

ONTARIO

Vol. 44 - Issue 2 Summer 2026

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

By Art Alblas, Chair, Ontario Sheep Farmers

From Conversation to Direction: What We Heard on the Path to 50x40

Over the past several months, Ontario Sheep Farmers (OSF) has travelled across the province to engage producers in one of the most compelling conversations in our industry today: how do we reach our organization's goal of supplying 50% of Ontario's lamb demand by 2040?

District meetings brought together producers of all sizes and systems—from small flocks to large commercial operations, from new entrants to multi-generation farms. These conversations were candid, thoughtful, and grounded in real on-farm experience.

What emerged was not only a picture of the barriers we face, but also a shared understanding of where the opportunity lies.

At first glance, a goal like 50x40 may suggest a need to dramatically increase flock sizes across the province or a need to bring on many new producers. However, OSF members quickly reframed the conversation.

While growth remains necessary, the strongest consensus was that flock health and production efficiency, not just flock size, will determine success.

Across districts, producers emphasized three critical realities:

- Too many lambs are lost before they reach market
- Many flocks are not achieving their reproductive potential
- Existing capacity on sheep farms and within districts, including facilities, labour, and knowledge is often underutilized or untapped

We heard a lot about the need for access to capital. Producers described expansion as "financially daunting," with major upfront costs associated with breeding stock acquisition, barn construction or conversion, and costly infrastructure like fencing, handling systems, and feed systems.

Even producers who are confident in their ability to grow face hurdles accessing financing including high interest rates, limited sheep knowledge among lenders and cash flow constraints during expansion.

There is strong support for programs that will provide government-backed or interest-free loans, support capital investment through cost-share funding and offer tools like a Ewe Finance program and Financial Protection.

Several common gaps were identified in the industry including limited access to sheep-specific veterinarians, inconsistent availability of vaccines and pharmaceuticals, and the need for more professionals for ultrasound, loin scanning and other specializations.

Producers consistently highlighted the need to focus on genetics and data-driven decision-making. This knowledge applied consistently across the industry will help increase the number of lambs born and weaned per ewe, improve lamb growth rates and feed efficiency and produce market-aligned carcasses.

However, there are clear gaps. Tools like GenOvis and management software which can support genetic improvement and performance tracking, are underutilized across the province. Similarly, producers indicated that basic management tools such as weigh scales are necessary for success and underutilized. One of the strongest messages from our discussions was, we cannot improve what we do not measure.

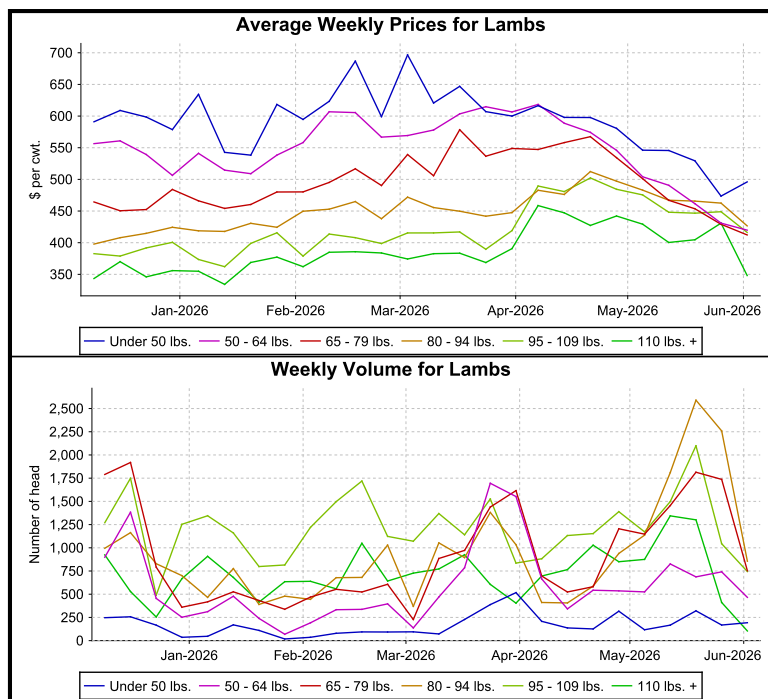
Even with capital and tools in place, growth cannot happen without people. Producers identified labour and skills as constraints to expansion. Larger and more intensive systems require significantly more labour while skilled labour is difficult to find and retain, and management complexity increases as

Continued on page 6.

Editorial policy: Ontario Sheep Farmers welcomes and encourages letters to the editor and article suggestions from farmers and industry partners as a means of communicating with the Ontario Sheep Farmers board of directors and other farmers on issues of importance. Letters may be on any sheep industry topic, including Ontario Sheep Farmers' policies, programs and procedure. Letters may address previous articles or letters to the editor, and the editor may comment on the accuracy of the information in letters. Letters should not exceed 300 words and may be edited for style and grammatical errors. When submitting a letter, please include the name of the author, address, phone number and/or email address (for verification purposes). Printed letters will include the author's name. Potentially defamatory or libelous material, or personal attacks on individuals will not be permitted. If an author feels that the editor has inappropriately edited or not print a letter, a written request can be submitted to the board of directors for review to determine if there has been a violation of *Ontario Sheep News'* editorial policy.

THE ONTARIO MARKET REPORT

Full market information can be found every week in the Ontario Farmer and online at 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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farms grow. At the same time, there is strong interest in the industry from young farmers, new Canadians, and individuals looking for an entry point into agriculture that present opportunities. There is a need to connect the employers with those wanting to gain work experience with sheep.

To support growth, producers emphasized the need for structured mentorship programs, new education and training pathways supporting business management knowledge development and practical learning opportunities, including peer-to-peer knowledge sharing.

Another critical theme emerging from the consultations was the need for better alignment between production and market signals. Producers raised important questions about what carcass weights the market wants, how consumer preferences are shifting with higher prices, and how can we provide a steady, consistent supply. Producing heavier lambs may improve efficiency and profitability at the farm level, but it must align with processor and consumer demand. Currently, many producers lack access to carcass data (weight, grade, dressing percentage), feedback from processors and clear market guidance.

OSF members emphasized the importance of strengthening relationships with processors and markets, improving access

to carcass feedback and understanding key markets, including ethnic and food service sectors.

Taken together, the district consultations provide an actionable roadmap. The path to 50x40 is not about a single solution; it is about coordinated progress across several interconnected areas:

- Unlocking access to capital to enable expansion
- Increasing lamb survivability and ewe health to improve output
- Driving productivity per ewe through better genetics and management
- Building producer capability through mentorship and education
- Aligning production with market demand
- Improving data and information across the industry

Thank you to everyone who participated in your district meetings and completed our survey. Your OSF board is going to take what we have learned and begin to draw out this roadmap to achieving our goal with short-term, medium-term and long-term objectives. We will share more on this process at your District AGMs at the end of the summer.

We hope you have a safe and productive summer! **OSN**



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Replacement Ewe Lambs and Reproductive Success in an Accelerated Flock

Insights from Michigan State University's Richard Ehrhardt, by Walker Ball, Industry Relations Specialist

For sheep producers running accelerated lambing systems, timing of first breeding of ewe lambs is critical to the flock's future productivity.

Breed them too early, and producers may run into reproductive problems, poor milk production, or disappointing conception rates. Wait too long, and valuable production time is lost. Finding the right balance is one of the biggest management challenges in accelerated sheep systems.

