

MINI 4-H SHEEP



Name: _____

CLOVERBUDS/MINI 4-H—Grades Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd

This booklet is good for all 3 years of Mini 4-H SHEEP

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SOURCES:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Mr5f85n45KisucFlKMgei6a0k4MPtRIO/view>

<https://www.montessorinature.com/sheep-life-cycle-anatomy-types-activities-printables-kids/>

<https://petkeen.com/popular-types-of-sheep-breeds/>

<https://www.raisingssheep.net/4h-sheep>

<https://www.raisingssheep.net/how-to-halter-break-a-lamb>

<https://www.raisingssheep.net/lamb-buying-guide>

<https://www.raisingssheep.net/washing-sheep>

<https://www.raisingssheep.net/how-to-show-sheep>

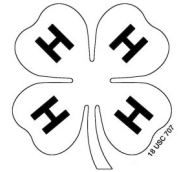
<https://www.uidaho.edu/-/media/UIIdaho-Responsive/Files/Extension/county/Gem/4-h/4-H-FFA-sheep-supply-list.pdf>

https://extension.usu.edu/cache/files/Feeding_Market_Lambs.pdf

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5dcc7842de7f6e25b5d3322dt/5eac9f3ce091df24c927793f/1588371272597/Online+Activity+Book.pdf>

Mini 4-H'ers Page

Welcome to Mini 4-H! You are now a member of the 4-H family. You are a special person. Mini 4-H'ers have a lot of fun! There are many activities for you to explore and new things to try. You can share it with your family and friends. Mom, Dad, another adult and your 4-H club can help you with your project. When it is finished, bring your project to the 4-H fair to display it so others can see what you have done. You will also get a ribbon made just for Mini 4-H'ers. Most of all, have fun with learning about horses!



Here are some things to know about 4-H:

The 4-H Symbol: The symbol is a four-leaf clover with a "H" in each leaf.

Clover is a plant which grows in fields, yards, and along roadsides. Most clovers only have 3 leaves. If you look closely when you are outside, you may get lucky and find a clover with four leaves. A four-leaf clover is used as the symbol for 4-H to let everyone know 4-H is a special kind of group.

The 4-H Colors: The 4-H colors are green and white. The four-leaf clover is green and the "H" in the leaf is white.

The 4-H Motto: "TO MAKE THE BEST BETTER." When something is better than all of the others, it is the best. 4-H encourages you to always try to do better, even if you are doing the best, you have ever done.

The 4-H Mission: The Indiana 4-H Youth Development mission is to "provide real-life educational opportunities that develop young people who positively impact their community and the world".

The 4-H Vision: Indiana 4-H Youth Development strives to be the premier community-based program empowering young people to reach their full potential.

The 4-H Pledge: A pledge is a promise you make to yourself and to the people around you.



**I pledge my HEAD to clearer thinking,
My HEART to greater loyalty,
My HANDS to larger service,
And my HEALTH to better living,
For my club, my community,
My country and my world.**

Mini 4-H Helper's Page

Welcome to the Mini 4-H program! Mini 4-H is designed for youth to explore a variety of project activity areas and to interact with caring adults and other children.

Children receive project manuals for their chosen project(s) after enrolling in Mini 4-H. These manuals provide information to learn about the chosen project along with learning activities to provide fun and interaction throughout the year in Mini 4-H. The manuals also provide ideas for a project to bring to the fair. **Much information in this booklet is also to help the first-time 4-H parent/helper to learn about this project. Read to your child and help them by talking about the information with them and guiding them thru the learning activities.**

As a Mini 4-H helper, your job will be to guide and encourage the Mini 4-H'er through doing the activities in the manual. A wide range of activities are provided to allow you to choose the ones most appropriate for the child you are working with. Read through the booklet with your child. It is suggested that you DO NOT complete the activities for them, but instead, help them, guide them, and work with them, letting the child do as much as they possibly can themselves. 4-H believes in allowing children to "learn by doing". The Mini 4-H project activities are hands-on learning opportunities designed to provide a meaningful educational experience for youth.

Additionally, the Mini 4-H program is setup to allow children to display a project activity based upon information learned from this manual. Some children choose to exhibit their project at the Decatur County 4-H Agricultural Fair. Fair week is an exciting week for 4-H members, Mini 4-H'ers and their families. It is a week that allows the community youth to showcase their enthusiasm for learning.

