

ONTARIO

Vol. 43 - Issue 2 Spring 2025

# SHEEP NEWS

## Maximizing Flock Performance

Maximizing Flock Performance:  
The Benefits of Genetic Indexes in Sheep

Navigating Tariff Challenges: Insights  
from an Ontario Sheep Farmer and the  
Canadian Wool Council

2025 Advocacy Priorities and  
OSF Recommendations



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# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

By Art Alblas, Chair, Ontario Sheep Farmers

## 40 Years of Volunteers

As I reflect on this organization's 40-year anniversary milestone, what stands out are the amazing contributions of our volunteers. From the founding members to the most recent volunteers, it is the dedication of our members that have built and sustained this organization.

Whether it is helping at a district event, mentoring youth through 4H, chairing a local committee, or sitting as a provincial director, volunteering plays a vital role in improving sheep farm businesses and strengthening the entire industry.

Government and industry partners often comment that the small commodity organizations "punch above their weight" and that is a result of the time and effort members take to support their fellow producers and build a community of sheep farmers to meet the challenges in the industry.

There is lots to be gained from volunteering including growing your personal network, accessing training to build a greater skill set, a sense of fulfillment from helping others and participating in a greater cause, and contributing to the success of an organization. Volunteers value the social interactions, knowledge sharing, and lasting friendships gained through district involvement. Personally, I appreciate the opportunity to give back to our industry, meet awesome new people and leverage common goals to advance our industry.

Over the last 40 years, our organization's volunteers have successfully advocated for policy change and business risk management programs at Queen's Park. Our farmers have offered their farms and flocks for research that has provided access to more flock health tools and more sustainable pastures. Collaboration within our community has improved genetics, created marketing opportunities, and organized education for new and growing producers. And our communities have supported farmers in need, supplied food banks and comforted families after loss.

As we prepare for our district annual meetings, please consider volunteering for your local district committee or running for the OSF board of directors. We need a diverse set of skills and knowledge to continuously bring new ideas to our leadership. OSF is there to support your district's efforts with display and materials to showcase our industry, provide resources and tools to emphasize sheep production. Our staff and provincial directors are always accessible to share experiences and provide feedback.

I am grateful to be part of such a thriving community of sheep farmers and I am proud of the organization we have collectively built over the last 40 years. Thank you to the many volunteers that have contributed and guided our organization on this journey to date. Our foundation is solid as we focus on the future of sheep production.

The sheep sector has significant growth potential, and volunteering is essential to fostering a supportive environment. It also offers networking opportunities, contributes to policy and regulation development and promotes a sense of community. Ensuring a good return on your time invested.

I encourage those who would like to be part of the next 40 to come out to our local district meetings and events and learn about the amazing work we can do when we support each other and invest our time and knowledge to build our industry. **OSN**

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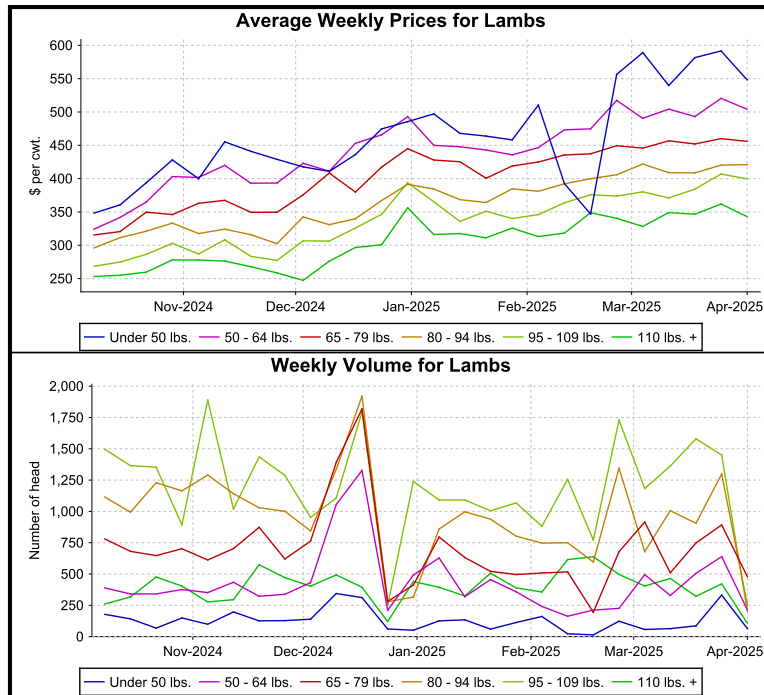
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# THE ONTARIO MARKET REPORT

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.

Market information for OLEX, the Ontario Stockyards, Brussels and Embrun are recorded every week. You can also find archived weekly summaries on the Market page.

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# Canadians Can Explore Sheep Farms in New Virtual Tours

By Stacey Sage

Ontario Sheep Farmers (OSF) in partnership with Farm and Food Care is pleased to be part of an innovative project that allows Canadians to explore farms virtually. The latest release on [www.FarmFood360.ca](http://www.FarmFood360.ca) includes an immersive tour of an Ontario sheep farm, providing a unique opportunity to learn about sheep farming while attending agriculture events, or from home or the classroom.

Using 360-degree cameras and virtual reality technology, this interactive experience offers a behind-the-scenes look at a real, working sheep farm—no boots or biosecurity gear required. The tours are aimed at enhancing public understanding and trust in food production and agriculture.

The virtual reality experience takes visitors to Peter, Elly and Harold Van der Veen's sheep farm in Grand Valley. From raising lambs to milking sheep and wool production, this tour highlights the sustainable practices and innovative techniques that sheep farmers use to maintain a successful and thriving business.



