheep begins when eggs

in feces hatch into larvae during the first two stages (L1 and L2), then develop into infective third-stage larvae (L3) that migrate onto pasture grass during warm seasons.

Sheep become infected by ingesting L3, which develop into adult worms in the abomasum, or fourth stomach of the sheep, and begin producing eggs after 16 to 21 days. Female worms can each produce as many as 5,000 to 10,000 eggs per day, which are spread through dung in pastures.

Although adult worms are only up to two centimeters in length, or less than about one inch, they can collectively weaken sheep by attaching to the lining of each animal's abomasum.

The parasites feed on blood and can rapidly cause anemia, or lack of sufficient red blood cells to carry oxygen. It not only can affect the profitability of farmers by impacting the ability of their sheep to gain weight or grow wool, but it can also quickly lead to the death of their animals if left untreated, said Gellatly.



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Continued on page 8.

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"Although the L3 infective stage does not tolerate the harsh winter conditions of Western Canada, we now know that the L4 stage can survive inside the host in a dormant state through a process called hypobiosis. These larvae resume development in the spring, contributing to reinfection even when environmental contamination appears minimal."

Another pressing issue is the declining effectiveness of commonly used dewormers in Canada, such as ivermectin and benzimidazoles, said Gellatly. "Studies led by Dr. Gilleard's team have identified the barber's pole worm as the most prevalent gastrointestinal roundworm in Western Canada, and confirmed the presence of anthelmintic resistance to these treatments."

The 57-day study was funded by Alberta's Results Driven Agriculture Research (RDAR) agency, along with Alberta Lamb Producers and Ontario Sheep Farmers.

It was launched in 2023 and involved testing of Rideau Arcott sheep divided into four groups of 15 animals each: infected and dewormed, infected and

non-dewormed, non-infected and dewormed, and non-infected and non-dewormed, said Gellatly. "Testing these groups was essential for identifying metabolomic changes in sheep before and after deworming."

Producers must currently detect infected sheep using a visual test called the FAMACHA chart. The level of anemia is determined by comparing the colour of the mucous membranes inside of the lower eyelids, or conjunctiva, of the eyes of sheep to the chart.

Another way producers identify infected animals is by checking for signs such as soiled tails due to diarrhea, as well as "bottle jaw" – a soft swelling under the jaw caused by fluid buildup due to parasite infection. Producers may also confirm infection by sending fecal samples to a lab for fecal egg counts.

The problem is these tests work best on sheep that are already far down the road to being infected, said Gellatly. It is forcing producers to treat all of their sheep with anti-parasite medications such as ivermectin as a precautionary

measure, she said.

It not only significantly adds to the expenses of farmers, but it also is increasingly causing the infections to become harder to treat, she said. "The worms are developing resistance to these medications due to overuse."

In summary, this study marks a major advancement in combating parasitic infections in sheep by offering a practical, science-based approach to a growing global issue.

Through the identification of metabolite-based biomarkers, it has the potential for an early, accurate, and on-farm detection of *Haemonchus contortus*, paving the way for more targeted parasite control, reduced reliance on mass anthelmintic treatments, and enhanced animal welfare.

With further development, the proposed handheld diagnostic device could become a vital tool for producers, supporting the long-term sustainability and profitability of the sheep industry. **OSN**



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# Is Your Farm Ready for an Emergency?

Emergencies don't wait for convenience. Whether it's a barn fire, a flood, or a disease outbreak, being prepared can mean the difference between quick recovery and long-term loss.

Developing an emergency preparedness plan is essential for every farm business. Emergencies demand fast, informed action to protect people, livestock, and property. Without a clear plan, stress and emotion can lead to poor decisions and unnecessary damage.

A solid emergency plan helps you stay grounded when things get chaotic. It can guide you in real time, minimize harm, and protect what matters most: your people, your animals, and your livelihood.

## What Counts as an Emergency?

On the farm, emergencies come in many forms. Common risks include:

- Natural disasters like tornadoes, droughts, floods, or wildfires
- Structural issues such as barn fires or building collapses
- Power outages or stray voltage incidents
- Water shortages or feed supply disruptions
- Animal health issues like infectious disease outbreaks or biosecurity breaches
- Transportation accidents involving livestock
- Cybersecurity threats or activist trespassing
- Human health and safety incidents on-farm

Understanding which risks are most likely in your area is the first step toward building a relevant and effective plan.

## The Four Phases of Emergency Management

Emergency planning involves four main phases.

### 1. Prevention and Mitigation

This means reducing risks before

they become emergencies. For example, inspecting wiring regularly to prevent barn fires or securing chemical storage areas.

### 2. Preparedness

This is about laying the groundwork for a fast, effective response. It might include creating a list of local emergency contacts, training staff on first aid, or identifying alternative shelter for livestock.

### 3. Response

These are the immediate actions you take when an emergency occurs. Having an evacuation plan for livestock in case of fire, or assigning specific roles to staff during a crisis, can make a huge difference.

### 4. Recovery

This phase is about getting back on your feet after the crisis has passed. It includes working with insurance providers, repairing damage, and evaluating what worked and what didn't in your plan.

of a barn fire? Do you have halters, trailers, or transport options ready?

- Do staff know who to call if a chemical spill happens?
- If power goes out during winter, how will you keep water thawed and animals warm?

These details save lives, both human and animal.

A good plan should include:

- A risk assessment of your property and operations
- A detailed farm site map with key assets and hazard areas marked
- An asset and contact list
- A livestock management and emergency transport plan
- Options for alternative food sources and shelter

And don't forget **Premises Identification (PID)**. In the event of a disease outbreak or natural disaster, it's vital that the Ontario Sheep office can contact you. Make sure they have your PID number and up-to-date information.

## Building a Practical Plan

Your emergency plan should be tailored to your farm. Consider questions like:

- Where would animals go in the event

## Want More Help?

For more details and resources on building your emergency management plan, visit our website. **OSN**

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# Ontario Sheep Farmers Field Day

Save the Date: July 24 • 2 Princess St, Orono, ON L0B 1M0

The OSF Field Day will be occurring on Thursday, July 24, 2025 at the Orono Fairgrounds in Orono. The event will feature numerous product demonstrations, innovative tradeshow displays, networking, education events as well as food booths. The event is being run by the Ontario Sheep Farmers (OSF), Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA), and the Large Flock Operators (LFO).

Specifically tailored towards commercial sheep farmers or those who are striving for expansion or plans to take their farm operation to the next level, this premier event will showcase cutting-edge technologies and innovative services designed to elevate productivity and maximize production within any sheep flock.

To date, a variety of companies will feature handling equipment with sheep running through to show ease of use and labour savings. Software and technology suppliers will be partnered with the handling equipment companies to demonstrate how their integrated software and hardware solutions can be utilized – highlighting how these innovations can streamline sheep management and create a highly efficient, optimized work environment. Other companies at the event will focus on infrastructure, feeding systems, nutrition, seed, equipment, insurance, industry associations and animal health. Attendees will have the

opportunity to talk to vendors, engage in demonstrations and gain valuable information on their equipment, products, and services.

Mark Thursday July 24th, 2025 on your calendar, and keep an eye out for more information.

Please visit the OSF website for more details.

FOR EARLY REGISTRATION sign up at the following link: <https://OntarioSheepFieldDay.eventbrite.ca>

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**July 24, 2025**

- Orono Fairgrounds
- Food Vendors
- Networking
- Equipment Demos
- Innovative Products



# 2025 OSF PHOTO CONTEST

## ARE YOU A MASTER AT FRAMING FLOCKS? OUR PHOTO CONTEST IS CALLING!

Entries are now open for the 2025 Ontario Sheep Photo Contest. Whether you're a seasoned photographer or an amateur enthusiast, this is your chance to showcase the beauty of Ontario's sheep and the vibrant life on its farms.

Winners of the contest will be announced at the 2025 Annual General Meeting.

### CATEGORIES

- **Flock Shots:** Capture the essence of a flock, with a minimum of 20 sheep.
- **Around the Farm:** From pastoral landscapes to bustling barns, show us the heart of sheep farming.
- **Sheep Farmers:** Candid moments of farmers at work or the warmth of farm family life.
- **All About Wool:** Highlighting the pride of Ontario's wool production.
- **Fan Favourite:** Farm landscape, outside/inside barn or pasture, shearing day - your choice!

### PRIZES

Top photos in each category will receive a \$100 cash prize, with an additional \$250 grand prize. Plus, every submission stands a chance to win the \$100 Fan Favorite award.

### SUBMISSIONS

Email your entries in JPEG format to [admin@ontariosheep.org](mailto:admin@ontariosheep.org) with the subject line "2025 Photo Contest." Images must be at least 200 dpi and 1 MB in size. Only Canadian entries will be considered.

**The deadline for entries is September 5th, 2025.**

Include the following information with your submission:

- Photo title (optional)
- Contact information: mailing address, phone number, email
- Photographer's name (if different from the submitter)
- Chosen category

### CONTEST RULES

- All submitted photos become property of Ontario Sheep Farmers (OSF) and may be used or reproduced by OSF, with credit to the photographer where possible.
- If the submitter is not the photographer, the photographer's name must be provided.
- Each photographer may submit up to two entries per category.
- Participation in the sheep industry is not a requirement for entry.