Mini 4-H is fun! Children will certainly enjoy it. As an adult helper, you can have fun too, by guiding and helping as children participate in the program. Encourage and praise the child(ren) as they have fun learning while doing the activities, and sharing what they are learning with you.

If you have questions regarding Mini 4-H or the 4-H program and projects, please feel free to call the Decatur County Extension Office at 812-663-8388.

**Decatur County Extension Office
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Mini 4-H Program Rules

The Mini 4-H program is designed to supplement and introduce students in kindergarten through second grade to the Decatur County 4-H program.

Rules:

Mini 4-H is open to any boy or girl who is currently enrolled in Kindergarten, first or second grade on January 1st of the current 4-H year.

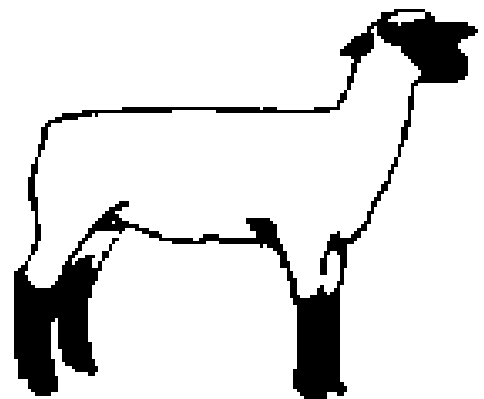
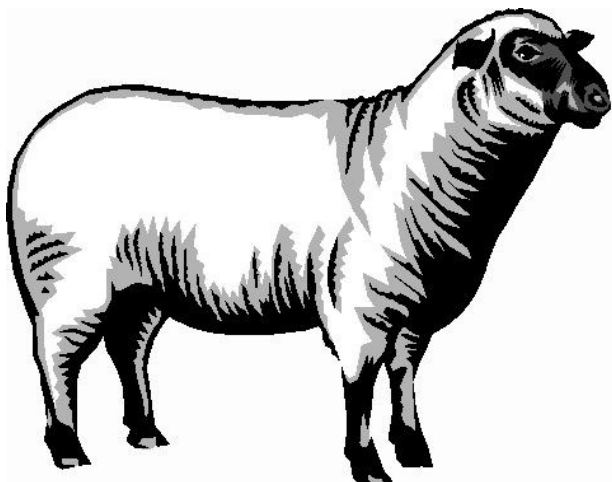
Mini 4-H participants will enroll in a 4-H club where they may get help with their project from older 4-H'ers and their club leader. They can also do their project at home with help from their parents.

Mini 4-H'ers in Decatur County may enroll in any of the following projects: Arts and Crafts, Bicycle (grade 2 only), Bugs, More Bugs (2nd grade), Collections, Dinosaurs, Farm Animals, Foods, Foods 2 (2nd grade), Forestry, Garden, Genealogy, Models, My Pets & Me, Plants & Flowers, Sewing, Space, Whales & Dolphins, Wildlife and Woodworking.

Animal projects now have manuals, and the child will participate in the Mini 4-H Livestock show during the fair for the species they have signed up to show. They will use an animal provided by an older sibling, relative, friend, or other 4-H'er that is already being shown at the fair. Older 4-H'ers and adults will help them so they will learn the proper way to show the animal. Animal projects include: Beef, Dairy, Rabbits, Goats, Sheep, Horses, Puppies/Dog, Swine and Poultry. The animal booklets are good for 3 years of Mini 4-H.

Mini 4-H'ers will complete activities in their project manuals, show in the Mini 4-H show, and if desired, turn in a project also. Any poster exhibits must follow the following specifications:

- The poster must be a stiff cardboard or foam core board so it can stand up easily, if needed. Poster board size is to be 22" high x 28" wide. Posters are to be covered with plastic to protect them.
- The Decatur County Extension Office sells foam core poster board and plastic sleeves to cover the poster boards, as a set, at a minimal price.
- Posters must be positioned horizontally.



INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT SHEEP

<https://www.montessorinature.com/sheep-life-cycle-anatomy-types-activities-printables-kids/>

- ⇒ Sheep are domesticated animals that belong to the family Bovidae. They are known for their curly woolly coat and their calm temperament.
- ⇒ Sheep are herbivores and only eat plants like grass, alfalfa, and clover.
- ⇒ Sheep have been domesticated by humans for thousands of years for their wool, meat, and milk.
- ⇒ A female sheep is called a ewe; a male sheep is called a ram. Baby sheep are called lambs.
- ⇒ Sheep can produce up to 10 pounds of wool each year, which can be shorn (cut off) by farmers and used to make clothing items like sweaters, hats, and blankets.
- ⇒ Sheep have four stomachs to help them break down tough plant material.
- ⇒ Sheep are social animals and prefer to live in groups called flocks.
- ⇒ Sheep can recognize the faces of up to 50 other sheep and are able to remember them for years.
- ⇒ Sheep communicate with each other through bleating, or by making different sounds.
- ⇒ Sheep can see very well in the dark and have an excellent sense of hearing.
- ⇒ Sheep can live up to 10-12 years in captivity.

Sheep go through a life cycle that includes several stages:

- ◇ BIRTH—A baby sheep is called a lamb. Lambs are born in the spring, usually between February and April. They are born with a woolly coat of fur and are able to stand and walk within minutes. They depend on their mother's milk for nourishment.
- ◇ INFANCY—Lambs stay with their mother for the first few months of life. They grow quickly and are able to eat grass and hay when they are about a month old. They stay with their mother until they are weaned, which is usually between four and six months.

JUVENILE—Once weaned, young sheep are called hoggets. They are still growing but are no longer dependent on their mother's milk. They spend their time grazing and living in a flock with other sheep.

PRIME—When sheep reach about two years old, they are considered fully grown and are ready to breed. This stage is called their prime. Sheep can live up to 10 years or more.

BREEDING—Ewes (female sheep) come into heat in the fall, and this is when they can become pregnant. Rams (male sheep) will mate with the ewes, and pregnancy will last about five months.

LAMBING—The cycle begins again when the ewe gives birth to a lamb. This is a natural process that occurs every year as long as the ewe remains healthy and gets enough food and water.

Sheep are herbivorous mammals that have been domesticated for thousands of years. They are known for their woolly coat, their docile nature, and their ability to thrive in a wide range of environments. Sheep have a unique anatomy that makes them well-suited for their lifestyle.

Here are some key features of sheep anatomy:

1. **HEAD**—A sheep's head is relatively small and has a blunt snout. Their eyes are located on the sides of their head and provide them with good peripheral vision. Sheep have excellent hearing and are able to swivel their ears to pick up sounds from all directions.
2. **MOUTH**—Sheep have a split upper lip, which allows them to selectively graze on grasses and other plants. They have a set of sharp teeth at the front of their mouth that they use for biting off pieces of vegetation.
3. **STOMACH**—Sheep have a four-chambered stomach that helps them efficiently digest their food. Sheep are able to regurgitate and re-chew their food in a process called rumination. This allows them to break down tough fibers and extract more nutrients from their food.
4. **WOOL**—Sheep have a thick coat of wool that keeps them warm in cold weather. Wool is a type of fiber that comes from the hair of sheep and is prized for its softness and warmth. Some sheep breeds are raised primarily for their wool, which can be used to make clothing, blankets and other textiles.
5. **HOOVES**—Sheep have two-toed hooves that are adapted for walking and running on rough terrain. Their hooves are made of a dense material called keratin, which grows continuously and needs to be trimmed regularly to prevent overgrowth.
6. **REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM**—Sheep are mammals and give birth to live young. Female sheep are called **EWES** and males are called **RAMS**. Ewes are able to give birth to one or two lambs at a time, and are able to produce milk to feed their young.



SHEEP BREEDS

<https://petkeen.com/popular-types-of-sheep-breeds>

1. Merino Wool Sheep

This is technically a general breed, not a specific breed. However, most of these sheep are pretty similar and are all used for the same thing - high-quality wool. These sheep produce some of the best wool of any sheep, which is why they've spread as far as Australia, South Africa, South America, and the United States. These sheep account for nearly 50% of the world's sheep population. They are extremely popular.

Their fine wool does well in arid and semi-arid regions. They have a very strong flock instinct, which makes them easier to take care of. They are very productive and produce a lot of wool. They are adaptable to different environments, hence why they have spread throughout the world. They are also excellent foragers, so you don't have to worry about their food all that much. They have a pretty long lifespan as well and stay productive throughout their lives.