"We are excited to offer this opportunity for Canadians to explore an Ontario sheep farm virtually," said Erin Morgan, executive director of Ontario Sheep Farmers. "This tour helps highlight the dedication and passion of our farmers, who are committed to producing high-quality lamb, milk, and wool products for consumers across Canada."

Peter Katona, communications and industry relations manager for the

Agricultural Adaptation Council (AAC), explained that this project was partially funded through AAC's FarmFood360 program. The program supports up to half of the costs of completing a VR project for AAC member organizations. Katona said, "the intent of the program is to apply the most innovative and current examples of transparency available, to help earn public trust in food and farming. We're delighted that our member organization OSF used this funding to complete the new sheep tour. Our organization is appreciative of FFCO's tireless efforts to promote Ontario's agri-food industry, and we truly value this partnership."

This project is also funded in part by the Government of Canada under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

Since its inception in 2016, almost 30 Virtual Reality farm tours have been produced, with the latest sheep farm tour joining the collection. Each year, [www.FarmFood360.ca](http://www.FarmFood360.ca) attracts more than a million online visitors eager to discover where their food comes from and to learn more about Canadian agriculture. **OSN**





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- Michael Richards, MGR Sheep Farms, Ontario

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# Maximizing Flock Performance: The Benefits of Genetic Indexes in Sheep

By Sarah Brien, Canadian Sheep Breeders' Association & Amélie St-Pierre, CEPOQ

Whether you are a purebred or commercial producer, genetic indexes can be a valuable tool when it comes to selecting new or replacement sheep for your farm. Regardless of your objective, genetic indexes can help you work towards your flock goals if you're already on the Genovis program or thinking about buying animals that are.

By leveraging Estimated Progeny Differences (EPDs) and Genetic Indexes, you can make informed breeding decisions that enhance the performance and economic viability of your flock. This article explores the benefits and applications of these genetic tools, providing insights into how they can help you achieve your breeding objectives and improve your bottom line.

## EPD vs. Genetic Index

An EPD (Estimated Progeny Difference) is the expectation of how the progeny

allows for a true comparison to be done between animals, no matter the variables in their genetics. Adjusting the EPDs allows you to compare lambs as if they were genetically similar, even though they may not be.

For example: In the simplest terms, you are looking at a more balanced comparison of the traits from a single lamb to a quadruplet, a ewe lamb to a ram lab or even lambs from yearling ewes to lambs from mature ewes.

Once you can make the 'apples to apples' comparison, you can identify the traits you are looking to improve and make selections based on performance. But breeding decisions are made using more than just a single trait. Ideally you will want to consider multiple traits at a time, which makes things much more difficult when trying, so that's where Genetic Indexes can be used.

into indexes, you can select for several important traits at the same time with only one number.

For example: Increasing the trait for number of lambs born from 2 to 5 sounds great, but what if only 1 of those lambs survives. By using the MAT-HP index, you can focus on increasing the lambs, while simultaneously increasing the lamb survival rate.

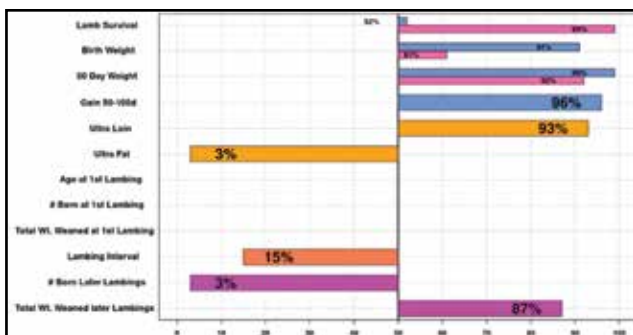
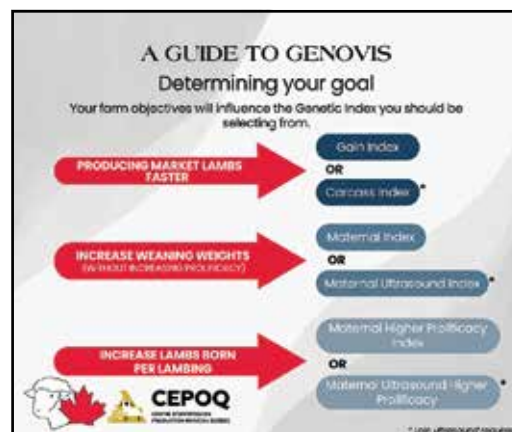


Figure 1 shows the different EPDs that are calculated using the GenOvis program.

of an animal will perform. Animals with the highest EPD value have the highest probability of producing exceptional progeny for that specific trait.

There are EPDs for traits such as rate of gain, number of lambs born, lamb survival, to loin depth, and many more. The EPD is an adjusted value that

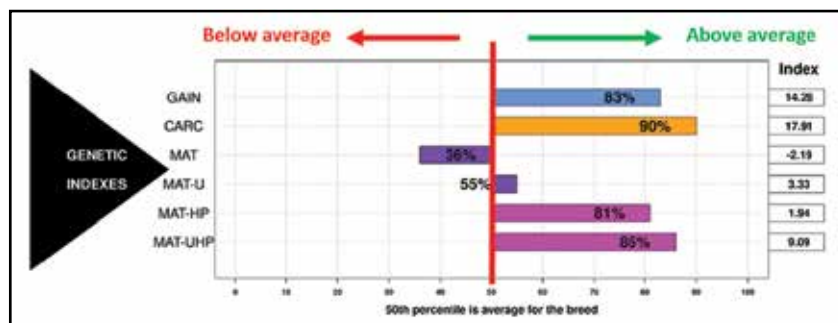
## Genetic Indexes

A Genetic Index is designed to select for several different traits at once. Each index is formulated to provide an average rate of progress that has been set for each trait. By balancing the traits

The Genovis program offers 6 indexes, focusing on 3 goals, with the option of indexes that include data from loin ultrasounds.