# JU Wool Leads Groundbreaking Prototyping Project to Transform Quebec's Wool Industry

J. Underhill Wool Inc. (JU WOOL) is proud to announce its leadership role in a pioneering initiative set to reshape the wool industry in Quebec. As a key partner in securing a historic subsidy, JU WOOL is helping to unite six Quebec-based enterprises specializing in commercial-scale wool processing into a powerful regional ecosystem.

In collaboration with TechniTextile, Filature Lemieux, and others, the project has been awarded over \$700,000 in funding from the Ministère de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et de l'Énergie du Québec. The initiative will prototype semi-finished and finished wool products and conduct scientific testing of sheep's wool sourced from Quebec farms.

## Why This Matters

This project champions a regional manufacturing model—a proven approach that reduces costs, shortens lead times, and minimizes environmental impact. By concentrating

*"As leaders in the wool industry, we are excited to spearhead this transformative project that will not only enhance the wool sector in Quebec but also set a new benchmark for sustainable and efficient wool manufacturing across Canada. The vision of a synergistic wool ecosystem is becoming a reality, and we are committed to driving positive change for our communities and the environment."*

~ Jane Underhill, Founder and President of Ju Wool

wool processing within a 2.5-hour radius in Quebec, the consortium is laying the foundation for a Canadian wool epicentre. Regional processing supports rural economies, revitalizes traditional skills, and ensures that more of the wool's value remains in Canada—creating meaningful careers and a more sustainable supply chain. **OSN**

### About J. Underhill Wool Inc.

Headquartered in Quebec City, JU WOOL was founded in response to a growing demand for expertise in Canadian sheep's wool. The company offers bespoke B2B services in product manufacturing, research and development, and wool marketing, along with consulting services for entrepreneurs working with Canadian wool.

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# TechniTextile Québec Looks to Revitalize Regional Wool Production in Québec

TechniTextile Québec, Québec's technical textile materials cluster, is aiming to revitalize the regional supply, processing and production chain for Québec and Canadian wool, right here in Québec, within the next year.

Spearheaded by Québec companies and experts, this ambitious project brings together the expertise and know-how of J. Underhill Wool, Lemieux Spinning, Milo & Dexter, Laine Pierre, Duray and CTT Group.

"Wool is part of our history and our heritage," says Dany Charest, General Manager of TechniTextile Québec. "Through this collaborative, multi-

stakeholder project, we are aiming to create a structured, competitive regional industry capable of producing sustainable, biodegradable textiles and innovative, high-quality products. Our ambition is to explore new markets and take advantage of growth opportunities. By relying on regional production of natural fibres, we will also be able to reduce our dependence on imports."

"Saint-Hyacinthe has always been a historic pillar of the Québec textile industry, and this new project to revive wool production is perfectly in line with its tradition of excellence and innovation. Thanks to CTT Group, which has cutting-edge expertise in wool

characterization in its Saint-Hyacinthe laboratory, our city once again stands out at the heart of this promising sector, a symbol of our industrial heritage in Québec," says Chantal Soucy, MNA for Saint-Hyacinthe.

A technical and economic feasibility study, which will be conducted over the next 12 to 18 months, will receive \$358,000 in funding from the Ministry of Economy, Innovation and Energy (MEIE) through the ACCORD program, as well as an equivalent amount of private investment. The total budget for the study is over \$700,000. This strategic financial support will enable validation tests, prototypes, and a market study.



"This project aims to restore wool to its rightful place in Québec's textile industry while promoting innovation and collaboration among key players in this vital economic sector," says Jane Underhill of J. Underhill Wool. "Wool from sheep raised in Québec and Canada has unique properties, such as softness, suppleness, resilience, and thermal control. It also has intrinsic fire-retardant and self-extinguishing properties. These characteristics make wool an ideal fibre for a wide range of textile products, such as blankets, carpets, socks, and certain types of clothing."

## Developing a Regional, Eco-friendly Wool Industry in Québec

Québec manufacturers and experts will use the feasibility study to evaluate performance, tolerance, durability, quality, and cost. As part of this process, they will also be asked to test new methods and techniques to optimize the manufacturing process and improve their respective organizations' efficiency and productivity.

Over the next year, more than 6,000 pounds of sheep fleece will be processed into spun, woven, knitted, and braided products. These products will be made using wool from Québec and Canada, as well as imported wool blends, occasionally.

Project manager Jane Underhill will play a key role in ensuring a steady supply of this abundant yet underutilized raw material by working with 15 farms that specialize in sheep farming.

"For the first time, we will test Québec and Canadian wool and compare its properties with those of batches from New Zealand and England," says Serge Lemieux, President of Lemieux Spinning. "This exercise will allow us to define a distinctive positioning and a strong brand image, establish a range of products based on the unique characteristics of our wool, and develop a marketing plan. At the end of this process, we plan to introduce a new knitting yarn and increase the proportion of local wool in products manufactured at our Saint-Éphrem-de-Beauce plant."

**Lemieux Spinning** - one of the three remaining commercial spinning mills in Canada - will carry out most of the spinning, analysis and yarn characterization work.

**Duray** has already begun producing high-quality, natural-coloured socks. The family-owned company is known for its authentic Canadian wool socks and has been producing them for three generations. Each year, it produces one million pairs of socks, which are sold across Canada.

**Laine Pierre**, a newcomer to the Québec textile industry, will weave blankets and rugs. Liz Pead's Val-des-Sources workshop combines cutting-edge technology and textile artistry to create remarkable pieces enhanced by handmade or natural vegetable dyes. The workshop stands out for its remarkable agility and ability to work with small and large sheep farmers alike.

*Continued on page 14.*



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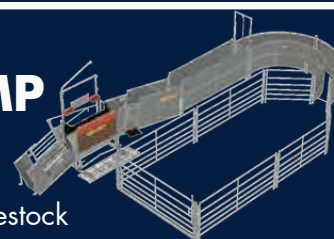
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"We are delighted to be part of this adventure, which will allow us to reestablish these essential links with sheep farmers and all the players in this great value chain. Wool is part of our DNA, and we want to inspire the younger generation to join this sector with its authentic, sustainable values by passing on our passion to them," says Jobair Jaber, Founder and General Manager of Milo & Dexter. His team will test different yarns on their knitting machines to ensure their products meet the needs and expectations of customers.

Thanks to the purchase of new specialized equipment, CTT Group is now ready to perform all tests according to the international IWTO and ASTM methodologies. "This expertise will enable us to characterize wool in our Saint-Hyacinthe laboratory," explains Valerio Izquierdo, Vice President of Business Development and Partnerships at CTT Group.

This initiative will foster strategic alliances and collaborations with clusters, industry associations, university technology transfer centres, research centres, and groups such as Les Éleveurs d'ovins du Québec (LEOQ), La Société des éleveurs de moutons de race pure du Québec (SEMRPQ), Le Centre d'expertise en production ovine du Québec (CEPOQ), the Canadian Wool Council, and the International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO). The feasibility study will also establish connections with industries that can benefit from wool, such as the reinforcement materials and sustainable development sectors.

## About the Textile Industry

According to CSMO Textile, Québec's textile industry comprises nearly 400 companies that specialize in manufacturing textiles, textile-based

products, and knitted garments. The industry produces nearly 50% of Canada's total textile output and is notable for its wide range of activities. A key sector of the Québec economy for over 150 years, it continues to stand out for its remarkable advances in developing value-added technical materials. The textile industry employs over 10,000 people. **OSN**

## About TechniTextile Québec

TechniTextile Québec is a cluster created in 2017 that brings together all the industrial, technical, scientific, and government stakeholders involved in the technical textile materials sector in Québec. The cluster is an initiative of the Ministry of Economy, Innovation and Energy's ACCORD program and aims to foster the industry's sustainable development.



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# OSF Awards and Scholarships

## Applications are now open!

Ontario Sheep Farmers is accepting nominations for the 2025 awards and scholarships, to be presented at the AGM and convention banquet in Cambridge on October 30, 2025. Recognizing members is key for community engagement, and we hope to see nominations from every district.

**Emerging Leader Award** - this award celebrates and recognizes distinguished younger members of Ontario Sheep Farmers who are socially responsible leaders and innovators, currently making notable contributions to the Ontario sheep industry with significant impact.

**Outstanding Shepherd Award** is awarded to an Ontario shepherd who has made significant contributions to the advancement of the Ontario sheep industry. This award is presented to an Ontario shepherd who exemplifies the values of leadership and responsible sheep husbandry.

**Long Service Award** is awarded in acknowledgment and appreciation of long-standing contributions to the Ontario sheep industry, recipients of this award have demonstrated outstanding dedication, leadership, and an innovative spirit. This award is presented to an Ontario shepherd or industry service provider in recognition of their significant contributions to the advancement of the Ontario sheep industry over many years of service.