Their wool is delicate and soft. It is usually considered very high-quality. Most of the world's wool comes from these sheep. The wool is used often for performance athletic clothing.

The word "merino" comes from Spain, where the sheep was introduced in the 12th century. It has spread throughout the world since then.



2. Rambouillet Sheep

This is a specific breed of Merino sheep. However, it is widespread. It is probably one of the most common commercial sheep out there. For this reason, it deserves its own category. It is the Merino sheep on steroids when it comes to popularity. Practically every sheep you see in the states is likely to be a Rambouillet sheep.

These sheep are the foundation stock of most sheep in the United States. They are also called the French Merino, as they are descended from the original Spanish Merino sheep. However, they were also crossed with the French Rambouillet, which is a common sheep in France. They are a bit larger than the original Spanish merino, which also means that they produce more wool. They are also a bit sturdier, which is due to their larger size as well.

The breed was imported into the United States early in its development and the U.S. Rambouillet breed association was formed in 1889. They will work on the standards for this breed and support this breed's high-quality breeding.

Despite being large, these sheep still have their strong flocking instinct. They are long-lived as well and produce high-quality wool for the large majority of their life. They can be used for meat as well as wool, since they are more significant than most wool sheep. This made them very popular in America, where dual-purpose animals seem to make it further than niche animals.



3. Suffolk Sheep

This is one of the most popular mutton sheep in the United States. It has medium-length wool, but is usually not sheared. Instead, it is used almost exclusively for meat.

This breed is most distinguished by its black legs and head. You can almost instantly tell if a sheep is a Suffolk sheep based on the coloration on its head and legs.

This breed is prevalent, especially in the United States. Almost all meat sheep belong to this breed. This sheep makes up more than 50% of the purebred sheep registries. It was initially the result of Southdown rams and Norfolk horn ewes crossbreeding over 200 years ago in southeastern England. However, they have been a breed for so long that their standards are set in stone.

They are a fast-growing breed that gets quite large. They produce heavy, high-quality meat. These two traits are mainly why they are so popular. They were introduced to the United States in 1888 and have been popular ever since.

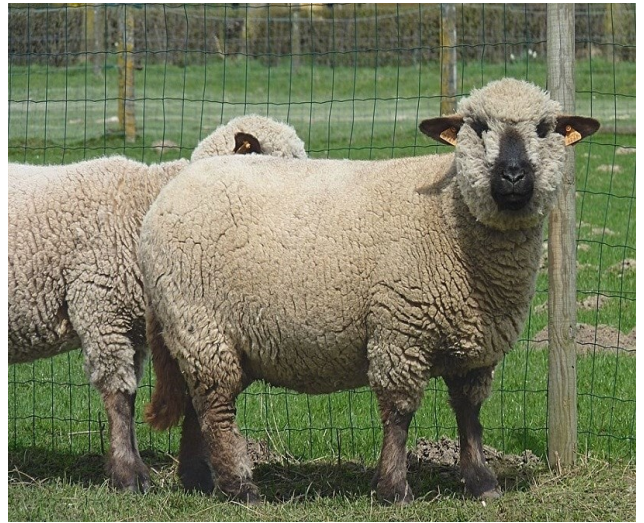


4. Hampshire Sheep

The Hampshire Sheep is a dual-purpose breed. They produce fine quality wool and excellent meat, and they do both jobs exceptionally well. Like the Suffolk sheep, they also have black legs and faces, which makes them decently distinguishable.

These sheep grow fast, allowing them to produce high-quality meat rather quickly. They are active foragers and are very calm sheep. These traits make them reasonably easy to take care of.

Like most breeds we've read about thus far, this breed initially came about in the 1800s. It was bred by crossing Southdowns to the Hampshire Downs of the U.K. It became popular in the United States shortly after it was bred.



5. Katahdin Sheep

This sheep is a hair sheep that is mostly bred for meat. It was developed in the U.S. in the 1950s, making it one of the newest popular breeds around. They are named after the area where they were first bred, Mt. Katahdin in Maine. They were crossed by an amateur geneticist who was trying to make a mutton-type sheep that was easier to take care of - and he succeeded.