## Selecting the Best Animals

Looking at an EPD or Index value might not immediately show whether the animal is poor, good or great, so on any animal certificate you can find its percentile ranking as well as the value. Percentiles rank the animals within





its breed, based on the information available in the genetic evaluation database. This number is a great reference to see if the animal is below or above the average of the breed.

Any breed average is listed as 50%. If an animal is under the 50th percentile it is considered to be below average for that breed, above 50th percentile is above average for the breed and anything greater than 90% is considered a "Top Animal" for that breed.

You will make genetic progress in your flock by selecting animals that are shown to be in the 50th percentile or higher.

## Economic Benefits

All this information is helpful, but how does it impact your bottom line? The potential is up to you.

Using a ram with a high potential gain can bring lambs to market, on average,

6.7 days earlier. To break it down, if you have 2 lambs sold at market per ewe, with a daily cost of \$1.30 per lamb, who is gaining 350g per day, that can turn into an economic return of \$17.42 per ewe.

Whether you are registered on Genovis or looking to buy an animal that is already on the program, there is data available that you can use to your advantage and improve your bottom line. **OSN**

# Navigating Tariff Challenges: Insights from an Ontario Sheep Farmer and the Canadian Wool Council

By Stacey Sage

The recent tariff delay by the U.S. administration has provided a brief relief for Canadian businesses, including the approximately 3,000 sheep farmers and wool producers in Ontario. This pause offers a crucial moment to reassess and strategize for the future.

In Wallenstein, the owners of Circle R Livestock & Revolution Wool Company are among those trying to navigate the uncertainties posed by potential tariffs.

"As farmers, we absorb those costs because it's not something that we pass on to our customers," explained Romy Schill. "For our meal lambs and market lambs, we sell them through a live auction-based system and take what we get. We cannot pass on any increased cost to our customers."

According to the Canadian Wool Council, Canada exported \$1.3 million in wool products to the U.S. in 2022, representing 73 percent of the market. "In terms of exports to the United States, we're looking at about \$1 million - \$1.3 million in just raw wool," said Matthew Rowe, the council's CEO. "But the Canadian wool industry is part

of a much broader textile industry which, when you're looking at some of the stats, we're selling about a billion dollars."

Despite the unpredictable nature of the trade war, the industry remains focused on promoting Canadian products. "Our advice is to start looking at alternative markets and domestically, how we can sell more products to other countries with whom we have better relationships," Rowe suggested.

Ontario beef farmers have also expressed their concerns. Nathan Phinney, President of the Canadian Cattle Association, emphasized, "The integration of the North American live cattle and beef supply chain is unlike anywhere in the world. Tariffs would greatly increase the cost of processing cattle and ultimately the cost of beef on both sides of the border".

Similarly, Ontario pork farmers are feeling the pressure. Drew Spoelstra,



President of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, noted, "Tariffs and resulting impacts on currency and markets will have severe negative consequences for farmers and consumers on both sides of the border".

For now, it's a waiting game as the federal government works to negotiate a path forward. "As a Canadian farmer, and as a small business in Canada, I really appreciate Canadian support for what we're trying to do," Schill said.

Ontario sheep farmers continue to adapt and persevere, showcasing the resilience and dedication that define our agricultural community. **OSN**

# Winter Roundup: Key Takeaways from Ontario Sheep Producer Events

By Stacey Sage

This winter, sheep farmers gathered for three key industry events: Grey Bruce Sheep Day, the Midwest Co-op Sheep Producers Meeting, and the Dairy Sheep Symposium. Offering valuable insights on innovative farming techniques, sustainable practices, and flock health, while fostering networking and collaboration among farmers, these events are crucial to supporting the advancement of the Ontario sheep farming community.

## Grey Bruce Sheep Day

Hosted by Grey County Agricultural Services, the annual Grey Bruce Sheep Day was held in early January during the Grey Bruce Farmers Week in Elmwood. Sheep Day featured keynote speaker Peter Delbridge from England, who shared insights from his experience at Blindwell Farm as a producer of over 700 ewes and as the Chair of Britain's National Sheep Association.

Mark Bearinger discussed "Raising Replacements," sharing insights from Fare Vewe Acres on genetic improvement and raising quality replacement animals. He emphasized selecting desirable traits to enhance flock productivity and health. Dr. Talia Fletcher, veterinarian from Markdale Veterinarian Services presented on "Strategies to Reduce Gastrointestinal Parasites in Sheep," offering practical advice on managing parasites through

genetic selection, pasture management, and multi-species grazing.

Erin Morgan, Executive Director for Ontario Sheep Farmers was included in the 'On-Demand presentations' covering the work of OSF in 2024 under the organization's strategic pillars. The full presentation can be seen on the OSF's YouTube channel.

The panel on "Finishing Lambs for the Processor" brought together industry experts to discuss the aspects of preparing lambs for market. Yaser Alqayem, President of Parkhill Meats, shared his insights on the qualities processors seek in finished lambs, drawing from his experience in the meat processing industry. Bill McCutcheon, seasoned farmer from Grand Valley and owner of Ontario Lamb Marketing provided a supplier's perspective, emphasizing the importance of achieving the desired standards in lamb production. Charlie Cunningham, owner and operator of Merry



Erin Morgan and attendees at Grey Bruce Sheep Day.



Grey Bruce Sheep Day crowd



Panelist, Bill McCutcheon, Ontario Lamb Marketing

Meadows added his expertise as a sheep farmer and shearer, offering practical advice on preparing lambs for market. Together, the panelists provided comprehensive guidance on producing high-

quality lambs, benefiting both new and experienced sheep farmers.

Ontario Sheep Farmers' satellite location for the Sheep Day event in New Liskeard offered accessibility for those unable to travel long distances, helped reduce travel and accommodation costs, while still providing networking opportunities. "The convenience of a nearby location helps busy sheep producers balance participation with other time commitments, ensuring more producers can benefit from

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the event's valuable knowledge and discussions", said Heather Johnson, OSF Member Relations Coordinator.