**DLF Pasture Award** - This award, sponsored in part by OSF, DLF and the Ontario Forage Council, recognizes individual sheep farmers who are doing an outstanding job of pasture management. The DLF Pasture Award (formerly the Mapleseed Pasture Award) is a way of encouraging sheep farmers to implement pasture management strategies to maximize production per acre. The winner of the award receives a cash prize of \$250.

**Ontario Sheep Farmers Memorial Fund - Industry Leader Award Funds** for this award have come from donations made in memoriam of Ontario sheep industry leaders. This fund was started with donations that have been made in memory of the late Bob Irvine, an Ontario sheep farmer who was a strong supporter of continuous learning. He was a dedicated member of the industry, with a focus on sheep genetics and was a mentor to many. This \$500 cash award

is open to applicants who are wanting to further their leadership development in Ontario's sheep industry. This award can be used by the successful applicant to participate in postgraduate or industry education opportunities and leadership courses.

**Ontario Sheep Farmers Undergrad Scholarship** - This \$500 cash scholarship is open to applicants who are enrolled in their first or second year at an accredited university, college, or apprenticeship program. Applicants do not have to be enrolled in an agriculture program to be eligible for the award. Applicants must be 21 years of age or younger (as of January 1, 2025).

For additional details on the 2025 OSF Awards and Scholarships please visit [www.ontariosheep.org/communications](http://www.ontariosheep.org/communications) or call the OSF office at (519) 836-0043. **OSN**



*Jesslyn Hendricks, 2024 Undergrad Scholarship Winner with Art Alblas, OSF Chair*



# 2025 OSF District Annual General Meetings



Join your fellow producers for your district's annual meeting where you can network, learn and share ideas with your peers to guide the industry.

At each AGM, district members will participate in elections for new district committee members, and choose your district's representatives to attend the OSF Annual Meeting and Policy Day on October 30th. Additionally, for members in districts 2, 5, 8 and 11, elections will be held for your Provincial Director.

The district AGM's will be taking place later this summer and early fall. To find out when your District AGM is taking place, please see the chart below.

For additional details visit <https://www.ontariosheep.org/events> or contact your District Secretary who can be found on page 30 of this publication. Watch for updates through email notifications from the OSF office, The Messenger, Ontario Sheep News and social media.

## 2025 OSF District Committee Positions

If you are looking for an opportunity to share your knowledge and expertise, develop your leadership skills or become more involved in the Ontario Sheep industry, please consider joining your OSF district committee. The district committee organizes local sheep meetings, supports knowledge development and community building with their local members and serves as a key communication link between OSF and the district. OSF supports the committee by regularly sharing industry information with the District Committee chairs, providing an annual contribution to the committee budget for meetings and events, training and information through the district portal on the OSF website. The district committees are integral to the strategic success of the industry as they are the conduit of grassroots guidance, knowledge and information to the board through their provincial director and the District

### Chairs' Committee.

Each district committee is comprised of a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer and other committee members. Elections for these positions take place at each district AGM and the term for each position is one year.

### District Chair

This position provides leadership to district sheep producers and ensures open two-way communication between district producers and the OSF board of directors on issues and policies of concern in the best interest of the sheep industry in Ontario.

### District Vice Chair

This position provides support for the district chair and steps in for the chair when necessary. This person should be a strong committee member and help wherever it is needed.

### Secretary/Treasurer

These positions combined can be held by one person or kept separate as two positionse. The secretary is responsible for keeping meeting minutes, district correspondence and is the liaison between the OSF office and the district committee. The treasurer is responsible for keeping the district finances in order.

### Other Committee Members

They assist the district executive through representation of their district and may or may not have a special role such as social media or events coordinator.

District AGM schedule below as of June 19th, 2025.

DISTRICT	DATE
1	September 13th
2	September 4th
3	August 26th
4	August 28th
5	August. 8th
6	August. 7th
7	September 11th
8	August 23rd
9	September 14th
10	September 6th
11	September 4th

This years OSF Districts 2, 5, 8 & 11 will be electing a Prov Director at their AGM. **OSN**

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# Field Results: Selecting Sheep for Parasite Resistance using Fecal Egg Counts

By Delma Kennedy, Sheep Specialist, OMAFA

Selecting sheep for parasite resistance is not new. Sheep farmers have been doing this in New Zealand and Australia since the late 1980s. In those countries, there are standard methods of measurement and sophisticated genetic evaluation programs to ensure that the best genetic progress can be made. As a small industry with a small resource base, Ontario research is underway on using antibody tests (CARLA saliva) and genomics for selection with fecal

egg counts, but those things are not yet available for producer use. However, progress can be made within flock with a simple fecal egg count measurement and selection program. One Ontario farm started selecting rams for parasite resistance using fecal egg counts in 2012. This article describes how the testing and selection was done, overall flock performance results and some interesting research results from West Virginia.

accelerated lambing program is used, lambs are raised indoors and replacements and adult animals go to grass. Using research information from New Zealand and Australia, a testing protocol was developed and refined over time to work on farm. Animals to be tested, go to grass for the first time mid to late August for an initial exposure to parasites and then are tested after their second exposure to parasites which happens the following grazing season as yearlings. A high worm load is needed to do the best job of separating out resistance between different animals. Since the main problem on this farm is *Haemonchus Contortus*, the objective is to have a group average of 800 eggs per gram before individual fecal samples are taken. Less than 10% of the animals should have zero egg counts to do the best job of selection. All animals in the group must have been managed in the same way and sampled on the same day.

## Testing Protocol Used

If lambs are born and raised on grass, testing protocols from Australia and New Zealand can be used. On this farm, an



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## Measurement

There are many environmental influences that affect actual fecal egg counts (FEC). As a result, the FEC of animals can only be compared to each other within the same group of animals under the same management conditions. A feces sample of about 6 pellets per animal should be collected from each animal in the selection group. The samples must be stored in a cool location to prevent egg hatching until the samples can be counted.

## Selection of Animals

The average FEC must be calculated for the group and all other animals in the group compared to this average. The animals of most interest will have FEC that are much lower than average. Their progeny will be better for parasite resistance than the progeny of the animals with high FEC. Animals that are genetically resistant to parasites are more resistant to parasites as lambs and will generally acquire immunity sooner. As adults the resistant animals shed fewer eggs which results in a reduction in general pasture contamination.

To make progress, this farm concentrated selection on rams. Family lines need to be maintained and other traits considered, so rams with the lowest fecal egg counts for each family line that met other basic performance criteria were chosen to sire the next generation. Rams were tested twice to increase accuracy since fecal eggs are likely not evenly distributed in the feces.

Figure 1 shows the fecal egg counts of the first sires tested and the average fecal egg counts for progeny of the sires that were used for breeding. The rams were tested in 2012 (13-15 months of age) and used in fall 2012 to sire lambs born in 2013 that were tested in 2014.

FEC of Rams Tested				Average FEC of progeny for the 5 rams selected and used in the flock			
ID	BirthDate	FEC	FEC	ID	Ave Progeny FEC	# Prog	
519	24-Mar-11	950	0	11YC	1633	29	
599	28-Mar-11	1400	150	81YC	1183	24	
783	30-Mar-11	0		191YC	1900	12	
531	01-Apr-11	1100		881YC	877	37	
584	02-Apr-11	0		932YC	579	41	
109	02-Apr-11	2550	400				
184	02-Apr-11	150	250				
889	02-Apr-11	75	300				
532	04-Apr-11	50	50				
10	04-Apr-11	450					
11	05-Apr-11	2700	1250				
80	05-Apr-11	2500					
81	05-Apr-11	400	1300				
190	18-May-11	700					
191	18-May-11	500	0				
282	25-May-11	1100	700				
409	04-Jun-11	0	400				

Figure 1. Ram fecal egg counts at testing and average progeny fecal egg counts for the rams used as sires.

The green highlight shows the lowest FEC ram chosen has progeny with the lowest average FEC. The yellow highlight shows the highest FEC ram chosen has progeny with the highest average FEC. The heritability of parasite resistance is low to moderate but the variability of the trait within a flock is usually high. High variability means that the difference in egg counts between the highest count and the lowest count is large. This means that good genetic progress can be made selecting for this trait.

### Challenges

- Fecal samples must be kept cool and counted soon after collection.
- Ensuring there is a vet or lab prepared to process large numbers of samples.
- Exposing sheep to be tested to a large enough worm challenge even in years that have low parasite loads.
- Having enough yearling rams tested to increase selection pressure.

## Farm Results

Figure 2 shows the average FEC for all animals tested by year. Different climate conditions year to year will affect the average FEC but the objective is not to test until the group has an average of 800 eggs per gram if possible.



Figure 2. Average Fecal Egg count in eggs per gram, for all tests done, by testing year.

Most years were successful with challenges in 2020 and 2021 trying to get the egg counts high enough to test. You would not expect average fecal egg counts to be lower as more selection is done because the test isn't completed until fecal egg counts are high, but over time, it was harder to create high loads in the animals to be tested.