That was the focus of a recent conversation with Richard Ehrhardt, Michigan State University sheep production specialist on the Ontario Sheep Farmers' Flock Talk podcast. Drawing on decades of research and hands-on sheep experience, Ehrhardt shared practical insights into what helps replacement ewe lambs succeed and where producers can run into trouble.

Why More Producers Are Looking at Accelerated Lambing

Accelerated lambing systems shorten the traditional 12-month lambing interval to approximately seven, eight, or nine months depending on the operation.

The appeal is easy to understand.

"By doing this, you create a year-round supply of lamb and increase your production efficiency," Ehrhardt explained. "There's an opportunity to be more profitable and create new markets."

Interest in accelerated systems has grown steadily in recent years as lamb prices have improved, and more producers are looking for ways to intensify production.

However, sheep are still sheep.

"Sheep are naturally seasonal, and they always are going to have a reproductive dip when you push them out of their normal biology," Ehrhardt said.

That seasonal biology becomes especially important when managing replacement ewe lambs.

Not All Ewe Lambs Develop the Same

One of the most interesting takeaways from Ehrhardt's discussion was how strongly the season of birth affects reproductive performance.

Three major factors influence when ewe lambs reach puberty:

- body condition,
- genetics,
- and photoperiod (day length).

A May-born ewe lamb often reaches puberty quickly because she encounters ideal fall breeding conditions at the right stage of development. Winter-born and fall-born ewe lambs, however, tend to mature more slowly because they miss that ideal photoperiod timing.

As a result, Ehrhardt said May-born ewe lambs can often be bred successfully to lamb at one year of age. Winter-born and especially fall-born ewe lambs usually perform better if first lambing is delayed until closer to 16 months of age.

"If they're lambing at 12 months of age, they might have 1.2 lambs," Ehrhardt said. "If they're lambing at 16 months of age, they're going to have 1.5 or 1.6."



Figure 1. Relationship between season of birth, photoperiod exposure, and attainment of puberty in replacement ewe lambs. Material provided by Richard Ehrhardt, Michigan State University sheep production specialist.

"The optimal conditions to reach puberty are the months of September, October, November," Ehrhardt explained.

That means ewe lambs born at different times of year reach reproductive maturity very differently.

When Breeding Too Early Causes Problems

Ehrhardt also discussed a reproductive issue he has observed in some ewe lambs bred too early, what he refers to as "early dilation syndrome."

In these cases, some ewe lambs fail to fully dilate during lambing and may also have poor milk production. The condition can become severe enough to require euthanasia or surgical intervention.

While the issue still needs more scientific study, Ehrhardt suspects that insufficient estrous cycling before pregnancy may be part of the problem.

"They need to have had a few estrous cycles before they become pregnant," he explained. "I think that influences mammary development and perhaps the reproductive centres that allow them to have a successful birth."

In practical terms, the message is simple: size alone does not mean a ewe lamb is reproductively ready.

Feeding Replacement Ewe Lambs for Breeding Success

Nutrition plays a major role in helping ewe lambs reach puberty successfully.

Ehrhardt recommends breeding ewe lambs at approximately 70% of mature body weight. For winter-born ewe lambs, he often pushes that target slightly higher, closer to 75% because of their added seasonal challenges.

For example:

- a mature ewe expected to weigh 200 lbs should be roughly 140 lbs before breeding,
- while a 150-lb ewe should weigh approximately 105 lbs.

To hit the targets, many replacement ewe lambs are fed similarly to market lambs during early growth. However, Ehrhardt cautioned against feeding extremely aggressive high-grain diets right through breeding.

Once ewe lambs approach 60-70% of mature size, he recommends gradually increasing forage and transitioning toward balanced rations that support steady growth without over-conditioning.

What Makes a Good Replacement Ewe?

When selecting replacements, Ehrhardt encourages producers to focus on practical traits that are easy to measure and strongly connected to flock performance.

Key traits include:

- strong weaning weights,
- high combined litter weights,
- consistent 60-day lamb weights,
- and good mothering ability.

"These weights are a pretty good indicator of milk production," he said. "And if you can have consistent weights, I think it's also a really good read on good mothering."

Ehrhardt also emphasized that producers do not need an overly complicated genetic program to make meaningful progress.

Even simple records can help identify the ewe families that consistently raise strong lambs.

As electronic identification (EID) systems become more common, producers are gaining better access to individual ewe performance data, making female-side selection easier than ever.

For pasture-based flocks, Ehrhardt added that udder structure and parasite resistance should also receive attention. Udder shape and teat placement are important considerations in all sheep production systems but can be especially critical in pasture-based flocks.

Poor teat placement or misshapen udders can create major problems in pasture lambing systems where producers cannot intervene easily. These udder traits are also associated with

Continued on page 10.

2026 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & CONVENTION

THEME: CHARTING OUR COURSE

AGM: October 29th 1-5
lamb banquet in evening

Convention: October 30th all day

*Building a clear roadmap for the future
of our industry through collaboration,
strategic priorities, and purposeful action.*



Agenda Highlights

- Innovative Sheep Farmer panel discussion
- Agricultural Industry Innovators panel discussion
- Accessing money and streamlining business to maximize profitability with MNP
- Learnings from the Laval Genomics research project with William Poisson, Laval University
- Condemnation workshop with Dr. Dory Kirkbright, OMAFA

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For more information follow OSF social media, the messenger and website:

ontariosheep.org/events/osf-convention-and-annual-general-meeting/



higher levels of clinical and subclinical mastitis and can make it more difficult for newborn lambs to successfully latch and nurse. Parasite resistance, especially against barber pole worm, is also becoming increasingly important in many regions.

Using the Ram Effect to Improve Breeding

Ehrhardt also highlighted the value of the “ram effect” as a natural breeding management tool.

Exposure to teaser or fertile rams stimulates estrus activity in ewes through scent, behaviour, and physical presence. Using vasectomized teaser rams before introducing fertile rams can help synchronize breeding activity and tighten lambing windows. The ram effect can also induce cycling in ewes that are on the edge of the breeding season, helping stimulate reproductive activity in females that may not yet be cycling naturally.

According to Ehrhardt, producers often see concentrated breeding activity approximately 17–22 days after teaser ram introduction. Interestingly, he noted that well-managed ram effect programs can sometimes achieve conception rates similar to CIDR synchronization programs.

“There isn’t a huge advantage to using CIDRs except for risk management issues and synchronizing reproduction a little bit more,” he said.

Can Lights Remove Seasonality?

Another interesting part of the discussion focused on light-controlled production systems used successfully in Quebec.

By controlling light exposure and dark cycles inside barns, producers can simulate ideal autumn breeding conditions year-round.

“These sheep always think it’s the month of October,” Ehrhardt joked.

The systems require investment in facilities and lighting infrastructure, but the reproductive results can be remarkable. Some Quebec flocks using prolific genetics alongside light-controlled systems are approaching annual production levels near four lambs per ewe.

As lamb prices remain strong, Ehrhardt believes these systems may become increasingly attractive for producers looking to intensify production.

“When you can see a high and consistent level of production, you can start talking to your bank about developing an economic model you can count on,” he said.

Managing Young Ewes Separately

Whenever possible, Ehrhardt recommends managing replacement ewe lambs separately from mature ewes.

Young females:

- continue growing during pregnancy,
- require higher nutrient levels,
- compete poorly at feed bunks,
- and often show weaker estrus behaviour.