## Jones Feed Mill Sheep Producer Meetings

Jones Feed Mill hosted two insightful Sheep Producer Meetings in February drawing a significant number of sheep farmers eager to enhance their knowledge and practices. Hosted in Lindsay and Floradale on separate days, the meetings covered a range of topics, including nutrition and feed efficiency, disease management, and sustainable farming practices.

Expert presenters included Nicole Moran, PhD Candidate from University of Guelph, Annie Dubuc and Matt Francisco, Chair of Next Generation Canadian Lamb Producers. Topics covered the latest advancements in sheep nutrition, emphasizing the importance of balanced diets to improve feed efficiency and overall flock health. Sessions on disease management provided practical advice on identifying and managing sheep pneumonia, with a focus on prevention and treatment to minimize losses.

Attendees left with a deeper understanding of how to optimize their feeding programs and manage flock health more effectively. The meetings also provided valuable networking opportunities, allowing producers to connect, share experiences, and build a supportive community. These meetings underscore Jones Feed Mill's commitment to supporting the sheep farming community through education and collaboration.

## Midwest Co-op Sheep Producers Meeting

The Midwest Co-op Sheep Producers Meeting, held in Mount Forest at the start of March brought together sheep producers from across the region for a comprehensive review of the past year's achievements and challenges, as well as strategic plans.

Highlights included a presentation by Courtney Vriens, a ruminant nutritionist, who discussed strategies for achieving efficiencies in market lamb production. Vanessa Horton from the Royal Bank of Canada provided insights on successful transitions in agriculture, while Dr. Megan Jamieson from Upper Grand Veterinary Services addressed the management of chronic diseases such as CAE, CL, and Johne's. Jay Lennox delivered an update on OSF District 2, and Clayton Dietz from Midwest Co-op shared his expertise on grazing practices. The meeting also featured a producer panel discussing the merits of pasturing versus cropping, emphasizing the importance of cooperative efforts in addressing common issues and enhancing overall productivity.

## Dairy Sheep Symposium

The Dairy Sheep Symposium, organized by the Ontario Sheep Farmers, was a key event for dairy sheep producers. Held on March 25, 2025, the symposium offered a series of informative presentations and networking opportunities. Keynote speaker Phillip Wilman, Raw Milk Quality Program Coordinator from OMAFA, discussed changes to the Milk Act and the compliance experiences of goat milk producers, providing valuable insights for dairy sheep farmers. Other notable sessions included Dr. Cathy Bauman's research on mastitis and somatic cell counts, and Dr. Cynthia Miltenburg's talk on managing deadstock for flock health. The event also featured a tailored tradeshow, showcasing the latest products and technologies in the dairy sheep



*Jones Feed Mill Sheep Producers Meeting.*



*Sheep producers at the District 7 satellite location of Grey-Bruce Sheep Day*



*Trade Show at Dairy Symposium in Floradale.*

industry. This year saw the highest number of attendees yet in Floradale. Thank you to the dairy sheep producers and exhibitors who attended. OSF appreciates your support and commitment to the Ontario dairy sheep industry.

These events provide valuable knowledge and resources to help farmers improve their operations and ensure the sustainability of their practices. We appreciate and recognize the large amount of time and work that goes into these events and want to thank Grey Bruce Agriculture Services, Jones Feed Mill and Midwest Co-op for their commitment to improving the sheep farming industry across Ontario. **OSN**

# 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.

**Mapleseed Pasture Award** is sponsored in part by OSF, Mapleseed and the Ontario Forage Council, recognizes individual sheep farmers who are doing an outstanding job of pasture management. 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 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.



# Revamped Shearing School and Championship: Celebrating 13 Years of Excellence

By Jay Lennox

This year marks 13 years of the Eastern Canadian Sheep Shearing Championship multi-day event that features a shearing school, speed shear competition, and sheep shearing competition. Historically hosted at the Holstein Agro Expo and Rodeo, this year the Championship will move to the Teeswater Fall Fair, August 14th to 16th, 2025.

This competition welcomes everyone, usually hosting twenty shearers from across Canada, often drawing international competitors. Past competitions have included competitors from the United States, New Zealand, Australia, Wales, Scotland, and

England. We hope to attract new participation this year with a revamped shearing school. In the past we have run one single day school, normally aimed at beginners. However, this year, we will be hosting two levels, beginner and advanced, with the advanced being a two-day event, with plans of welcoming in world class shearing instructors.

The shearing school hosted at the event has been a cornerstone in the development of shearing in Ontario and Canada, having trained numerous full-time shearers since its inception. Not only does the school teach the



basics of professional shearing, but many shearers also come back to participate in the school to refresh their skills and improve. Ontario Sheep Farmers (OSF) has been a key supporter of the shearing school over many years, and the support is appreciated by the event committee and in particular, the shearers who benefit from this professional development opportunity.



The schedule for the event is beginning to take shape and the committee expects to follow a similar format to years past, with the school happening on August 14th & 15th. Speed Shear happens the evening of the 15th, and the Eastern Canadian Sheep Shearing Championship on August 16th. If new or experienced shearers wish to participate or learn more, feel free to contact us through our Facebook page at Eastern Canadian Sheep Shearing Championship, by email at [easterncanadiansheepshearingchampionship@hotmail.com](mailto:easterncanadiansheepshearingchampionship@hotmail.com) or by phone at 647-994-8594.