## Genetic Change

As part of a parasite genomics project, annual genetic change was calculated from 11 years of data. The annual genetic gain has been 2.8%

with a heritability of .14. This is good considering the pre-selection that needs to be done and that the selection is from relatively small numbers within flock. Figure 3 shows the average FEC estimated breeding values for all tested animals or animals with tested progeny by birth year.

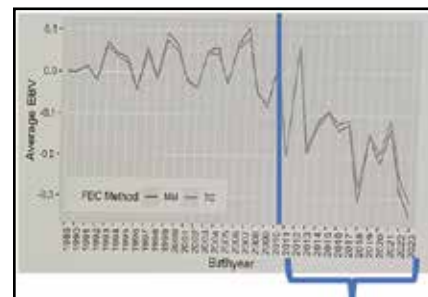


Figure 3. Average FEC estimated breeding value by birth year. Source: Samla Cunha, PhD, University of Guelph. OSF poster competition, October 2023.

The first tested animals were born in 2011. The genetic change is volatile year to year due to the small numbers of animals tested, but significant genetic progress was made.

## How did this affect the flock performance seen on farm?

On this farm, anthelmintic resistance was identified in 2008. Figure 4 shows the average total weaning weight per ewe per year from 2003 to 2024. In general, the amount of weight weaned per ewe per year started falling when anthelmintic resistance was identified and started increasing when the first lambs were born from selected rams in 2014.

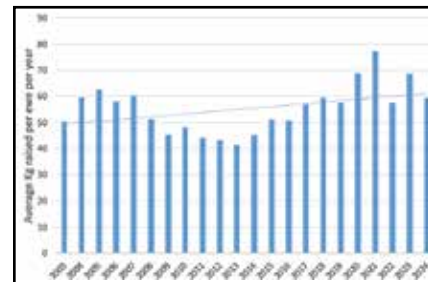


Figure 4. Average total weaning weight per ewe per year in kilograms.

*Continued on page 20.*

After a few years of selection, the flock owners felt that the ewes looked better, less dewormer was needed and pasture could be used according to pasture growth.

Genetic trends for total weight weaned from GenOvis for this flock show little genetic change but the actual performance recovered after selection for FEC indicating that the decrease in performance could have been related to parasitism. In general, litter weight returned to levels attained by the flock prior to the discovery of anthelmintic resistance with a few years reaching new highs.

## West Virginia Research

Fecal Egg Count selection work has been done with Katahdins at West Virginia University. In a project verifying the reduction of parasitism when using low fecal egg count sires, Weaver et al. 2023 found that under disease pressure, lambs from low fecal egg count sires survived better than those from high fecal egg count sires.

Figure 5 shows the lamb death loss by type of sire for each of the two years of the project.

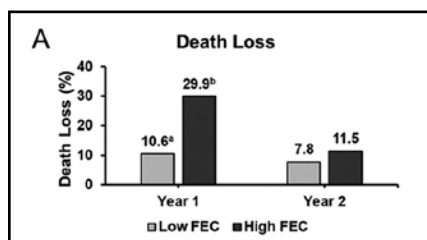


Figure 5. Lamb losses compared by high and low FEC sires. Death losses after day 7 until removal from pasture. Source: Weaver et al. 2023.

In year 1, lambs were affected by *Clostridium perfringens* and there was a significant difference in death loss found between low FEC lambs and high FEC lambs. This led to further work exploring the connection between lamb survival and selection for FEC.

In a second project, the serum IgG of lambs was measured after receiving a clostridial vaccine and booster. IgG plays a major role in fighting infection. Figure 6 shows the difference in average lamb IgG when grouped by their resistance to parasites.

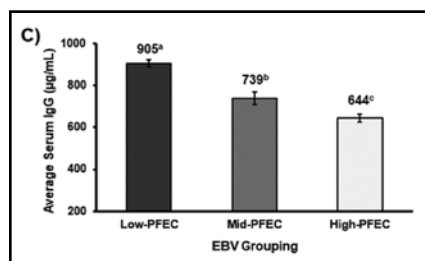


Figure 6. Average lamb serum IgG (µg/mL) by fecal egg count grouping. Subscript letters indicate significant difference. Source: Bentley et al. 2023.

Lambs with low fecal egg count evaluations had more serum IgG than high FEC lambs after receiving a clostridial vaccination. Low FEC sired lambs had a death loss of 5.6% and high FEC lambs a death loss of 12.3% in this study confirming better survival in their Katahdin lambs selected for low FEC.

In a third project, colostrum was measured for IgG, Brix values and colour, in ewes with different resistance to parasites based on FEC. Figure 7 shows the average IgG in colostrum and milk for the low FEC ewes and the high FEC ewes at 24 hours, 30 days and 60 days.

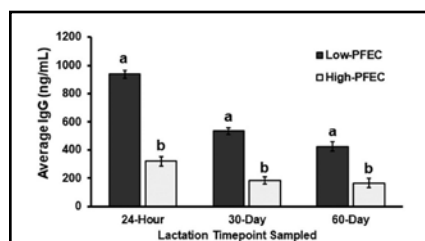


Figure 7. Immunoglobulin G concentration in colostrum and milk samples of Katahdin ewes based on FEC groupings. Source: Bentley et al. 2024.

Low FEC ewes had significantly higher IgG in their milk and colostrum than high FEC ewes. No correlations were found between IgG and Brix measurements in the high and low FEC ewes. Low FEC ewes had colostrum that was more yellow than high FEC ewes.

## Ontario Farm Mortality

Interestingly, on this farm, after selecting for resistance to parasites, lamb mortality has also improved. Figure 8 shows the average mortality per year from 2003 to 2024.

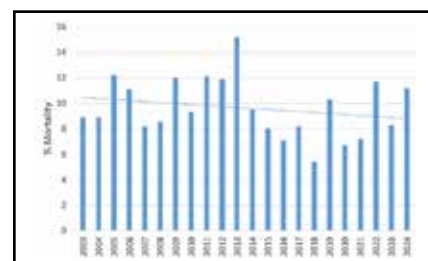


Figure 8. Average lamb mortality by year.

2014 was the first year that lambs were born from parasite resistant sires and in general the flock has had better success keeping mortality low since then. Although the West Virginia research was done with Katahdins, this farm seems to be having a similar experience where selecting for parasite resistance using fecal egg counts is reducing average lamb mortality.

Control of parasitism needs to be a multi pronged approach aimed at reducing the number of parasites on pastures to reduce risk. Adult sheep have some resistance to parasites and show few signs of parasitism when they are healthy, well fed and exposed to moderate or low levels of parasites. Genetic selection for parasite resistance can make a significant long term impact on flock performance when using pasture and may also improve immune function which can help to reduce lamb mortality. **OSN**

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# Thank you to our OSF Sponsors



# A New Era for 4-H Sheep Clubs: Ontario's Youth Resource Gets a Much-Needed Makeover

If you haven't looked at the 4-H Sheep Project manual in a while, you're in for a good surprise.

After nearly two decades of service, the 4-H Ontario Sheep Manual has been fully updated to reflect the realities of today's sheep industry. With advances in animal nutrition, grazing systems, parasite control, and the National Code of Practice under revision, the time was ripe for change.

Why the Revamp? Because the Flock and the Facts Have Moved On. The previous edition, last updated in 2008, served its purpose well. But in an

industry that's constantly evolving, even the best-written resource can start to fall behind. Volunteer leaders and 4-H families alike needed something to reflect today's practices, not yesterday's. The goal of the update was to ensure the project remained both educational and relevant. It built on the strengths of the old manual while incorporating new science, updated statistics, and modern learning methods.

## What's New in the Updated Manual?

Practically everything. From fresh research on breeding and health to

digital access points that meet kids where they are, the manual now covers:

- Nutrition and reproduction based on current research
- Modern grazing and parasite management techniques
- The current National Code of Practice (and will include revisions made in the current revision when they are available)
- Hands-on learning activities and digital-friendly resources
- High-quality images and updated stats

This update is more than a refresh. It is a complete evolution of the resource,

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shaped to better prepare youth for success, whether in the barn, in the showing, or in their future careers. Built by the Industry, for the Future of the Industry

This wasn't a closed-door update. A diverse advisory committee helped bring the new manual to life, including 4-H volunteer leaders, industry professionals, and staff from OMAFA. The update was made possible thanks to sponsorship from Ontario Sheep Farmers, the Canadian Sheep Breeders Association, and Masterfeeds.

## 4-H Sheep Clubs Are Thriving and This Resource Is Fueling the Fire

With 26 active sheep clubs and 496 members in 2025 (up from 415 in 2024), 4-H Sheep in Ontario is more than holding its ground. It's growing. Enthusiasm is rising, and with it, so is

participation in everything from club meetings to the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair.

What's driving the momentum? For starters, the new manual makes it easier for leaders to deliver strong, up-to-date content and for youth to feel confident and capable. And of course, there's the natural draw: working hands-on with animals, learning valuable life skills, and meeting friends who share their passion.