Ideally, replacement ewe lambs should remain separate through first breeding, first lambing, and even first lactation where facilities allow. If separate groups are not practical, Ehrhardt stressed the importance of providing enough bunk space so younger ewes can compete successfully.

Building a Stronger Flock

For producers considering accelerated lambing systems, Ehrhardt’s message was both encouraging and realistic.

Accelerated production can improve efficiency and profitability, but long-term success depends on understanding the biology behind reproduction and managing replacement ewe lambs

accordingly. The best replacement programs are not built around a single trait or feeding strategy. They combine practical selection, proper nutrition, good records, and realistic breeding timelines.

In the end, producers who work with the ewe’s biology instead of fighting it, are often the ones who build the most productive and resilient flocks.

Producers interested in hearing the full discussion with Richard Ehrhardt can listen to the complete interview on the Ontario Sheep Farmers Flock Talk podcast. **OSN**

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Anita O'Brien, On-Farm Program Lead, OSF

By the time you are reading this the growing season will be well advanced. Along with it so too must our management of three critical aspects of sheep and lamb production – parasites, predators and pasture.

Parasites

In many areas of the province, sheep have been out grazing since mid to late April. From gastro-intestinal parasites (GIN) perspective, enough time has gone by for at least three, possibly four (4) life cycles to have been completed, meaning that infective larvae load will be building rapidly on grazed pastures.

- Review key components of your parasite management plan. If you need a refresher, take the self-paced Parasite Management Course on the OSF THINKIFIC site <https://learning-ontariosheep.thinkific.com>
- Monitor fecal egg counts, especially in most susceptible groups such as this year's lambs and any sheep in their first grazing year along with yearlings.
- Consider using FAMACHA to monitor degree of anemia if you had issues with *haemonchus contortus* last year.
- Minimize resistance to wormers by maintaining some refugia within the flock (leaving some sheep untreated).
- Monitor effectiveness of treatments with follow-up FEC at 10 to 14 day after treatment.
- Identify and cull those that require repeated treatments.
- Handbook for the control of Internal Parasites of Sheep and Goats is an excellent reference document https://www.ontariosheep.org/media/5asjef20/parasite-handbook_april_2019-updated-w-cover-compressed-for-online.pdf

Predation

Although the risk of predation is most associated with pasture use, sheep in confinement can be at risk as well. Coyotes are responsible for the majority of sheep predation in Ontario.

We are heading into the higher risk predation period where predation historically increases with the progression of summer, partly explained by increased feed demands for a coyote family as April-born pups continue to grow.

- Minimize coyote entry into pastures. Frost-heaved fence posts, ditch crossings, and gateways including vehicle ruts, make easy entry points for coyotes in an otherwise secure fence. Regular fence maintenance to ensure these are promptly blocked or repaired will help deter coyotes gaining access to sheep.
- If relying on electric fence to deter coyotes, shocking ability of the fence relies on good voltage on the wire, excellent ground system and the joule output of the energizer. Inadequate ground systems often result in lower shock ability especially during the drier times of the year. Regular fence monitoring with a voltage meter and fault finder make it easier to identify and fix issues causing power drain on the fence.

- Effective livestock guardians with the flock will help to deter coyotes and other predators.
- Be familiar with the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program when predation does occur. Take photos as outlined in the claim requirements <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-wildlife-damage-compensation-program-guidelines>.
- Keep contact information for local municipal livestock investigator current for prompt response to predation events. Same for a local trapper with experience removing problem coyotes.

Pasture

Pasture offers one of the cheapest feed sources available to livestock producers.

- Rotational grazing systems can improve forage utilization while maintaining higher forage quality throughout the season.
- Longer rest periods between grazings can help to lower the number of GIN infective larvae present and thereby lower the parasite burden of the grazing animals.
- Adequate rest periods also help ensure there is grazable forage during the midsummer slump typically experienced in Ontario from lower rainfall and high temperatures mid-July through early September.
- Stock-piling late-summer and early fall growth can help extend the grazing season into November and December. **OSN**

CANADA'S OUTDOOR FARM SHOW

SEPTEMBER 15–17, 2026

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THEME:
Charting Our Course

CANADA'S OUTDOOR FARM SHOW SITE
Woodstock, Ontario

Keep an eye out on socials, our website and our newsletter for further details and registration information for our guest speaker lunch!

2026 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 help guide the industry.

At each AGM, district members will participate in elections for new district committee members and choose their district representatives to attend the OSF Annual General Meeting and Convention on October 29 and 30, 2026. Additionally, members in Districts 3, 6 and 9 will participate in elections for Provincial Director to the Ontario Sheep Farmers (OSF) Board of Directors.

District AGMs will take place later this summer and early fall. To find out when your district AGM is taking place, please see the schedule below.

For additional details, visit the Ontario Sheep Farmers website. Watch for updates through email notifications from the OSF office, The Messenger, Ontario Sheep News and social media. More details will be shared prior to your AGM.

2026 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.

District committees organize local sheep meetings, support knowledge development and community building among local members, and serve as a key communication link between OSF and producers within their district. OSF supports committees by sharing industry information, providing an annual contribution for meetings and events, and offering training and resources through the district portal on the OSF website.

District committees are integral to the success of the industry, providing grassroots knowledge, guidance and feedback to the OSF Board of Directors 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 affecting the sheep industry in Ontario.

District Vice Chair

This position provides support for the District Chair and steps in 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 positions. The Secretary is responsible for keeping meeting minutes, district correspondence and serving as the liaison between the OSF office and the district committee. The Treasurer is responsible for keeping 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

District AGM schedule as of June 2026.

District 1 – September 12

District 2 – September 3

District 3 – September 2

District 4 – August 27

District 5 – August 28

District 6 – August 30

District 7 – September 15

District 8 – August 27

District 9 – August 14

District 10 – September 26

District 11 – September 3

Provincial Director Elections

Elections for Provincial Director to the Ontario Sheep Farmers Board of Directors will be held in Districts 3, 6 and 9 this year. This is an exciting opportunity for sheep producers to help shape the future of our organization. As a valued member, you have the chance to play a pivotal role in guiding OSF.

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 serving on the Board include gaining new skills and industry knowledge, learning from fellow producers, meeting new people in the industry, expanding your network and utilizing your skill sets to help guide the industry forward.

If you know someone who is passionate about making a difference and would like to be considered, we encourage you to nominate them.

Each year, the OSF Board of Directors completes a skills inventory. This year, we encourage candidates with knowledge of the wool industry, research and environmental sustainability. However, please do not hesitate to put your name forward if these are not your areas of experience. All industry knowledge and business acumen are valuable and contribute to a strong board. **OSN**

2026 Awards & Scholarships

Ontario Sheep Farmers is accepting nominations for the 2026 awards and scholarships, to be presented at the Ontario Sheep Annual Banquet in Cambridge on October 29, 2026.

**Applications are open until September 7th, 2026.*



Emerging Leader Award

Recognizes young Ontario Sheep Farmers members who have demonstrated leadership, innovation, social responsibility, and a commitment to advancing Ontario's sheep industry.

Long Service Award

Recognizes individuals who have demonstrated outstanding dedication and long-term service to Ontario's sheep industry through leadership, volunteerism, innovation, and industry support. Eligible recipients may include sheep producers, industry advocates, and service providers who have made a lasting impact on the sector.