Although we are looking forward to a fresh start for the shearing competition, we would like to express our sincerest gratitude for the Lewis family's willingness to support and host this event for the past number of years. The Lewis family has done an outstanding job of providing an excellent event site along with great shearing lambs to make the championship a success. Finally, thanks also go to the Teeswater Agricultural Society for welcoming the event to their fall fair this August. **OSN**



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# Ontario Sheep Farmers Is Celebrating 40 Years of Service



Written by: Michael Richards

## Stories Through Time

**Submitted by- Colleen Acres**

**Dwayne Acres -** Mr. Acres demonstrated insightful leadership throughout the sheep industry, including genetics, performance testing, wool sales, judging, advocacy, marketing, and record keeping. He served on the board of the Ontario Sheep Breeders in the early 70's and helped to change the membership so that it included commercial producers as well as purebred breeders. Out of this grew the Ontario Sheep Association which Dwayne chaired in 1975, leading the establishment of the first check-off for wool. This helped to finance initial initiatives by the current Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency to advance the interests of the Ontario sheep industry. He became the founding Chair of the Ontario Ram Test Station Committee and was instrumental in establishing and operating ram test stations across the province to enhance the performance testing system. Nationally, he served as Chair of the Canadian Sheep Marketing Council in the late 70's

**Walter Renwick -** It has been said that Walter Renwick made things happen in the sheep industry. He directed his considerable energy and enthusiasm through several organizations as founding member and first president of the Western Ontario Lamb Producers' Association, Director and Chairman of the Ontario Sheep Association and Vice-Chairman of the Ontario Sheep Commission, the report of which led directly to the formation of the sheep Marketing Agency. He also served as Director and Vice-Chairman of the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency and Director and Chairman of Canada Sheep Council. Renwick was the lead negotiator for the industry with interprovincial and federal negotiators to arrive at the National Tripartite Stabilization program for sheep, and this safety net program has been of great assistance to Canada's sheep producers.

**Russ Dow -** Russell Dow operated the sheep sales for the annual Sheep Focus events in Ontario for merchandising breeding stock, and he organized Breeding Clubs to assist breeders to market their stock both in Canada and abroad. Also, he was instrumental in developing the Ontario Lamb Improvement Breeding Strategy to educate producers on genetic selection and focused cross-breeding strategies.

Much of his influence has been as a result of his involvement in numerous organizations including the Canadian Sheep Marketing Council from 1975-80; Chair of the Canadian Arcott Committee 1987-92; President of the Canadian Sheep Breeders' Association of Canada 1990-92; Director, Vice and Chair of the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency during 1990-2000; member of the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair Sheep and Marketing Committee from 1970-2000; and a director on the Canada Sheep Council and on the Canadian Livestock Record Board. In 1992 he was granted an Honourary Life Membership in the Canadian Sheep Breeders' Association and in 2004 he was given a Recognition Award at the Seventh World Sheep Congress for his contributions to the Canadian Sheep Industry.



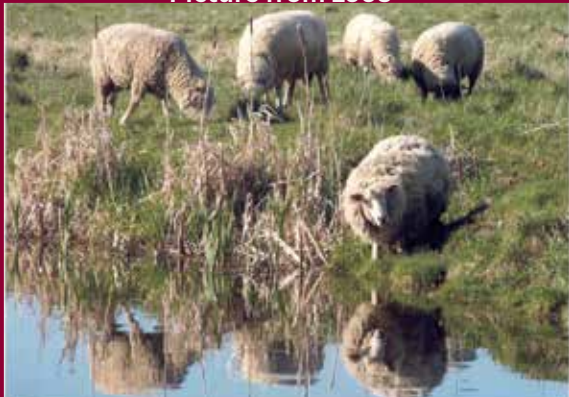
# Pictures Through Time



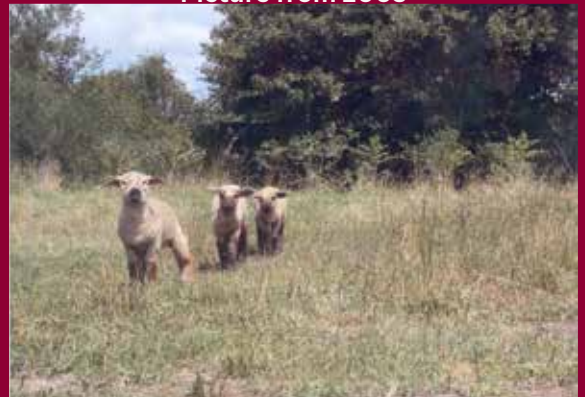
Picture from 1993



Picture from 2003



Picture from 2005



Picture from 2010

As we (Ontario Sheep Farmers) celebrate the 40th anniversary of our organization, we are reaching out to you for help in commemorating this milestone. We are seeking historical materials that capture the rich history and achievements of the Ontario Sheep Farmers. Your contributions will be invaluable in showcasing the journey and impact of our community.

If you have any of the following items, we would greatly appreciate if you could share them with us:

1. **Photos:** From producer meetings, events, farm tours, and any memorable moments.
2. **Newsletters and Publications:** Old newsletters, bulletins, or magazines.
3. **Awards and Certificates:** Any awards or recognitions received.
4. **Historical Documents:** Founding documents, meeting minutes, constitutions, or bylaws, AGM Booklets.
5. **Promotional Materials:** Flyers, posters, banners, or promotional items.
6. **Videos and Audio Recordings:** From past events, meetings, or interviews.
7. **Photos of Farms and Sheep:** Historical photos of sheep farms or flocks.
8. **Press Clippings:** Articles and press clippings about the organization or events.

Please send your contributions to [mrichards@ontariosheep.org](mailto:mrichards@ontariosheep.org).



# ONTARIO FARM ANIMAL CARE HELPLINE SERVICE

**A farmer helping farmer approach to animal care**

**519-837-1326**



## How does the Ontario Farm Animal Care Helpline Work?

The Helpline is not an emergency service. For animals in immediate distress call the Ontario Animal Protection Call Centre directly at: 1-833-9 Animal (1-833-926-4625)

The Helpline accepts calls about most types of commercial farm animals living on livestock farms: beef cattle, dairy cattle, veal cattle, pigs, sheep, chickens, and turkeys.