## From the Barn to the Big Stage

While 4-H Ontario doesn't run the showmanship competitions at the Royal, it's clear the foundation is built in local clubs. Volunteer leaders coach and mentor youth in everything from halter breaking to public speaking. They're often the reason a shy kid ends up showing at the Royal in the first place. "They build confidence. They push youth

in the best ways. And they know how to make learning fun," says one leader. "That's the magic of 4-H."

## What's Next?

The updated Sheep Project manual is just one piece of the puzzle, but it's a big one. By combining technical accuracy with engaging formats and real-world relevance, 4-H Ontario is investing not only in youth but in the future of the Canadian sheep industry itself.

And if you ask the kids what keeps them coming back? It's not just about the sheep, it's about the experience. Making friends, having fun, and getting the chance to own their learning in a way that sticks.

Because in 4-H, you don't just raise livestock.

You raise leaders. **OSN**

# Master Shepherd's Course



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# District Happenings

Ontario's sheep producers have been on fire this year, leading education, advocacy, and community outreach across the province. Dive into your district's highlights and see how they're shaping the future of sheep farming. Don't forget to join your local AGM and step up to steer your district's next big moves.

## District 1



District 1 kicked off their year with a summer picnic at Ailsa Craig Provincial Park, featuring an exclusive tour of Parkhill Meats and a safety briefing from a Ministry of Transportation officer. Their advocacy made waves by engaging children through five days of classroom visits at the Western Fair, inspiring hundreds of students with hands-on agriculture education. Volunteers at the Ilderton fair provided a similar experience to local elementary students. Two top-tier producer education events featured Dr. Paul Luimes on forage quality and Dr. Rex Crawford's nationwide-hit webinar on lamb survivability.



## District 2

District 2 set the bar high for sheep industry member activities this past year. Wagon tour of the Lewis family's pioneering sheep grazing/solar farm in Holstein, a regional first.

The new D2 Facebook page has energized members, boosting engagement more than ever before.

- Reached 1200 grade 5 students at Roots of Bruce and Grown in

Grey with dynamic youth-led sheep presentations, sparking interest in agriculture

- Hosted Peter Delbridge, Chair of the UK's National Sheep Association, during Grey Bruce Farmers Week
- Proud sponsors of six thriving Grey Bruce 4H sheep clubs, the 4H Showdown at Owen Sound and the Maple Hill Market Lamb Show and Sale at Hanover



- Donated to a new safety barn and silo at Saugeen Valley Children's Safety Village, supporting local youth safety education
- Supported local predation advocacy on Grey Cty coyote bounty amendments, influencing policy with factual sheep industry data
- Made a presentation on the state of the sheep industry to 80 municipal, provincial, and federal officials at Grey Bruce Politicians Day
- The 20th annual Lamb Banquet shattered attendance records with over 200 guests, driving youth agricultural support through a lively silent auction

## District 3

District 3's AGM near New Hamburg was a standout, hosted by Tyler and Vanessa Harper with a tour of their state-of-the-art barn housing both sheep and beef operations. The event served up local lamb and beef burgers that were a delicious crowd-pleaser. Producer education flourished with "Breeding for Profit" led by Keith Todd and Laura Mosley, sparking lively discussion. Dr. Gillian Davidson's in-depth presentation on top flock diseases drew a full house, tackling critical issues like abortion, mastitis, and maedi visna.

## District 4

District 4 hit the ground running with three speaker events in Jerseyville, including hybrid sessions attracting producers both in person and online. Highlights included Delma Kennedy's insight on selecting ewe replacements and Dr. Paula Menzies' expert briefing on Maedi Visna, with OSF's Erin Morgan joining as a special guest. The district also welcomed Jane Underhill from the Canadian Wool Agency to discuss wool management, gearing up for a summer AGM barbeque at Ancaster Fairgrounds.

## District 5

District 5 focused on hands-on learning with their "Hook to Hoof" event at Parker Meats, allowing producers to assess producer member's carcasses post-slaughter, a rare opportunity to link farm management with meat quality. Their social at the Topsy Fox created a relaxed space for producers to discuss local priorities, with a pasture walk at Mike Swidersky's farm next on the calendar, promising strong turnout and practical knowledge exchange.

## District 6

District 6 ignited member engagement like never before, with a vibrant AGM in Grenfell featuring guest speaker Bradley DeWolf on parasite control. Fresh faces joined the committee, including youth representative Lauren Cowan. Chair Rachel Brooks led initiatives including a membership survey, personal outreach to new members, and a quarterly newsletter highlighting producer stories. Social events ranged from a winter potluck and farm tour to a spring visit to Ontario Stockyards, attracting producers from multiple districts. Sponsorship of North and South Simcoe 4H sheep clubs continues their strong youth support.





## District 7



District 7 made waves by teaming up with the Durham Region Federation of Agriculture to host a well-attended Grey Bruce Farmers Week watch party in Greenbank, complete with a home-cooked church lunch. Chair Kim Schneider spearheaded collaboration with neighboring districts on member engagement strategies, including a survey to better tailor future activities to producer interests. Committee members supported local ag events by volunteering at the International Plowing match and the Jones Feed Mill Sheep day. The district is buzzing with excitement for the upcoming OSF Field Day scheduled in their territory.

## District 8



District 8's AGM at Benacres Farm showcased a producer panel and a deep dive on out-of-season breeding, followed by a festive social at Waterfront River Pub & Terrace. Director Karen Davis launched a quarterly newsletter keeping producers in the loop on local and provincial issues. Winter online sessions featured Dr. Kelsey Bentley from Kansas State University on parasite resistance and FCC's Jessica Sills delivering expert financial planning strategies. A May



farm tour with nutritionist Courtney Vriens rounded out the year with hands-on learning and good company.

## District 9

District 9 entered the year with fresh leadership and a well-attended AGM in Pakenham featuring Dr. Emma Borkowski's expert talk on sustainable parasite management. The committee's innovative "Ask a Vet Anything" online event with Dr. Amy Gaw was a hit, tailoring veterinary advice directly to member questions. Chair Kim Groskleg remains active in cross-district member engagement initiatives, and planning is underway for a highly anticipated AGM featuring a delicious meal and special guest speaker.

## District 10



District 10's "Baa-rnside Chats" series has revolutionized producer learning with on-farm, expert-led discussions drawing up to 45 producers. Topics ranged from post-lambing nutrition and neonatal care at Maitland Meadows to sheep behavior and barn setups in Winchester, and a live drone seeding demo at Kirkview Farms that had everyone buzzing. The district also advocates locally by engaging political candidates and supports youth through 4H show sponsorships. They're gearing up for a 2025 AGM and farm tour celebrating resilience after fire with Brigette Meunier Grimes' new barn.



## District 11

District 11's AGM at Kerns Hall welcomed nearly 20 producers for a presentation on gastrointestinal nematodes by Dr. Amy Gaw, with Wanda Cook's homemade raspberry tarts stealing the show. The district expanded inclusivity by holding two Christmas socials across its vast region. The Earlton Farm Show drew producers from far and wide, to Northern Ontario's agricultural hub, Timiskaming District.



District 11 also made waves at The Canadian Homesteaders Conference with live animal displays and a shearing demo that captivated attendees. Upcoming events include an online speaker panel on sheep management software and the annual "Day in Farm Country" outreach tour in Timiskaming. **OSN**

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# CACHE VALLEY VIRUS: What Ontario Sheep Farmers Need to Know

**B**y the time lambing season rolls around, heartbreak in the barn is the last thing any farmer wants. But for producers breeding in summer and early fall, there's a quiet threat lurking in the warm night air: mosquitoes carrying Cache Valley Virus (CVV). While not new, the effects from the virus are becoming more noticeable, especially for those targeting the Easter lamb market.

## What is Cache Valley Virus?

Cache Valley Virus is a mosquito-borne virus that has been present in Ontario since at least 2011 and is believed to be widespread across North America. In non-pregnant sheep, it often passes

unnoticed, as infection typically occurs without symptoms. The real danger arises when a ewe is infected during early pregnancy, a time when the virus can severely disrupt fetal development, leading to pregnancy loss or lambs born with serious birth defects.

Dr. Amy Gaw, a veterinarian in Ontario, explains: "If a ewe is exposed in the first 30 days of gestation, she'll likely reabsorb or abort the fetus. You may notice her cycling back in, or you just won't get the pregnancy rates you were expecting. But if she's exposed between day 31 and day 50, that's when we see serious problems, birth defects, stillbirths, and difficult deliveries." If a ewe is bitten by a mosquito carrying the

virus after 50 days of pregnancy, there usually aren't any adverse effects.

## What Do Affected Lambs Look Like?

Dr. Gaw doesn't sugarcoat it: "It's really gross. Fused joints, twisted spines, underdeveloped muscles, shortened jaws. Internally, their brains might not even form. In one lamb I examined, there was basically no brain tissue left, just an ice cube inside the skull."

These lambs aren't just heartbreaking. They also create serious lambing difficulties. Fused joints make natural delivery nearly impossible, increasing the number of dystocia cases and raising the risks to the ewe.