Undergraduate 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 (shearing schools and programs qualify). Applicants do not have to be enrolled in an agriculture program to be eligible for the award. *Eligibility requirements to be found on our website.*

Outstanding Shepherd Award

Honours an Ontario shepherd who has made a significant contribution to the sheep industry through leadership, responsible sheep husbandry, and dedication to the advancement of the sector.

Industry Leader Award

Supports leadership development within Ontario's sheep industry and encourages continued learning and professional growth. *Eligibility requirements to be found on our website.*

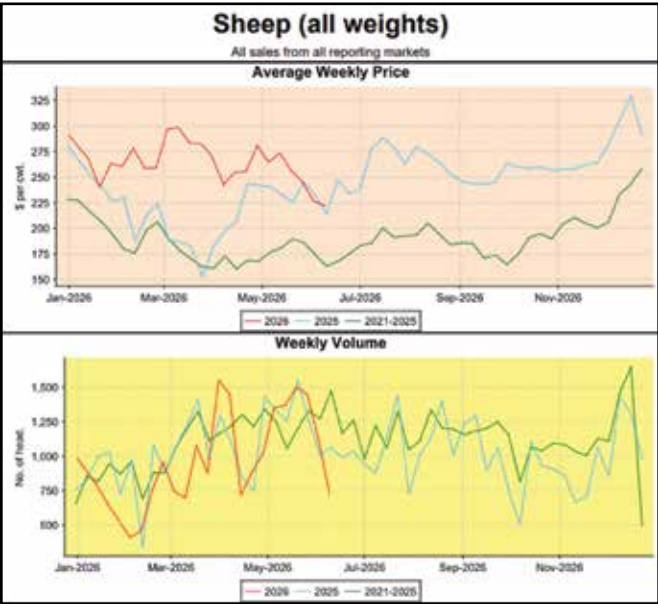
DLF PASTURE AWARD

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

Visit: <https://www.ontariosheep.org/communications/awards-scholarships/>

Overview of Cull Sheep Prices in Ontario

- Change in cull sheep price is seasonal and also impacted by volume as shown below in the report for week ending June 2, 2026.
- Prices tend to be highest from November through mid-March (5-year average price line).

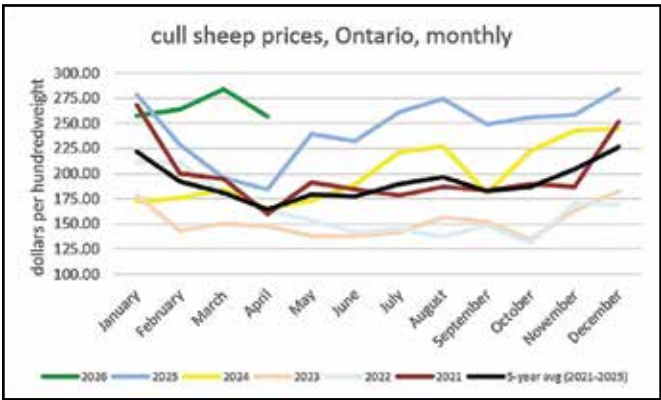


- The past two years have varied from this trend with higher prices sustained from June 2025 onwards. This is partially due lower supply of cull sheep as shown in the bottom half of the picture and the table below – most weekly volume in 2025 and 2026 to-date is below the 5-year average line.

Photo Credit: Wanda Cook



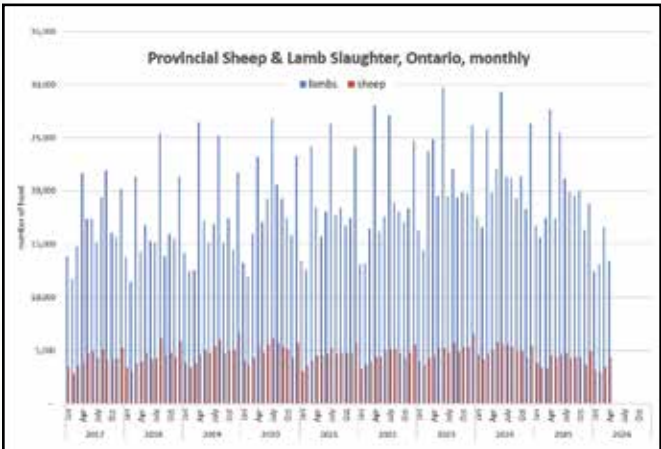
Sheep - all weights												
Weighted Average Price	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
2026	257.73	263.69	283.63	257.14								
2025	270.79	229.34	196.72	184.11	229.63	222.13	261.93	274.67	248.06	256.30	259.19	264.32
2024	172.82	175.21	184.98	164.92	172.82	189.33	220.84	227.41	191.15	222.81	242.89	244.87
2023	176.17	143.12	150.40	147.57	138.22	139.83	148.43	156.12	152.01	134.33	163.79	182.46
2022	211.73	211.63	173.96	163.88	163.83	161.93	145.43	137.38	148.22	131.48	176.17	189.26
2021	267.83	269.38	194.90	158.87	191.08	184.27	173.05	186.97	183.40	189.14	187.09	212.09
5-Yr Avg (2021-2025)	221.81	191.85	180.74	164.86	179.99	177.14	189.36	196.38	182.73	186.81	204.53	226.58
5-Yr Avg (2021-2026)	219.25	204.50	196.35	163.48								



- Volume of cull sheep through Ontario auction salesyards is down significantly. Volume for 2025 was 13.4 percent lower compared to 2024. Year-to-date volume for 2026 (week 22) is 8.7 percent lower than same week in 2025.

VOLUME OF SHEEP THROUGH ONTARIO AUCTION SALESYARDS			
	Current Year	Previous Year	% Change
2025 vs 2024	53,393	61,651	-13.4%
YTD2026 vs 2025 (wk22)	21,058	23,060	-8.7%

- Provincial sheep slaughter shows a similar trend with few months in the past 2 years being above the 5,000 head mark compared to 6 or more being above 5,000 head prior to 2021 (see graph below). **OSN**



Sheep Slaughter, Ontario, provincial, by month												
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	Nov	Dec
2015	3,878	3,483	4,135	5,167	4,700	5,387	5,281	4,965	6,014	4,585	4,653	6,050
2016	2,927	2,779	3,432	3,874	4,174	4,807	4,499	4,086	5,106	3,929	4,549	5,181
2017	3,482	2,845	3,528	3,848	4,708	4,936	4,231	5,057	4,144	4,166	4,213	5,230
2018	3,370	2,997	3,797	3,938	4,834	4,163	4,279	6,054	4,629	4,947	4,424	5,809
2019	3,820	3,399	3,791	4,648	5,054	4,744	5,389	6,028	4,765	4,975	4,960	6,681
2020	4,029	3,598	4,305	5,472	4,780	5,661	6,155	5,727	5,325	5,117	4,341	5,722
2021	3,087	3,607	4,082	4,823	4,497	4,871	5,171	4,724	4,863	4,788	4,716	5,767
2022	3,200	3,681	3,999	4,385	4,436	5,012	5,117	5,156	4,722	4,331	4,777	5,586
2023	4,017	3,592	4,286	4,565	5,278	5,212	4,815	5,715	4,621	5,328	5,260	6,517
2024	4,834	4,178	4,735	5,028	5,774	5,624	5,530	5,315	4,914	4,983	4,288	5,495
2025	3,817	3,423	3,330	4,513	4,380	4,627	4,790	4,272	4,378	4,344	3,650	4,942
2026	3,148	2,935	3,481	4,364								

OSF Photo Contest

Love capturing great moments behind the lens?