Calls relating to domestic pets, goats or horses should be reported directly to the Animal Protection Call Centre.

Helpline calls are accepted at the **Farm & Food Care office at 519-837-1326**, during regular office hours - typically **Monday to Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.** Callers can also leave a message at any time and staff will follow-up.

Callers are asked to provide specific and detailed information necessary to pursue the case. The information about the case, but not the name of the caller, is then passed on to the appropriate commodity group for follow-up and/or visit. The Helpline is designed to report instances of farm animal concerns or lack of proper care.

Helpline representatives are farmers or experienced staff from commodity groups who can assess the situation and offer practical advice. Callers to the Helpline are asked to identify themselves for purposes of follow-up, but such information is kept strictly confidential with Farm & Food Care.

The Helpline is a confidential “farmer helping farmer” approach of advice and referral on animal care. For more information, please visit: [www.FarmFoodCareON.org](http://www.FarmFoodCareON.org) & click on Farm Animal Care Resources







## What's the difference between the Helpline and the Ontario Animal Protection Services?

In 2020, enforcement of animal care laws in Ontario transitioned to a new provincial agency in Ontario, Animal Welfare Services – Ministry of Solicitor General

You should call the Farm & Food Care Helpline for potentially worrying situations where staff will work with commodity groups to conduct peer to peer visits and discuss animal care and Codes of Practice with farmers.

For animals in immediate distress and situations that are more urgent, call the Ontario Animal Protection Services at 1-833-9 Animal (1-833-926-4625). This then either directs callers to AWS agents, police or animal control depending what type of call.

## What doesn't the Helpline cover?

The Helpline responds to farm animal inquiries including: beef cattle, dairy cattle, pigs, veal cattle, sheep, chickens and turkeys.

Calls relating to domestic pets, goats or horses should be reported directly to the Animal Protection Call Centre.

## Who can use the Helpline?

Anyone who observes situations where farm animals are not receiving proper care or individuals working with livestock that might not be able to properly care for their own animals.

## Why is the Helpline service needed?

The Helpline is one way for the farming community to work together to help fellow farmers and farm animals. It's also yet another good example for the public that demonstrates if there's a problem with animal care, farmers want to be part of the solution. It's good for agriculture, it's good for the farmer, and most importantly, it's good for the animals

For more information on Farm & Food Care or the Helpline Service, contact our office at:

Phone: (519) 837-1326

Email: [info@farmfoodcare.org](mailto:info@farmfoodcare.org)

Website:

[www.FarmFoodCareON.org](http://www.FarmFoodCareON.org)

# 2025 Advocacy Priorities and OSF Recommendations

## Access to Veterinary Tools and Care

### Access to Veterinary Drugs, Vaccines, and Drenches

Canadian sheep farmers signed a white paper prepared for the federal government in August 2024, highlighting a crisis in accessing veterinary tools. The document states that barriers are limiting the availability of approved tools, forcing reliance on a shrinking number of options, many of which are crucial in human medicine. This situation impacts both animal and human health and places Canada at a competitive disadvantage.

The white paper titled "Improving access to veterinary pharmaceuticals, veterinary health products, livestock feeds and veterinary biologics in

Canada", outlines several solutions, with the most relevant for Ontario's sheep producers being the need to address barriers that disincentivize companies from marketing veterinary pharmaceuticals in Canada. The Ontario Sheep Farmers (OSF) endorse this white paper and recommend the federal government adopt the nine solutions detailed within it.

### Veterinarian Shortage

The availability of small ruminant veterinary care in Ontario has reached a crisis point. As large animal veterinarians retire without replacements, many farmers find themselves without nearby veterinary services. This issue is particularly severe in northern Ontario, where distances to the nearest vet can be even greater.

Farmers frequently report clinic closures or the end of services for small ruminant clients, raising concerns about the availability of emergency care.

The provincial government has announced the addition of 20 new veterinarians per year through a northern school, focusing on large animals. This initiative, along with financial incentives for graduates practicing in rural Ontario, is a positive step.

Increasing the number of veterinarians in rural and northern Ontario is crucial to avoid overstretched practitioners. Additionally, there is a need for more small ruminant specialists. Many farmers report that their large animal vets primarily serve cattle farms and lack expertise in small ruminants.

*Continued on page 22.*



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# Ontario Sheep Farmers Field Day

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[www.ontariosheep.org/events](http://www.ontariosheep.org/events)

Ontario Sheep Farmers are excited to announce we are hosting Field Day in Orono, ON on July 24, 2025.

This event will be THE sheep event of the summer.

The Field Day will have a full selection of innovative equipment and technologies through demonstrations and displays. The event will be a chance to network with fellow sheep producers and walk around at a comprehensive trade show.



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OSF recommends that the federal government support the provincial efforts to increase the number of veterinary students focusing on large animal practices and provide incentives for small ruminant veterinarians to enhance capacity across Ontario.

## Interprovincial Trade Pilot

Ontario Sheep Farmers (OSF) commend the provincial and federal governments for advancing interprovincial trade for meat within Canada.

### Supporting Slaughter Availability

OSF supports pilot projects aimed at improving slaughter availability in remote and rural border regions. These pilots will increase access to small meat plants and custom slaughter services. Additionally, OSF backs the proposal to work with high-volume provincially inspected plants to expand market access beyond provincial boundaries before becoming federally inspected.

### Ontario-Quebec Border Challenges

For producers in rural and remote areas

there has been a decline in service availability and capacity – most notably in eastern Ontario and northern Ontario as well as Quebec. Many producers in these regions are seeking custom slaughter services not offered by large plants, to focus on local or direct to consumer sales where producers may obtain a premium for their products.