## Farmer Wellness

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[www.ontariosheep.org/farmer-resources](http://www.ontariosheep.org/farmer-resources)



"There are mornings it's hard to go into the barn," Gaw admits. "You know you're going to find something awful."

## What Can Be Done?

There's no vaccine for CVV and no available treatment, so prevention becomes the most critical tool, and that means smart, proactive management.

Here are some key strategies for reducing risk:

- **Time your breeding carefully.** Avoid having the critical 30 to 50-day gestation window overlap with peak mosquito season. In much of Ontario, high-risk mosquito activity begins around July 1st and can last through Thanksgiving. Most CVV cases seem to trace back to ewes bred in late July or early August.
- **Wait for a hard frost.** Once a true cold snap sets in, mosquito activity drops sharply. Breeding after the frost is one of the most effective ways to nearly eliminate the risk.
- **Avoid high-risk pastures.** Mosquitoes breed in stagnant water like swamps,

ponds, and ditches. Keep breeding groups away from these areas during the known high-risk periods

- **House breeding groups indoors.** While not foolproof, indoor housing can significantly reduce mosquito exposure, as long as the space is well-ventilated and adequately sized for the number of animals housed.
- **Control standing water.** Managing water on your property can help limit mosquito breeding zones.

Keep in mind that mosquito pressure varies from year to year depending on the weather. A cool, dry summer might mean low CVV risk, but a warm, wet one could make things worse.

## Should You Cull Affected Ewes?

In most cases, no.

"If a ewe aborts or produces malformed lambs due to Cache Valley, she's unlikely to be affected again," says Gaw. "In fact, she might be a safer bet in future high-risk seasons because she'll have

developed immunity." This immunity can last for several years or her entire lifetime.

## Balancing Risk and Reward

For producers aiming for the Easter lamb market, early breeding is a strategic financial move, but CVV introduces a level of risk that's impossible to ignore.

"It's a cost-benefit decision," Gaw says. "If producers are dead set against seeing another Cache Valley case, waiting until after frost is the best option. But you'll miss the early lambs. It's a conversation worth having with your veterinarian."

And if you do experience malformed lambs or stillbirths, talk to your vet. They can help determine whether CVV is the cause and guide your next steps. There's no shame in being affected by this virus, but there's a lot of value in being better prepared for the next season. **OSN**

## PRODUCER/SHEEP OWNER LICENCE FEE REMITTANCE FORM (PRIVATE TREATY SALES)

Ontario's 3,000 sheep producers are represented by the Ontario Sheep Farmers organization. With a focus on profitability and sustainability, the organization works in the areas of advocacy, industry capacity, research and market development. The organization is funded through a check off (or licence fee) on lamb and sheep marketed in Ontario. Representing the sheep, lamb and wool industries, it was established in 1985 under the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Act. A compulsory check off (licence fee) of \$2.20 per head sold or slaughtered in Ontario is payable to the Ontario Sheep Farmers to fund projects and operations supporting the Ontario sheep marketplace. Visit our website ([www.OntarioSheep.org](http://www.OntarioSheep.org)) to see your licence fees at work.

Auction markets, livestock agents, and processors are to deduct the check off fee from the proceeds payable to a seller, and processors must also assess the licence fee in addition to the slaughter fee. This fee is applicable to each sale or slaughter transaction.

Private sales (i.e. a sheep owner to sheep owner sale, sales not done at an auction market, nor to an agent or processor) require licence fee self-assessment and reporting through this remittance form.

**Ontario Sheep Farmers** 130 Malcolm Road, Guelph, Ontario N1K 1B1

**SHEEP/LAMB: FEE IS \$2.20 PER HEAD PLUS 13% HST**

Producer # \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov.: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Sale: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Remitted: \_\_\_\_\_

# of sheep/lamb sold: \_\_\_\_\_ Lic. Fees (x \$2.20=) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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# GENETIC AND HEALTH PROGRAM ENROLLMENT LISTING

If you have questions, concerns, or would like more information about these programs please contact the Ontario Sheep office at (519) 836-0043 or email [admin@ontariosheep.org](mailto:admin@ontariosheep.org).

## CURRENT PRODUCERS ENROLLED IN THE GENOVIS PROGRAM (AS OF JUNE 2025)

4S Maple Lane Farm • Kimberly Schneider • (905) 404-7811  
5-Star Livestock and Farm Services  
Jen & Chris Vervoort • (519) 993-6413  
Allinbrook Farms • Neil Allin • (905) 983-5791  
Asphodel Sheep Co • Todd Payne • (705) 875-5904  
Breezy Ridge Farm • Philip & Elizabeth Smith • (905) 478-4280  
Brubacher Ovine • Earl Brubacher • (519) 321-8016  
Burtwistle Sheep • Benjamin Burtwistle • (519) 280-0093  
Cedar Creek Charollais • Ted & Joanne Skinner • (905) 263-2102  
Cedar Grove Farm • Quintin Mc Ewen • (519) 949-4130  
Century Lane Farm • Robert & Shirley Graves • (613) 791-2656  
Circle R Livestock • Ryan & Romy Schill • (519) 669-4146  
Codan Suffolks • Bill & Lynne Duffield • (519) 899-2663  
Cowan Acres • Grant Cowan • (705) 796-2236  
Craigmore Farm • Wayne Kreklewich • (416) 892-0664  
Cursio Farms & Arkell Valley  
Frank & Ned Cursio • (519) 766-3378  
Emke Livestock • Craig Emke • (519) 901-2519  
Ewenique Farm • Nathalie Labelle • (613) 290-5405  
Fare Vewe Acres • Mark & Betty Bearinger • (519) 323-1760  
Jim & Wendy Driscoll • (519) 638-5703  
G & L Brien • Gary & Luanne Brien • (519) 674-3846  
Gimlet Hill • Rob & Tracey Werry • (289) 385-6804  
Greendale Farms • Tyler Jackson • (905) 655-4469  
Halfway Farms • Hiske MacKay • (519) 281-3725  
J & J Farms • Ross & Clementine Savasi • (705) 652-7477

John & Holly Wallace • (519) 368-6540  
Keiton Moffat • Keiton Moffat • (705) 295-4354  
Kettle Crest Farm • Art & Sandra Alblas • (519) 637-0050  
Kolgie Ltd • Maria Stock • (519) 275-4988  
Lamb Lady Farm • Shelagh Finn • (647) 932-7102  
Lush Acres • Jenean & Jason Lush • (519) 538-2753  
Maple Meadow Farms  
Colleen Acres & Dwayne Bazinet • (613) 826-2330  
Parker Agriculture Ltd. • Jeanne Parker • (204) 730-0597  
Q Farm • Vinod Gorantla • (416) 605-2469  
Rising Oak Farm • Laura Mosley • (705) 305-9275  
Rocky Lane Farm • Allison Brown • (705) 308-3284  
Shadow Ridge Acres • Zabrina Bielaskie • (613) 433-6199  
Schuyler Farms Ltd. • Brett Schuyler • (519) 427-9696  
Shepherd's Grove • Harv & Christine Berman • (519) 879-6579  
Shillalah Farm • Florence Pullen • (519) 233-7896  
Southgate Sheep Inc. • Jesse Bauman • (226) 752-7170  
Stonehill Sheep • Paul Dick • (519) 794-3732  
Todd Sheep Company Inc. • Keith Todd • (519) 528-2650  
Tome Charollais • Nelson Tome • (416) 677-1862  
Tulach Ard Farm • Sean McKenzie • (905) 786-2476  
Twin Shores Farm • Brian Voith • (343) 364-4095  
Wigmana Farms Ltd. • Dorothy Frankland • (519) 923-5974  
Wooldrift Farm  
Chris Buschbeck & Axel Meister • (519) 538-2844

## FLOCKS WHO HAVE ACHIEVED "A" STATUS ON THE MAEDI VISNA PROGRAM (AS OF JUNE 2025)

Allinbrook Farms • Neil Allin • (905) 983-5791  
Cedar Creek Charollais • Ted & Joanne Skinner • (905) 263-2102  
Century Lane Farm • Robert & Shirley Graves • (613) 831-2656  
Kettle Crest Farm • Art & Sandra Alblas • (519) 637-0050  
Rainbow Woods • Eleanor & Sarah Reed • (705) 454-3167  
Robert Pennie • (705) 859-2671

Rider Ridge Ranch • Jill & Tim DeClark • (519) 644-0766  
Rocky Lane Farm • Allison & Luke de Vos • (705) 308-3284  
Shadow Ridge Acres • Zabrina Bielaskie • (613) 433-6199  
Trailblaze Farm  
Perry, Sharon & Valerie Robinson • (519) 794-4837

## FLOCKS WHO HAVE ACHIEVED "B" STATUS ON THE MAEDI VISNA PROGRAM (AS OF JUNE 2025)

Crow Hill Corriedales • Leslie Dymont • (705) 359-1376  
Huron Grove Farms • Michael & Fraser Hodgson • (519) 918-4159

Stitch and Steel Homestead  
Sam Sheehan & Andrew Sheehan • (647) 546-8906

## FLOCKS WHO HAVE ACHIEVED "ENROLLED NEG" STATUS ON THE MAEDI VISNA PROGRAM (AS OF JUNE 2025)

Antje & Wouter van Breugel • (902) 393-4677

The Sweet Sheep Company  
John Wernham & Krystyna Dallaire • (613) 463-9245

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Century Lane Farm • Robert & Shirley Graves • 1 Certified  
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For more information visit [scrapiecanada.ca/vsfc/vsfc-enrolled-producers/](https://scrapiecanada.ca/vsfc/vsfc-enrolled-producers/).