Entries are now open for the 2026 Ontario Sheep Photo Contest. Whether you're a seasoned photographer or an enthusiastic amateur, this is your chance to showcase the beauty of Ontario's sheep and the life on our farms.

Categories

FLOCK SHOTS:

Capture the essence of a flock with a minimum of 20 sheep in the photo .

AROUND THE FARM:

From pastoral landscape to bustling barns, show us the heart of sheep farming

ALL ABOUT WOOL:.

Highlighting the pride of Ontario's wool production.

SHEEP FARMERS:.

Candid moments of farmers at work or the warmth of farm family life.

Prizes

Top photos in each category will receive a \$100 cash prize, with an additional \$250 for the grand prize. All photo entries will be eligible to win the fan favorite cash prize of \$100.

Contest Rules

- All submitted photos become the 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.
- If the sheep/farm in the photo is not yours, permission of the farm/sheep owner is required.
- Each photographer may submit up to two entries per category.
- Participation in the sheep industry is not a requirement for entry.

Submissions

- Include the following information with your submission: Photo title (optional)
- Contact information: mailing address, phone number, and email
- Photographer's name (if different than the person submitting the photo).
- Chosen category (see above for criteria and a list of categories)

Entry Deadline
Sept 11th, 2026



More Information:
www.ontariosheep.org/communications/photo-contest/

Is Your Flock Replacement Rate Affecting Your Profit?

Anita O'Brien, On-Farm Program Lead, OSF

One of the many factors that can impact the profitability of a sheep flock is the flock replacement rate – how many ewe lambs must be kept back to replace ewes that have died and were culled. High flock replacement rates result in lower returns per ewe due to the costs of growing out replacements combined with their lower conception and lambing rates compared to mature ewes, and fewer of the annual lamb crop available for market.

Preliminary results from the recent Industry Growth Initiative (50% by 2040) survey enables us to explore the reasons why ewes get culled or die in Ontario flocks and their impact on flock profitability.

Ewe Mortality and Causes

When asked to select the annual ewe mortality rate, 37 percent of respondents (68) selected “less-than-1.5%”, with an additional 31 percent selecting 1.5-to-2.9% and 31 percent selecting categories of 3% and higher as shown in the accompanying graph. Fifty-seven percent of respondents felt there is room for improvement regarding ewe mortality on their farm, with 31 percent indicating no room for improvement and an additional 11 percent indicating they didn’t know.

Top reasons differed by production system, with age, mastitis, and prolapse being ranked the top three by respondents with accelerated flocks (21); while parasites, age and cast ranked as the top three with annual lambing flock respondents (28). Those flocks (15) using a combination of annual and accelerated identified age, lambing complications, mastitis and parasites as the top reasons ewes died on their farms. Top ten reasons given for ewe mortality and the frequency of selection by respondents is summarized in the table below.

Top Ewe Mortality Reasons Identified by Production System in 50% by 2040 survey		
Accelerated (21)	Annual (28)	Combination (15)
age 43%	parasite 29%	age 27%
mastitis 29%	age 18%	mastitis 27%
prolapse 29%	cast 14%	parasites 27%
lambing complication 24%	predation 11%	lambing complication 27%
parasites 15%	mastitis 11%	unknown 20%
pneumonia 15%	prolapse 11%	accident 13%
listeria 15%	pneumonia 7%	predation 13%
pregnancy toxemia 10%	pregnancy toxemia 7%	pregnancy toxemia 7%
bunk crush 5%	accident 7%	prolapse 7%
cast 5%	unknown 7%	bunk crush 7%

These results are preliminary and may change slightly when all data is compiled. Ranking is based on frequency of selection by respondents.

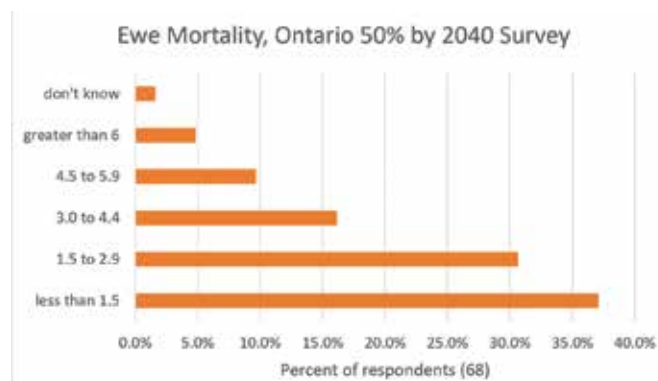
Interestingly, of respondents indicating ewe mortality was lower than 3 percent, fewer listed age as one of the top three causes of ewe mortality compared to those selecting ewe mortality of greater than 3 percent, and begs the question whether ewes were actively culled for age on those farms.

Cull Rate and Reasons

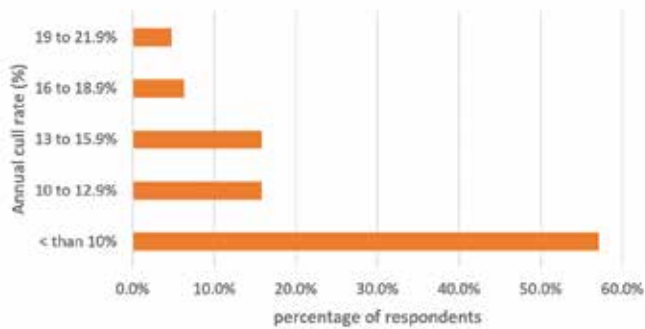
Fifty-seven percent of respondents indicated their cull rate was 10 percent or less, with 16 percent selecting 10 to 12.9 percent and 13 to 15.9 percent respectively. Eleven percent of respondents indicated cull rates of 16 to 22 percent as shown in the graph below. Sixty-one percent felt there was room for improvement in their cull protocol, while 29 percent indicated no improvement needed, with an additional 10 percent did not know.

Although top reasons for ewes being culled differed in ranking by production system, it is no surprise that age/teeth and udder issues were in the top three reasons for all three systems. Top ten reasons and the frequency of selection by respondents is summarized in the table below.

Respondents were asked to provide their own reasons rather than select from a list. A challenge with this is some respondents may use a different term to describe the same cull reason. As an example, reproduction was identified by 23 percent of respondents using accelerated production systems. If it were used to identify open ewes and those that failed to breed, then the combined categories would push it to top reason with 40 percent identifying it. If it was used to identify ewes lambing on the second or third cycle, or ewes that aborted, then it should stand as its own category.



Annual ewe cull rate, Ontario 50% by 2040 survey



Top Ewe Cull Reasons Identified by Production System in 50% by 2040 survey		
Accelerated (22)	Annual (28)	Combination (15)
age /teeth 32%	age /teeth 57%	udder issues 60%
mastitis 27%	udder issues 39%	mother ability 47%
udder issues 27%	mother ability 25%	age /teeth 40%
poor performance 23%	open / breeding issue 18%	lambling issues / assistance 27%
reproduction 23%	mastitis 21%	oen /breeding issue 20%
open / breeding issues 18%	poor performance 14%	mastitis 13%
mother ability 14%	low BCS 14%	poor performance 13%
poor milk 14%	behaviour 14%	low BCS 13%
litter size 14%	litter size 7%	litter size 7%
low BCS 9%	feet 7%	behaviour 7%

These results are preliminary and may change slightly when all data is compiled. Ranking is based on frequency of selection by respondents.