This sheep needs very little care. It requires very little maintenance and is resistant to most weather. They were bred in Maine, after all. They are naturally resistant to parasites, so that is one less thing farmers have to worry about. You don't even need to shear them, as they shed their winter coat. This also makes them more suitable to warm environments, since they'll just shed their coat when necessary.

They are medium-sized and ideal for pasture lambing. They are great at foraging and take care of the majority of their own needs.



6. Dorper Sheep

The [Dorper sheep](#) are incredibly hardy. They are most popular in South Africa, but you can find them in America as well. They are best in arid conditions, which is where they originated from. However, they are highly adaptable and can get used to nearly any environment. Their popularity began to take off in the United States in 1995, so they are not extremely widespread as of yet.

Their coat is both wool and hair. It will drop off when being sheared, which makes them a bit easier to take care of. They are mostly bred as mutton-sheep.



They are chiefly prized for their sheepskin, which is extremely thick and protective from harsh weather. This skin has been named "Cape Clovers", which it is still marketed under today. In fact, a lot of the sheep's carcass value comes from their famous sheepskin, not necessarily their meat. However, they still produce high-quality meat - but their sheepskin is worth more.

7. Dorset Sheep

The Dorset sheep is bred for meat. It has medium-length wool and is most well-known for its prolific lambing. Most Dorset sheep in the United States are the Polled Dorset, which is a particular type. They are prolific breeders and milkers, which they are sometimes used for exclusively. However, they are mostly prized for their high-quality meat production.

This breed originated in Salem, Oregon, in 1860. However, Polled Dorset originated in Raleigh, North Carolina.

This breed is second to only the Suffolk breed in the United States in terms of popularity. They are the most popular white-faced breed in the United States as well. If you see a white-faced sheep, it is probably a Dorset.



8. Southdown Sheep

If you've read thus far, you'll know that this sheep was crossbred to produce most of the famous sheep breeds in the United States today. Despite most of its descendent breeds exceeding the Southdown in popularity, this breed is still somewhat popular in the States today. They are dual-purpose sheep that produce medium wool and high-quality meat.

They have contributed genes to the Suffolk, Hampshire, and Oxford breeds, which are all relatively popular today. They originated from southeastern England and are one of the oldest sheep breeds in the world. They were in Connecticut as far back as 1648.



The breed is medium-sized and has a grey-ish face and legs. These sheep are useful for grazing weeds in vineyards, as they are too short to reach the actual grapes. They are sometimes employed for this purpose.

9. Karakul Sheep

This is possibly the oldest domesticated sheep in the world. We know they date back to at least 1400 B.C.E. in Persia. However, they likely go back even further than that. That's when we have the first record of them.

They are "fat-tailed sheep", which means they taste a bit different than most sheep. They are used mostly for mutton and are one of the most popular fat-tailed sheep around today. They are mostly found in the arid regions of Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. However, you can find them in the United States as well.

They were first introduced in the U.S. in the early 20th century, where they were mostly used for their pelt production. They currently fit a particular niche in the fiber arts industry. Their fleece has a shallow grease content and is easily spun. It makes perfect carpet yarn. Their wool is where the art of felting came from, and much of their wool is still used for felting today. Small herds are kept throughout the United States for this reason.



10. Lincoln Sheep

This sheep was brought from England to the United States in the 18th century. It is known as the world's largest sheep breed, with mature rams weighing anywhere from 250 to 350 pounds. They have long wool that is very high-quality. Their fleece is in high-demand for spinning and weaving crafts.

They have the heaviest and coarsest fleece of all long-wooled sheep. This is one of the primary reasons for their popularity; they fit in a very specific niche. You can't get similar wool from any other sheep breed.



11. Icelandic Sheep

The Icelandic sheep comes from Iceland, as you might guess. It is a heritage breed that isn't popular. However, it is gaining in numbers as farmers move back towards heritage breeds. They are not as calm and tame as some other breeds. However, they can be raised for fiber, meat, and milk. They're very versatile and hardy.

They are double-coated, which protects them from extreme environments. Their wool is considered low-quality and is usually used for rugs. They are quite prolific in Northern Europe, but they were not introduced into North America until 1985. They are efficient herbivores, as they are used in a relatively harsh environment. They are also protected under Icelandic law, where it is illegal to import other sheep.