# THE 2026 ONTARIO LAMB MARKET CALENDAR

Date	Holiday	Consumption Preferences	Market Processor Needs	Public Auction Market Impact
January 6	Feast of the Epiphany (Christian)	Lamb is featured in many celebration meals.	Recently weaned and milk-fed lambs are preferred.	Lower market volumes generally.
January 7	Orthodox Christmas	Lamb is featured in many celebration meals.	Recently weaned and milk-fed lambs are preferred.	
February 19	Chinese New Year	Both mutton and lamb are used in a variety of dishes and is a favorite ingredient in hot pots.		Lower market volumes.
March			Easter holiday inventory buildup.	Growth in supply following winter, with Easter demand increase.
February 19 - March 19	Ramadan (Islam) (daylight fasting)	Some celebrations will occur prior to start of Ramadan.	Weaned market lambs (60 – 90 lbs live weight)	A moderate market factor for week leading into Ramadan.
March 19-20	Eid al-Fitr (Islam) Festival of Fast-breaking	Celebrations occur during the fast break period which will feature lamb products.	Weaned market lambs 60 – 90 lbs liveweight. Lower demand for heavy lambs.	A moderate market factor for the week leading into Ramadan.
April 1-9	Passover (Pesach) Jewish	Traditionally must be processed under Kosher laws.	Healthy finished lambs. (up to 64 lbs live weight; ideally milk-fed and fat)	Steady market. A limited influence.
April 5	Western Easter	Roast lamb is a main dish in festival meals for Mediterranean (Italian, Portuguese, and Greek) heritages	Healthy young lambs. (under 60 pounds live weight; ideally milk-fed and fat). Number of lambs under 65 pounds begins to increase in the 3 weeks prior to Easter, and often peaks during the week before Easter. Number of 65-to-79-pound lambs will also increase during this time.	Higher market demand in the 2-to-3-week period preceding holiday. Check local auction schedules for "special" Easter sale dates. A peak sale period in the year.
April 12	Orthodox Easter	Roast lamb is a main dish in festival meals for Mediterranean (Italian, Portuguese, and Greek) heritages	Healthy young lambs. (under 60 pounds live weight; ideally milk-fed and fat). Number of lambs under 65 pounds begins to increase in the 3 weeks prior to Easter, and often peaks during the week before Easter. Volume of 65-to-79-pound lambs will also increase during this time.	Higher market demand in the 2-to-3-week period preceding holiday. Check local auction schedules for "special" Easter sale dates. A peak sale period in the year.
May		Start of barbeque season which more frequently featuring Ontario lamb.	Moderate demand. Processors see an increase in BBQ lamb demand from May to August.	Commonly higher supply and slightly higher but still moderate demand.
May 24-26	The Hajj (Islam)			
May 26-28	Eid al Adha (Festival of Sacrifice, Eid)	Eid, the festival of sacrifice, is one of the most important observances in the Islamic faith. (This may be referred to as Qurbani, though this refers to the actual act of animal processing.)	Lambs (70 – 110 lbs live weight) Desired weight differs across different communities. Lambs should be under a year of age and be unblemished. Some prefer lambs older than six months. Blemishes may include wounds, torn ears, or any physical unsoundness. Wethers and lambs with docked tails may not be acceptable to some buyers.	High market demand in period leading up to holiday. Peak demand is in week preceding holiday. Note: There is a high activity level of private holiday sales sought by families for this important celebration.
June 16	Muharram (Islamic New Year)	The Islamic New Year is the first day of the Muslim calendar. Mutton is often served as the main course for this holiday meal.	There is no preferred weight for this holiday, although animals should appear healthy.	Steady market. A limited influencer.
August 25	Mawlid al-Nabi (Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad)			
September 11-13	Rosh Hashanah Jewish New Year	Lamb is a tradition or symbol of a new beginning.	Forequarters from weaned market lambs (60 – 109 lbs live weight)	Steady market. A limited influencer.
October 12	Thanksgiving	Lamb is an alternative to turkey.	Steady demand with slow year over year consumer demand increase.	Steady market. A limited influencer.
November		Stew/casserole are growing in seasonal popularity.	Lower but steady demand during transition from Thanksgiving into Christmas period.	Lower market volumes.
December 4-12	Hanukkah (Festival of Rededication) Jewish	Traditionally meats must be processed according to Kosher law.	Healthy heavy lambs. (up to 100 lbs live weight)	Usually occurs close to Christian Christmas which leads to high demand.
December 25	Christmas Day to New Year (Christian)	Lamb is a feature at Christmas parties (lamb-pops, spiedini, roasts). Leg of lamb, stews and curries are food staples.	Lambs should be freshly weaned (milk fed), up to 80 lbs, and not older than 3 months of age. Out-of-season breeding is required to produce the favoured type of lamb for this market. Cull sheep are popular for stew and curry.	Higher market demand in 2 to 3-week period preceding holiday. A peak sale period of the year.

This calendar and the 5 year calendar is also available on the OSF website at [www.ontariosheep.org/religious-ethnic-market-calendar](http://www.ontariosheep.org/religious-ethnic-market-calendar).

# District Contacts

Look for your district news and events in the Messenger or on the website.

## District 1

*Counties of Essex, Kent, Lambton, Middlesex, and Elgin*

Director	Art Alblas	519.637.0050
Chair	Andrew Pearson	519.301.6875
Vice Chair	Jeff Swain	519.466.0984
Secretary	Kacey Wilson	519.521.6742
Treasurer	Jennifer Van Hooydork	519.520.7970

## District 2

*Counties of Grey and Bruce*

Director	Jay Lennox	519.374.4055
Chair	Jason Emke	519.379.8778
Vice Chair	Petra Aeberhard	519.655.2017
Secretary	Dennis Thompson	519.881.3174
Treasurer	Steve Ernewein	519.392.8624

## District 3

*Counties of Huron, Perth, Waterloo and Oxford*

Director	Keith Todd	519.528.2650
Chair	Susan Martin	519.669.8066
Vice Chair	Ron Follings	519.625.8809
Secretary	Cynthia Kretschmann	519.272.3907
Treasurer	Rick Zimak	519.284.0533

## District 4

*County of Brant, Regional Municipalities of Hamilton-Wentworth, Haldimand-Norfolk and Niagara*

Director	Rafael Lara	226.622.8097
Chair	Jay Mycroft	905.957.1114
Secretary	Vacant	
Treasurer	Monica Roberts	519.755.7487

## District 5

*Counties of Wellington and Dufferin and the Regional Municipalities of Halton and Peel*

Director	Ryan Schill	519.669.4146
Chair	Mike Swidersky	519-370-8586
Vice Chair	Heather Little	519.939.0408
Secretary	Romy Schill	519.699.4146
Treasurer	Bill McCutcheon	519.766.7905

## District 6

*County of Simcoe, District Municipality of Muskoka and the District of Parry Sound*

Director	Grant Cowan	705.436.2236
Chair	Rachel Brooks	705.828.0059
Vice Chair	Dean Keranovic	647.889.6785

## District 7

*City of Toronto, Regional Municipalities of York and Durham, City of Kawartha Lakes, and Counties of Peterborough and Northumberland*

Director	Ken Lamb	905.985.4247
Chair	Kim Schneider	905.404.7811
Vice Chair	Allison de Vos	705.308.3284
Secretary	Tracey Werry	289.385.6804
Treasurer	Jenny Carnaghan	905.261.1658

## District 8

*Counties of Lennox and Addington, Hastings, Prince Edward, Frontenac and Leeds*

Director	Karen Davis	613.532.3347
Chair	Phil Botden	613.358.2676
Vice Chair	Brad Davis	613.561.7731
Secretary	Kayleigh Graham	289.355.9947
Treasurer	Krystyna Dallaire	613.312.7905

## District 9

*Counties of Renfrew and Lanark, and the Township of West Carleton and the City of Kanata in the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton*

Director	Wesley Godden	647.244.4768
Chair	Kim Groskleg	613.717.3795
Vice-Chair	Shanna Armstrong	613.433.8255
Secretary	Charlotte MacKay	613.281.7570
Treasurer	Zabrina Bielaski	613.433.6199

## District 10

*Counties of Russell, Prescott, Glengarry Stormont, Dundas and Grenville, and the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, except the Township of West Carleton and the City of Kanata*