The Cost of High Replacement Rate

The impact on the per-ewe operating margin is greatly influenced by ewe mortality and overall replacement rate:

- Higher on-farm ewe mortality lowers revenue and increases costs through loss of cull sale-value; and where ewe death occurs during pregnancy and/or lambing, the sale value of the lost lambs, her annual feed and health costs, plus disposal costs associated with on-farm mortality. Focusing on reducing ewe mortalities can greatly impact returns per ewe. Reducing ewe mortality from 4.5 to 2.5 percent while keeping replacement rate at 18 percent, resulted in a 2.7 percent increase in the per-ewe operating margin in the 50%-by-2040 example flocks regardless of production system.
- Higher replacement rates result in fewer of the year's lamb crop sold as market lambs, higher feed and health costs of growing out a greater number of replacements. That combined with their lower conception and lambing rates compared to mature ewes results in lower overall flock production and therefore, lower returns per ewe. Reducing replacement rate from 18 to 15 percent, while keeping ewe mortality rate at 3 percent, resulted in a 2.8 percent increase in the per-ewe operating margin in the 50%-by-2040 example accelerated flocks. This did not hold for the example annual pasture lambing flock due to current market value of cull ewes being higher than that of the lighter-weight market lambs using the 5-year (2021-25). Market weight in the example annual pasture lambing flock averaged 78.5 pounds. In market conditions where cull ewe value is lower

than market lamb value, a similar improvement in operating margin, as seen in the example accelerated flock, would be expected. This difference between systems highlights the importance of regularly evaluating your management strategies as their impact on profit will differ over time and market conditions.

Selecting Flock Replacements

As mature ewes, flock replacement must perform better than the ones they are replacing to help offset higher production costs. The criteria you use to select flock replacements impacts future productivity of your flock, and the labour required to manage the flock. Regardless of productions system used:

- Establish a protocol of actively cull the replacement pool from birth onwards for conditions such as entropion, assisted birth, assisted suckling, udder conformation (pendulous udder, large teats) of dam, dam's mothering ability, minimum and maximum weaning weight, plus other traits important to your management system and goals.
- Should you keep replacements from all lambing groups or simplify your management by only keeping them from one group? Various aged replacements are at different stages of growth, presenting feeding and management challenges unless surplus housing enables them to be managed as separate groups. With puberty being dependent on exposure to long daylength, followed by shortening hours of daylength, the trade-off between high winter market prices and lower lambing success of fall-born lambs at 12 to 14 months of age is a hard decision. Improved lambing rates can be achieved by delaying breeding to the natural season but comes with addition feed costs. On the other hand, selecting from the late winter or spring-born group means replacements can be managed and fed as one group, with a lower feed and health cost to lambing age, and a higher lambing success at 12 to 14 months of age (compared to fall-born replacements lambing at the same age). Doing a partial budget will help determine if this is a good fit for your system.

Measure What You Want to Change

- Tracking causes of ewe death and the specific reasons ewes get culled on your farm is step one in determining whether flock replacement rate, and the costs associated with it, can be reduced.
- Using specific terms over general categories (eg. open, not pregnant, aborted instead of "reproduction issue") for cull reasons and causes of ewe mortality makes it easier for improvement strategies to focus on specific issues.
- Review your culling strategy to ensure it matches your production system with a goal to accurately identify those ewes needing culled while ensuring ewes are not leaving the flock prematurely.
- Identifying culls with a permanent cull mark (ear tag or ear notch) ensures they are less likely to "slip through" and stay in the flock and eliminates the need to double-check flock records on sort day.
- Recognize that your top three will change over time and may differ from your neighbour or friends depending how long since your flock has been established and how consistent your cull identification and decisions have been. **OSN**

District Happenings

A look at what sheep districts across the province have been working on, celebrating, and discussing in recent months.

By Heather Johnson, Member Relations Coordinator

District 1

District 1 held the first online-only 50% by 2040 meeting in early April. The meeting was well attended and generated strong discussion, with a lot of member feedback on industry direction. The district is currently planning upcoming events for late summer and fall, including its AGM and participation in the Western Fair.

District 2

District 2 hosted its lamb banquet and silent auction in late March, drawing a strong turnout of politicians, industry leaders, and members of the public to this highly regarded event. Funds raised through this year's lamb banquet will be used to purchase medical sheepskins for hospices in Grey Bruce.

The district's 50% by 2040 meeting in early April was held as a hybrid event with strong participation both in person and online, leading to engaging conversation.

Wrapping up their busy spring, District 2 put on information booths and displays at Roots of Bruce and Grown in Grey in April. Approximately 300 Grade 5 students attended each event.

District 3

District 3 held its 50% by 2040 meeting in mid-April as a hybrid event, meeting in St. Pauls, with a turnout of approximately 15 people and a few participants joining online via Zoom. The gathering provided members with an opportunity to connect both in person and virtually while discussing their common thoughts about industry goals.

District 5

District 5 held its 50% by 2040 meeting as an old-fashioned farm kitchen table meeting in Melancthon, providing a relaxed setting for members to connect and discuss industry goals.



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Following this, District 5 has been working on plans for an upcoming tour of the Maplevue Milk Replacer facility, located within their district. The tour will provide members with an opportunity to learn more about the facility's operations and neonate lamb nutrition.

District 7

District 7 held its 50% by 2040 meeting in mid-May as an online discussion, providing members with an opportunity to connect virtually and share input on industry goals and priorities.

District 8

District 8 held its 50% by 2040 meeting in mid-May as an online discussion, with a strong focus on mentorship throughout the conversation. Members engaged in sharing ideas and experiences aimed at supporting the next generation and strengthening long-term industry growth.

District 9

At the time of writing, District 9 is preparing for its upcoming farm tour in May and recently partnered with District 10 to host a joint 50% by 2040 meeting online in mid-May. The collaborative event brought members from eastern Ontario together virtually for a focused discussion from the eastern side of the province.

District 10

District 10 hosted a spring dinner at La Belle Sorelle Bistro in Alexandria at the end of March. Chef Véronique Proulx showcased several creative ways to prepare lamb, providing members with an engaging culinary experience.

They partnered with District 9 to host the final 50% by 2040 members meeting online in mid-May.

District 11

District 11 held its 50% by 2040 meeting in early April as a hybrid event in Earlton, with a good turnout of nearly 20 attendees in person and almost half that number joining online. The meeting was followed the next day by the district's annual event, the Earlton Farm Show.

The district held a members' draw for two farm show hats for those who attended the 50% by 2040 meeting. Currently, District 11 is planning to host the board for a lamb roast during its visit to the district in June. **OSN**

An Extra-Special Thank You to Our Master Shepherds' Course Presenters and Farm Tour Hosts

The Master Shepherds' Course wrapped up in early May 2026 with fulltime students presenting their business plan to fellow students. The course ran over the previous eighteen months with eleven 14-hour modules, one in-person 2-day module and a 2-day farm tour. This program would not be possible without the support and participation of our presenters and farm tour hosts. On behalf of Ontario Sheep Farmers and the course participants a heartfelt thank you to you all.