12. Navajo Churro Sheep

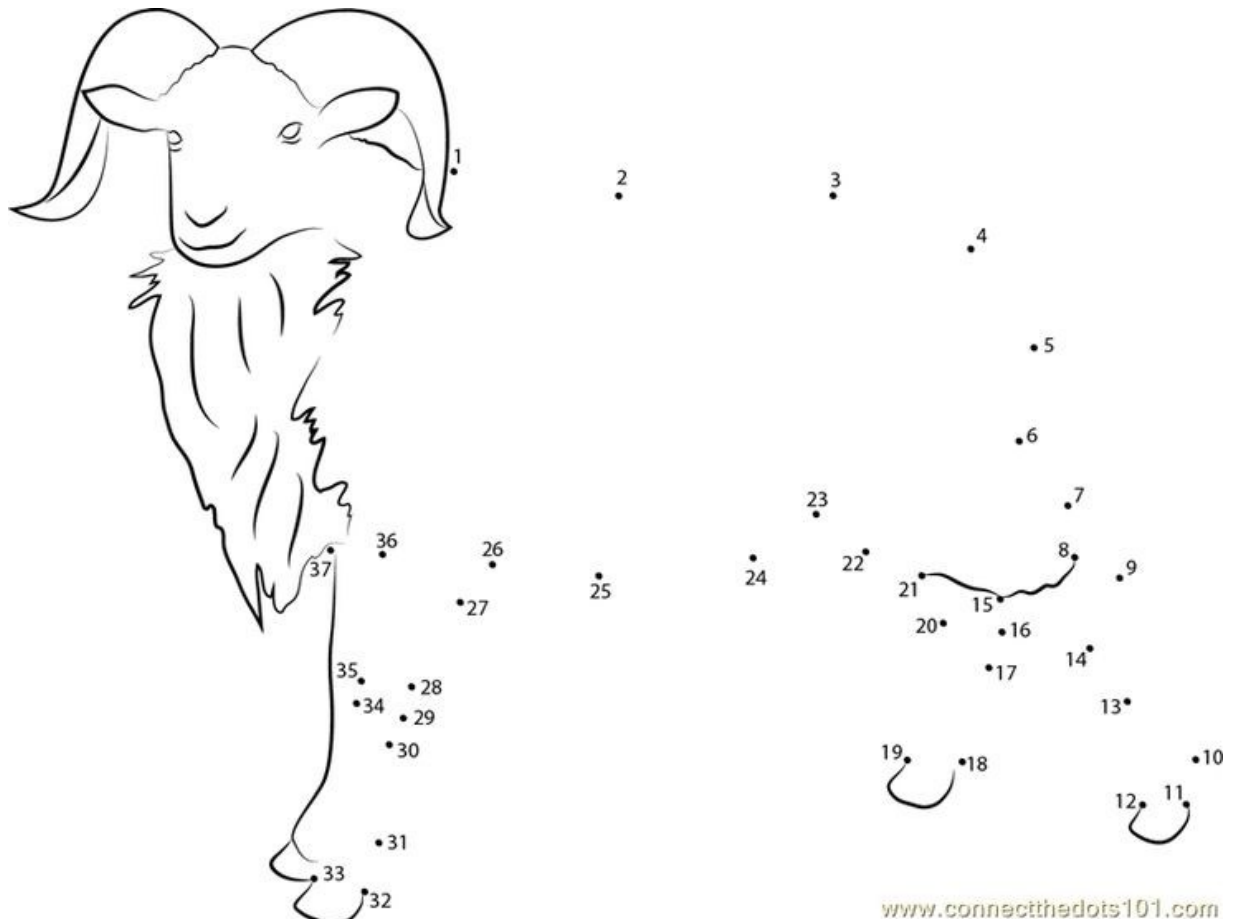
This is the oldest breed in the United States. Most of these animals are located in New Mexico today. They were imported to North America in the 16th century, where they were used to feed the Spanish armies. They are hardy and adaptable, as well as intelligent.

They have delicate meat and a double-coat. Their wool is low-quality, but it is used in some weaving crafts. They have become an essential part of Navajo culture, providing meat, milk, hide, horns, and wool. The U.S. government nearly exterminated them in the 1860s and again in the 1930s, where their numbers were lowered to about 800 animals.