Currently these producers cannot bring animals to nearby cross-border plants for slaughter and return to home province for local sale but instead may have to travel hundreds of km within the province. Improving these circumstances is expected to reduce wait times and improve costs for producers on both sides of the border and support rural economies.

The region of Ontario surrounding Ottawa, including the counties of Renfrew, Lanark, Leeds, Grenville, Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Prescott and Russell, represent 11% of Ontario's sheep production. Eastern Ontario abattoirs have capacity for only half of these animals, with the rest having to travel hundreds of kilometres for processing. Eastern Ontario is a region of great opportunity for sheep farms due to the geography and cost of land, however, the sheep population has declined by 50% in the last 10 years.

The northern region of Ontario that includes Algoma, Cochrane, Sudbury, Kenora, Manitoulin, Nipissing, Rainy River, Thunder Bay and Timiskaming represent only 3% of Ontario's sheep production but represent the greatest opportunity for sheep production in the province. Sheep production in this region has declined 44% since 2012 mainly due to the distance from processing.

OSF encourages the province to announce and roll out these pilots in 2025 for eastern and northern regions of Ontario.

## Ready to Grow Pilot

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA) is collaborating with industry and government partners to develop the "Ready to Grow Pilot." This initiative aims to allow high-demand meat plants to expand sales beyond provincial borders without compromising Canada's international market access or reputation. The pilot will not compromise Canada's market access abroad or its international reputation.

OSF has supported this pilot from the beginning and urges the provincial government to launch the program in 2025. Expanding this pilot to other provinces that meet or exceed Ontario's processing standards will further enhance market access for meat producers.

OSF supports the "Ready to Grow Pilot," initiative for Ontario plants to access markets beyond Ontario and supports expansion of the pilot program for plants in other provinces that meet or exceed Ontario's processing standards.

## Advanced Payments Program

The Advanced Payments Program (APP) is essential for farmers, especially new entrants and young farmers, to manage cash flow amid market volatility and high debt costs. Temporary increases to the interest-free portion since 2022 have been beneficial, but the limit is set to revert to \$100,000 soon.

Given today's significant investment and risk demands, reverting to the \$100,000 limit is untenable. OSF urges increasing the interest-free portion to \$350,000, aligning with recommendations from the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-food. This increase would ensure access to short-term, low-cost credit and maintain the higher threshold for interest-free payments.

Maintaining adequate interest-free support under APP is crucial despite potential interest rate declines, as rising production costs and financing demands persist. This support ensures farmers have the financial resources to plan, invest, and make informed decisions year-round.

## Research Investment

The Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance, a collaboration between the Government of Ontario, the University of Guelph, and Agricultural Research and Innovation Ontario, contributes nearly \$207 million to the agri-food economy. In 2023, the Alliance renewed its agreement, aiming to ensure access to healthy, safe food and competitive, sustainable farming.

Continued on page 24.

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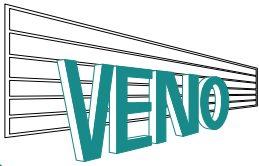
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[www.ontariosheep.org/farmer-resources/courses-workshops/master-shepherds-course/](http://www.ontariosheep.org/farmer-resources/courses-workshops/master-shepherds-course/)

In the first year, \$72 million was invested by OMAFA, with \$135 million from the University of Guelph over four years. However, government funding drops to \$66 million in the final three years. OSF believes sustained government investment is crucial for effective agriculture research and innovation.

More funding for research at the University of Guelph, in partnership with OMAFA and farm organizations, is necessary for Canada to remain a leader in agriculture. Ongoing federal investment in research is essential for Canada's food sovereignty and global sustainability contributions.

## Business Risk Management

Canadian agriculture is an essential part of the economic, political and social fabric of Canada. As a core driver of the Canadian economy, agriculture contributes to the well-being of both rural and urban communities as a

key generator of Canadian jobs in rural and urban communities across Canada and as a leader in Canadian productivity growth.

Agriculture is a high-risk business that faces volatile prices, unpredictable weather, and a global market influenced by government supports to competing producers in other countries. To maintain its economic growth and continued innovation, Canadian agriculture must have a stable economic foundation from which to address shifting global and domestic market opportunities. For those risks that cannot be addressed through

on-farm management practices, access to effective risk management programs provides Canadian producers with the income stability they need to continue investing in innovative technologies, to adapt to evolving market demands, and maintain long-term economic growth.

Canadian producers continue to focus on maximizing their income from the

marketplace. The ongoing investment needed to maintain an adaptable agriculture industry requires an effective, credible suite of Business Risk Management programs that manages the effects of short-term volatility in weather and markets through bankable and timely programs. These programs must comply with WTO agreements, limit the risk of countervail from international competitors, but first and foremost, they must provide the predictable support needed to maintain a vibrant agriculture industry and healthy rural communities.

The Canadian government has been reducing its investment in Business Risk Management programs, which poses challenges for producers as world markets become increasingly volatile and unpredictable.

### OSF recommends:

- Effective production insurance for commodities that are not adequately covered by traditional crop insurance
- AgriStability cannot be limited to

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providing disaster support and must provide funding on a timely basis to ensure that the short-term impacts of significant income losses are mitigated. In addition, AgriStability payments must be calculated in a transparent and straightforward fashion that allows producers to predict and bank upon impending payments.

- Enhance support and capacity within the AgriInvest program to provide a platform to facilitate market-based adjustments and proactive investments in risk mitigation. The AgriInvest program must match producer contributions up to 1.5% of allowable net sales and the government-matched contribution limit must also be amended to allow for matchable annual contributions up to \$100,000.
- The AgriRecovery framework must define clear and precise rules such that it can respond quickly to exceptional events and consider all losses not covered by programs such as AgriStability and AgriInsurance.