Course Presenters

Module 1 - Industry Dynamics & Governance

Jillian Craig, OMAFA Small Ruminant Specialist
Erin Morgan, OSF Executive Director
Christoph Wand, OMAFA Livestock Sustainability Specialist
Anita O'Brien, OSF On-Farm Programs Lead

Module 2 - Flock Productivity & Reproduction

Delma Kennedy, OMAFA Sheep Specialist
Chris Buschbeck, DVM, Small Ruminant Genetics
Anita O'Brien, OSF On-Farm Programs Lead

Module 3 - Lambing & Lamb Rearing

Jillian Craig, OMAFA Small Ruminant Specialist
Mike Swidersky, Riverview Ranch, Melancthon
Richard Ehrhardt, Small Ruminant Specialist, Michigan State University
Meggy Chan, DVM Peterborough Vet Services
Emily zur Linden, DVM Elmira
Heather Aitken, DVM Rideau-St. Lawrence Veterinary Services
Anita O'Brien, OSF On-Farm Programs Lead

Module 4 - Business Planning

Delma Kennedy, OMAFA Sheep Specialist
John Molenhuis, OMAFA Cost of Production Specialist
Jillian Craig, OMAFA Small Ruminant Specialist
Erich Weber, CA, Waterloo
Anita O'Brien, OSF On-Farm Programs Lead

Module 5 - Ewe Flock Nutrition

Paul Luimes, Research Professor University of Guelph-Ridgetown Campus
Delma Kennedy, OMAFA Sheep Specialist
Dale Darroch, Ruminant Nutritionist, Jones Feed Mill
Youngji Rho, OMAFA Feed Ingredient and By-Products Specialist
Courtney Vriens, Ruminant Nutritionist, Vriens Nutrition Consulting
Vince Stutzki, Elmcrest Farms, Paisley
Christine O'Reilly, OMAFA Forage & Grazing Specialist
Christoph Wand, OMAFA Livestock Sustainability Specialist
Anita O'Brien, OSF On-Farm Programs Lead

Module 6 - Pasture & Predation

Jim Johnston, Pasture Hill Farm, New Liskeard
Jillian Craig, OMAFA Small Ruminant Specialist
Patrick Hubert, OMNR Wildlife Biologist
Brent Patterson, OMNR Wildlife Biologist
Anita O'Brien, OSF On-Farm Programs Lead

Module 7 - Flock Improvement through Genetics

Erin Massender, Geneticist, True North Genetics Inc.
Delma Kennedy, OMAFA Sheep Specialist
Amélie St-Pierre, CEPOQ
Doug Savage, Bakerstone Rideaus, Merrickville
Betty-Jo Almond, AgSights
Anita O'Brien, OSF On-Farm Programs Lead

Module 8 - Infrastructure & Feeding Systems

Steve Beadle, OMAFA Livestock Structures and Equipment Engineer
Christoph Wand, OMAFA Livestock Sustainability Specialist
Jillian Craig, OMAFA Small Ruminant Specialist
Anita O'Brien, OSF On-Farm Programs Lead

Module 9 - Effective Flock Health Management

Emily zur Linden, DVM Elmira
Heather Aitken, DVM Rideau-St. Lawrence Veterinary Services
Amy Gaw, DVM Temiskaming Veterinary Services
Anita O'Brien, OSF On-Farm Programs Lead

Module 10 - Lamb Feedlots & Dairy

Stephen Conner, Cameron
Michael Richards, MGR Farms, Haldimand County
Christoph Wand, OMAFA Livestock Sustainability Specialist
Chris Buschbeck, Wooldrift Farm, Markdale
Anita O'Brien, OSF On-Farm Programs Lead

Module 11 - Marketing & Wool

Delma Kennedy, OMAFA Sheep Specialist
Jane Underhill, JU Wool, Québec
Bill McCutcheon, Ontario Lamb Marketing, Monticello
Wave Weir, Wave Fibre Mill, Seguin
Jennifer Osborn, EcoWool Canada Inc., Ayton
Shanna Armstrong, Pinnacle Hill Farm, Renfrew
Anita O'Brien, OSF On-Farm Programs Lead

Farm Tour Hosts - 2-days, September 2025

Todd & Jennifer Payne, Asphodel Sheep Company, Norwood
Riley Halligan, Gores Landing @ Lily Lake Solar site
Jenny & Luke Carnaghan, Carncroft Farms, Blackstock
Phil & Liz Smith, Breezy Ridge Rideaus, Sutton West
Mike & Amber Swidersky, Riverview Ranch, Melancthon
Bill McCutcheon, Mulmur Vista, Grand Valley
Mark & Betty Bearinger, Fare Vewe Acres, Mount Forest
Mark Martin & Family, Dairy Sheep Farm, Drayton
Kurtis Martin, K-Brink Farms, Moorefield
Ryan & Romy Schill, Circle R Lamb, Wallenstein

OSN

Taking a Pulse

We're trying something new in this issue with our very first 'Taking a Pulse' section. It's our hopes that it can be a space for honest reflections from producers across the industry. From difficult seasons and unexpected challenges to small wins and lessons learned, this section offers a glimpse into the realities of life behind the flock. Our hope is that by sharing these experiences, farmers can feel more connected, understood, and reminded that they are not navigating this industry alone. We'd love to hear from you, so please reach out to arrange having your say in the upcoming issues.

"It's that time of year when the cards can feel stacked against us. With lambing on the go as usual and now the endless springtime tasks of getting seed in the ground, equipment ready to make hay and all the springtime supplies on hand, as well as what most days seems like a million other tasks. The stress can be high to say the least. Along with the farm tasks we still have our lives to live and families to have time for. It's a balancing act that has no rights or wrongs and year after year we make it work somehow and look forward to doing it all over again next year."

- Phil Botden

"This Spring has been long and chilly, and we are not loving it! While it has not affected planting too much, the gloomy days are making it hard to keep a positive mindset. On the sheep side of things, we are expanding the flock and our family (births and weddings!) at the same time which has kept us very busy and sometimes a little overwhelmed. But we are lucky to do what we do and wouldn't have it any other way!"

-Andrew and Rhianne Pearson

"I've had a marginal couple of years and for some reason, bedding sheep suffers when I'm low. So, I am overjoyed that we are into dryer weather and I've got the barn all cleaned out. Also got all my back lambing data into GenOvis and identified my low-end sheep to get bred to terminal Sires (and/or short listed for a career change). Had a favorite ram break a leg but at least I have a bunch of pregnancies by him due to lamb right shortly. What's working: buying rams out of loin scanning / genovis flocks and anti depressants. What's not: only having one set of eyes in the barn and keeping lambs on ewes longer than 8 weeks."

- Heidi Kristufek

Feeling inspired to share your side of life? Send an email to Walker: wball@ontariosheep.org **OSN**

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“One of the big selling features for me, going from component feeding to TMR was the efficiency. We were feeding twice a day. We're down to once a day. We still push up feed throughout the day, but we're spending less time in the barn. I have overall, generally a lot happier animals. **Better birth weights... Better rates of gain... Better milk production...**”

- Michael Richards, MGR Sheep Farms, Ontario

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5100 Twin Auger Mini Mixer

Capacity: 91ft³ / 2.58m³

Suitable to feed per load:
100 adult sheep or 1000 lambs*

5050 Single Auger Mini Mixer

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Suitable to feed per load:
50 adult sheep or 500 lambs*



*Depending on body weight and ration composition

District 2 Community Initiative: Medical Sheepskins Project

Each year following the District 2 Lamb Banquet, district committee members come together to discuss how a portion of proceeds can be reinvested back into the community. Historically, these donations have supported a range of initiatives, including local 4 H sheep clubs and, more recently, the Children's Safety Village, where funds helped support the development of a safety barn and silo.