Director	Devon Wensink	613.330.8014
Chair	Colleen Acres	613.826.2330
Vice Chair	Fred Baker	613.327.8508
Secretary	Yvonne Seeley	613.330.0272
Treasurer	Sarah Jean Campbell	613.330.8014

## District 11

*Districts of Kenora, Rainy River, Thunder Bay, Cochrane, Algoma, Sudbury, Temiskaming, Nipissing and Manitoulin*

Director	Jenna Wight	705.622.1774
Chair	Colleen Allooi	705.248.3287
Vice Chair	Ryan Klapwyk	705.648.4432
Secretary	Trudy Reid	807.935.3224

OSN

# Auction Markets and Abattoirs

ABATTOIRS		
NAME	CITY	PHONE NO
Abattoir LeFavre Inc.	Lefavre	(613) 679-4698
Afghan Halal Meat Suppliers	Schomberg	(416) 894-1802
Agram 2005 Meats Inc.	Georgetown	(905) 877-6082
Almarwa Halal Meat Packers	St. Ann's	(365) 777-4932
Al Madina Halal Meat Packers	Brinston	(613) 652-1301
Aman's Abattoir	Wellington	(613) 399-2173
Bachert Meats	Walton	(519) 887-9328
Belle Vallee Meats & Abattoir	Belle Vallee	(705) 647-7419
Bentnick Packers Ltd.	Hanover	(519) 364-3538
Beverly Creek Farm	Millgrove	(905) 690-8111
*Bilal Farms Inc.	Clarence Creek	(613) 488-2268
Birch Lake Abattoir	Massey	(705) 865-1366
Brian Quinn's Meats Ltd.	Yarker	(613) 377-6430
Burt Farm Country Meats	Gore Bay	(705) 282-0328
Caledon Halal Meat Packers	Bolton	(905) 880-9888
Charles Quality Meats Ltd.	St. Agatha	(519) 886-7931
Cloverbelt Country Meats Co-operative	Oxdrift	(807) 937-6716
Cole Bros. Meat Processing	Picton	(613) 476-6955
Country Fresh Packers	Tilbury	(519) 682-2222
Creative Meats	Warren	(705) 967-2006
Desormeaux Slaughter-house & Meats Inc.	Crysler	(613) 987-2148
Dresden Meat Packers Ltd.	Dresden	(519) 683-2585
Dufferin County Meats	Amaranth	(519) 939-8068
Elora Road Meats	Mildmay	(519) 367-2261
Ewe Dell Family Farm	Woodslee	(519) 723-4456
Farmersville Community Abattoir	Athens	(613) 924-0400
Gord's Abattoir Ltd.	Leamington	(519) 326-2503
Green's Meat Market & Abattoir Ltd.	Wingham	(519) 357-2912
Grey County Meats	Maxwell	(519) 922-2400
Hank De Koning Ltd.	Port Dover	(519) 583-0115
Harriston Packing Company Ltd.	Harriston	(519) 338-3330
Hastings Meat Market	Stirling	(613) 395-0505
Hay's Custom Cutting Ltd.	Campbellford	(705) 653-3388
Henderson Meats	Chesterville	(613) 448-3471
Highgate Tender Meats Ltd.	Highgate	(519) 678-3383
Highland Packers Ltd.	Stoney Creek	(905) 662-8396
Hilts Butcher Shop Ltd.	Norwood	(705) 696-2172
J.J. Meat Distributing Inc.	Schomberg	(905) 859-1540
Joe Savage & Fils Abattoir Inc.	St. Albert	(613) 987-2070
Johnson Meats	Aylmer	(519) 773-9208
Ken R. Mogk Butchering	Tavistock	(519) 462-2280
L & M Meat Distributing Inc.	Beeton	(905) 729-2771
L & M Meat Distributing Inc.	Gilford	(905) 775-6775
Matar Meats	Osgoode	(613) 821-7929
Miedema's Country Meat	Exeter	(519) 235-4978
Miedema's Meat Market	Embro	(519) 475-4010
Millgrove Packers Ltd.	Waterdown	(905) 689-6184
Mr. Beef Inc.	Pakenham	(613) 624-5222
Mount Brydges Abattoir Ltd.	Mount Brydges	(519) 264-1873
Newmarket Meat Packers Ltd.	Newmarket	(905) 836-7001
Northhorizon Abattoir	Bruce Mines	(705) 941-8132
Ontario Halal Meat Packers Inc.	Milton	(905) 875-0270
Otonabee Meat Packers Ltd.	Peterborough	(705) 743-8547
Palmateer's Abattoir Ltd.	Tweed	(613) 478-3801
Parkhill Meats	Parkhill	(519) 293-3000

ABATTOIRS		
NAME	CITY	PHONE NO
Peel Meat Packers	Drayton	(519) 638-3446
Pine Ridge Meat Packer	Little Britain	705-786-9970
Rainy River District Regional Abattoir Inc.	Emo	(807) 482-3028
Reiche Meat Products Ltd.	Pembroke	(613) 732-3773
Rua Meats Ltd.	Foxboro	(613) 962-7915
Simcoe Street Meat Packers	Oakwood	(705) 821-3151
Smelser Meats	Cayuga	(905) 772-5053
St. Helen's Meat Packers Ltd.	Toronto	(416) 769-1788
Stayner Meat Packers Ltd.	Stayner	(705) 428-3006
Taylor's Custom Meats	Roseneath	(905) 352-2367
Teals Pure Pork Sausage	Waterford	(519) 443-8844
The Beefway	Kincardine	(519) 396-2257
Thunder Bay Meat Processing Co. (1986) Ltd.	Murillo	(807) 935-2911
Townsend Butchers	Simcoe	(519) 426-6750
Vanessa Meats & Deli	Vanessa	(519) 446-3897
VG Packers	Simcoe	(519) 426-2000
Wall's Pork Shop	Oxdrift	(807) 937-4357
Weiland Meats Ltd.	Petrolia	(519) 882-1215
Willie's Meats Ltd.	Troy	(519) 647-3160
Windcrest Meat Packers Ltd.	Port Perry	(905) 985-7267
Zehr's Country Market	Dashwood	(519) 237-3668

AUCTION MARKETS			
Aylmer Stockyards Inc.	8933 Walker Road, RR 1	Aylmer	(519) 765-2672
Brussels Livestock Exchange	42857 Newry Road, RR 3	Brussels	(519) 887-6461
D.H. Hickson Ltd.	2508 County Road 8, RR 5	Campbellford	(705) 653-3660
Denfield Livestock Exchange Inc.	12952 Sixteen Mile Road, RR 2	Denfield	(519) 666-1140
Embrun Livestock Exchange Ltd.	1643 Salebarn Road,	Greely	(613) 821-2634
Hagersville Auction Centre	97 First Line, RR 6	Hagersville	(905) 768-5601
Kawartha Lakes Community Sale Barn Inc.	580 Woodville Road, RR 3	Woodville	(705) 439-4444
Keady Livestock Market Ltd.	117012 Grey Road 3, RR 4	Tara	(519) 934-2339
Ontario Livestock Exchange Inc.	856 Weber Street N,	Waterloo	(519) 884-2082
Ontario Stockyards Inc.	3807 Highway 89,	Cookstown	(705) 458-4000
Renfrew-Pontiac Livestock Ltd.	18156 Highway 17, RR 3	Cobden	(613) 646-7335
Temiskaming Livestock Exchange	883006 Highway 65 E, RR 3	New Liskeard	(705) 647-5415
Vankleek Hill Livestock Exchange Ltd	1239 Ridge Road,	Vankleek Hill	(613) 678-3008

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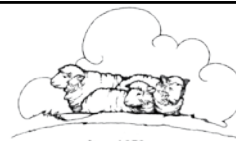
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# 2025 OSF Provincial Director Elections

Elections for provincial directors will be held in districts 2, 5, 8 & 11 this year. The provincial directors are elected for a three-year term on the OSF board of directors.

Serving on the board is a meaningful way to contribute your expertise, leadership, and vision to our industry. Board members help set strategic priorities, make key decisions, and support the growth of our organization. The benefits of being on the board include learning about the industry and gaining new skills, learning from other producers on the board, meeting new people in the industry and expanding your personal network and utilizing your skills set to guide the industry forward.

If you know someone who you feel will be passionate about making a difference and would like to be considered, we encourage you to nominate them! Please submit the form no later than 3 weeks prior to your District AGM. Nomination forms will be emailed to all district members but if you do not receive one, please contact the OSF office for the form.

Some things to consider when nominating someone:

- The nominee is a registered producer with OSF (please call the office if you are unsure).
- They will contribute to good governance of OSF.

- They are motivated to contribute to our sheep industry and represent OSF in its best interests.
- The district's connection with the Board. They will bring your concerns and news to the board and will bring back information to your district.
- Opportunities to sit on various committees helping the industry to move forward.

All nominations should be sent to Erin Morgan, Executive Director by email marked **CONFIDENTIAL** [emorgan@ontariosheep.org](mailto:emorgan@ontariosheep.org) no later than 3 weeks prior to your District AGM. **OSN**



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