In summary, OSF has outlined key advocacy priorities for 2025 to support the growth and sustainability of the sheep farming industry in Ontario:

- **Access to Veterinary Tools and Care:** OSF recommends that the federal government support the provincial efforts to increase the number of veterinary students focusing on large animal practices and provide incentives for small ruminant veterinarians to enhance capacity across Ontario.
- **Interprovincial Trade Pilot:** Support pilot projects to improve slaughter availability in remote and rural border regions and expand market access for high-volume provincially inspected plants.
- **Ready to Grow Pilot:** OSF supports the "Ready to Grow Pilot," initiative for Ontario plants to access markets beyond Ontario and supports expansion of the pilot program for plants in other provinces that meet or exceed Ontario's processing standards.
- **Advanced Payment Programs (APP):** OSF recommends increasing the interest-free portion to \$350,000 to help farmers manage cash flow amid market volatility and high debt costs.
- **Research Investment:** Emphasize the importance of sustained government investment in agri-food research and innovation through collaborations like the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance.
- **Business Risk Management:** Advocate for effective risk management programs, including enhanced production insurance, improved AgriStability and AgriInvest programs, and clear rules for AgriRecovery.

We invite our members to share their comments, questions, and feedback on these advocacy priorities. Your insights are invaluable in shaping our efforts for 2025 and beyond.

Please reach out to Erin Morgan, Executive Director of OSF, to contribute your thoughts and help us drive positive change for Ontario's sheep farming community. Erin can be reached by email at [erin@ontariosheep.org](mailto:erin@ontariosheep.org) or by phone at 519-836-0043 X 323. **OSN**



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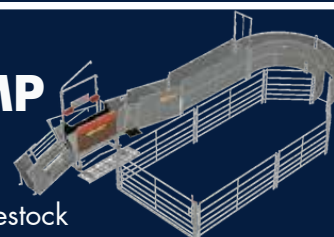
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SheepBytes ration balancer is web-based software designed for effectively managing nutrition for all types of sheep. Breeding flock owners, feedlot managers and nutritional consultants, across Canada, and internationally, are using SheepBytes to take the guesswork out of balancing cost-effective rations.

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- Fully vaccinated



• baumanjesse09@gmail.com

• Dundalk, Ontario.

• 226-752-7170

## 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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**519-836-0043**

HST# 107800823

Plus 13% HST \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL REMITTED** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# 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 APRIL 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 APRIL 2025)

Allinbrook Farms • Neil Allin • (905) 983-5791  
Cedar Creek Charollais • Ted & Joanne Skinner • (905) 263-2102  
Kettle Crest Farm • Art & Sandra Alblas • (519) 637-0050  
Mark Martin Dairy Sheep • Mark & Rosena Martin • (519) 638 3644  
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  
Stonehill Sheep • Paul Dick • (519) 794-3732  
Trailblaze Farm  
Perry, Sharon & Valerie Robinson • (519) 794-4837

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

Century Lane Farm • Robert & Shirley Graves • (613) 831-2656  
Crow Hill Corriedales • Leslie Dymont • (705) 359-1376  
Huron Grove Farms • Michael & Fraser Hodgson • (519) 918-4159

Rainbow Woods • Eleanor & Sarah Reed • (705) 454-3167  
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 APRIL 2025)

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

Lakeside Sheep Company • Frank Jongert • (519) 854-6258

## SHEEP PRODUCERS ON THE SCRAPIE PROGRAM (AS OF APRIL 2025)

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Parker Agriculture Ltd. • Jeanne & Rob Parker • 1 Certified

WoolDrift Farm • Axel Meister • 1 Certified

For more information visit [scrapiecanada.ca/vsfc/vsfc-enrolled-producers/](http://scrapiecanada.ca/vsfc/vsfc-enrolled-producers/).



# THE 2025 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.	
January 29	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.
March 1 - 29	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 30-31	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 12-20	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 20	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 20	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.
June 4 - 6	The Hajj (Islam)			
June 6 - 8	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 26	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.
September 6	Mawlid al-Nabi (Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad)			
September 22 - 24	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 13	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 14 -22	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

\* Bilal Farms - Always looking for quality lambs (70 - 80 lbs) and have a year round market. [wzazay@hotmail.com](mailto:wzazay@hotmail.com) or [www.bilalfarms.com](http://www.bilalfarms.com)

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Taylor Valliquette	Ottawa	905 717 2639
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Chris Vervoort	Arthur	519-993-941 <a href="mailto:jenandchrisv@hotmail.com">jenandchrisv@hotmail.com</a>
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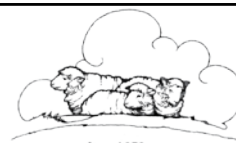
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**Rocky Lane Dorsets** - Purebred Polled Dorsets with New Zealand and Australian influence. High quality working sheep for purebred and commercial producers. Participating in the Maedi Visna Program and Genovis. Allison & Luke de Vos, Woodville ON. Find us on Facebook at "Rocky Lane Dorsets" • RockyLaneDorsets@gmail.com • 705-308-3284

## RIDEAU ARCOTT

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**Gimlet Hill Farms** Purebred Rideau rams and ewes available. High quality genetics, great mothering, accelerated lambing flock. Participating in Maedi Visna Program and Genovis. Rob & Tracey Werry 289-385-6804 tracey.werry@gmail.com

**Golden Fleece Farms** Ruco Braat. 171 Lakeview Rd., Bailieboro, ON, K0L 1B0 705-939-2366. goldenfleece@nexicom.net. Purebred Rideau Arcott's Closed Flock.

**Mulmur Vista Farm** Bill McCutcheon, R.R.#2, Grand Valley, ON L0N 1G0, 519-766-7905, Email: wmccutcheon@sympatico.ca. Purebred Rideau closed flock, SFIP tested, Scrapie level certified.

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