In 2025, District 2 members explored new ways to give back—specifically looking for an initiative that would both benefit the community and reflect the sheep industry. This led to the idea of medical sheepskins.

Medical sheepskins are a natural, value-added sheep product with direct healthcare benefits. The sheep skins are first trimmed to approximately one inch in length and specially treated for durability. Then they can be used in a health care setting that requires regular washing and reuse. The benefits include pressure relief for individuals who are bedridden and they are effective in helping prevent bed sores and protect sensitive skin.

Sheep skins are used for hospital and hospice patients spending many hours in bed as they are naturally breathable, allowing airflow and circulation and comfortable year-round—warm in winter and cool in summer. They can also be used as lining for body casts.

The District 2 Lamb Banquet has been supported by the community for many years and the farmers in District 2 felt it was important to find a new project to give back to the community. This project has the added benefit of showcasing a practical, compassionate use of wool, while directly supporting patients and care providers in rural healthcare.

District 2 initiated the project with a \$500 contribution from Lamb Banquet proceeds in 2025, which were used to purchase the first sheepskins. Individual medical sheepskins cost approximately \$240–\$400, depending on size. Products are sourced from The Old Mill in Blyth, a recognized local Ontario supplier.



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Call 1-866-531-2600

www.ontariosheep.org/farmer-resources



At this year's Lamb Banquet in March 2026, an additional \$640 in direct donations was raised spontaneously after Dennis Thompson and Jason Emke shared the positive impact the project will have on the community. These donations will purchase two more sheep skins for the local community.

After the banquet, additional sponsorship was committed by The Old Mill and Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers to further strengthen the reach of the initiative.

The first sheepskin will be donated to Chapman House Hospice in Owen Sound. However, District 2 has set a clear goal to expand the initiative to provide sheepskins to additional hospices in the region, including facilities in Tiverton, Southampton and the new hospice planned for Walkerton. Ultimately, District 2 will place a medical sheepskin in every hospice across Grey-Bruce.

District 2 is proud to give back in a way that reflects both the industry and the values of its members and looks forward to continuing and expanding this effort in the years ahead.



For more information on the project, please contact District 2 Secretary, Dennis Thompson. **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) 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=) \$ _____

PAY BY PHONE USING VISA OR MASTERCARD

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.

CURRENT PRODUCERS ENROLLED IN THE GENOVIS PROGRAM (AS OF JUNE 2026)

1000914124 Ontario Inc. O/A Halfway Farms Hiske & Carmen MacKay • (519) 281-3725
4S Maple Lane Farm • Kimberly Schneider • (905) 404-7811
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 & Naomi Brubacher • (519) 321-8016
Steven & Lucille Burkhart • (519) 698-0232
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
Cowan Acres • Grant Cowan • (705) 796-2236
Craigmore Farm • Wayne Kreklewich • (416) 892-0664
Cursio Farms & Arkell Valley Frank & Ned Cursio • (519) 766-3378
Jim & Wendy Driscoll • (519) 638-5703
Emke Livestock • Craig Emke • (519) 901-2519
Fare Vewe Acres • Mark & Betty Bearinger • (519) 323-1760
Farlane Livestock • Christopher Macfarlane • (705) 868-5199
G & L Brien • Gary & Luanne Brien • (519) 674-3846
Gimlet Hill • Rob & Tracey Werry • (289) 385-6804
Grahamloch Farm • Lori Anderson • (705) 724-5780
Grey Stone Sheep • Dean Keranovic • (647) 889-6785

Homstead Acres Suffolks • Len Riebot • (905) 359-3347
J & J Farms • Ross & Clementine Savasi • (705) 652-7477 John & Holly Wallace • (519) 368-6540
Kettle Crest Farm • Art & Sandra Alblas • (519) 637-0050
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
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
Tri R Way Livestock • A. Scot & Mary Robertson • (705) 322-6977
Tulach Ard Farm • Sean McKenzie • (905) 786-2476
Twin Shores Farm • Brian Voith • (343) 364-4095
Twyla Brae Farms • Garry & Karen Milne • (705) 446-5457
Wooldrift Farm Chris Buschbeck & Axel Meister • (519) 538-2844

FLOCKS WHO HAVE ACHIEVED "A" STATUS ON THE MAEDI VISNA PROGRAM (AS OF JUNE 2026)

Allinbrook Farms • Neil Allin • (905) 983-5791
Century Lane Farm • Robert & Shirley Graves • (613) 447-2656
Huron Grove Farms Michael & Fraser Hodgson • (519) 918-4159
Kettle Crest Farm • Art & Sandra Alblas • (519) 637-0050
Rainbow Woods • Eleanor & Sarah Reed • (705) 454-3167

Robert Pennie • (705) 859-2671
Shadow Ridge Acres • Zabrina Bielaskie • (613) 433-6199
Stitch and Steel Homestead Sam Sheehan & Andrew Sheehan • (647) 546-8906
Trailblaze Farm • Valerie Robinson • (519) 560-0946

FLOCKS WHO HAVE ACHIEVED "ENROLLED NEG" STATUS ON THE MAEDI VISNA PROGRAM (AS OF JUNE 2026)

Prolific Acres • Charlie Renaud • (705) 322-2140
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SHEEP PRODUCERS ON THE SCRAPIE PROGRAM (AS OF JUNE 2026)

Century Lane Farm • Robert & Shirley Graves • 1 Certified
Parker Agriculture Ltd. • Jeanne & Rob Parker • 1 Certified

WoolDrift Farm • Axel Meister • 1 Certified

For more information visit 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.

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	519-317-9988
Chair	Jeff Swain	519-433-0984
Vice Chair	Sean McBrien	519-437-1874
Secretary	Kacey Wilson	519-521-6742
Treasurer	Cathy Pollard-Culbert	519-868-3076

District 2

Counties of Grey and Bruce

Director	Jay Lennox	519-374-4055
Chair	Jason Emke	519-379-8778
Vice Chair	Mike Follings	519-897-3952
Secretary	Dennis Thompson	519-881-3174
Treasurer	Steve Ernewein	519-392-8624

District 3

Counties of Huron, Perth, Waterloo and Oxford

Director	Keith Todd	519-525-7539
Chair	Susan Martin	519-669-8066
Vice Chair	Tyler Harper	519-801-9932
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	Kevin Krakar	226-931-1640
Chair	Courtney Miedima	519-209-2014
Vice Chair	Vacant	
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	519-669-4146
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	Jeremy McNabb	705-818-3860
Secretary/Treasurer	Amy Spence	705-790-7209

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	905-718-3380

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/Treasurer	Kayleigh Graham	289-355-9947

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	613-281-2476
Treasurer	Zabrina Bielaskie	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	Lana Penner Tovey	613-799-5262
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	Helen McRae	705-206-6315
Chair	Ryan Klapwyk	705-648-4432
Vice Chair	Jenna Wight	705-622-1774
Secretary	Trudy Reid	807-935-3224
Treasurer	Jim Johnston	705-647-7160

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
Bentinck 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
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
Peel Meat Packers	Drayton	(519) 638-3446

ABATTOIRS		
NAME	CITY	PHONE NO
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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Chris Vervoort	Arthur	519-993-9411 jenandchrisv@hotmail.com
Mitchell Brunning	Erin	416-553-7266 mitchellbrunning@gmail.com
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