Luckily, they are making a comeback today. A breeding program in 1978 gathered the survivors and started helping the breed come back from the brink. Today they are scarce but not considered endangered.



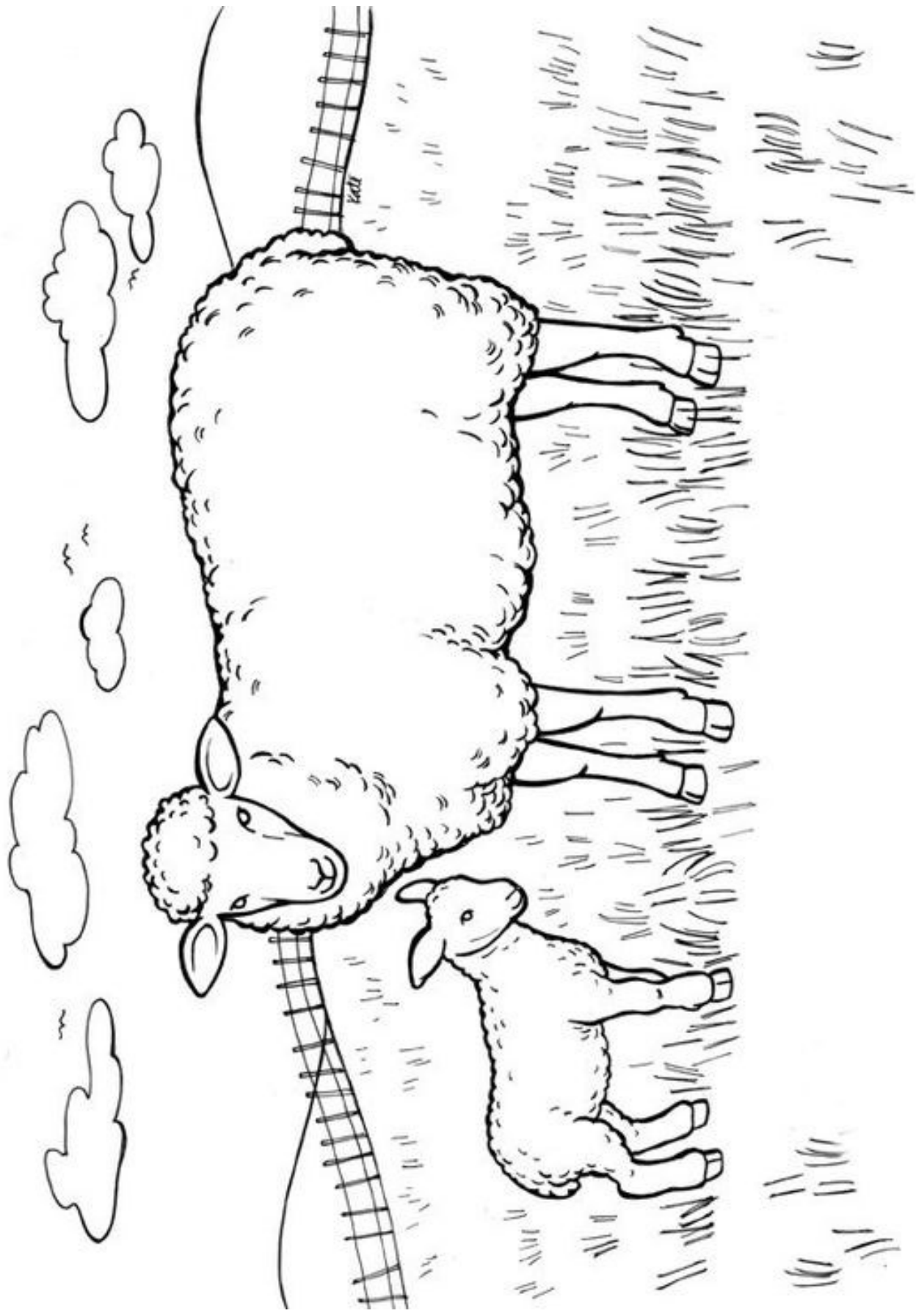
FINISH DRAWING THE SHEEP. START AT NUMBER 1 AND END AT NUMBER 37. COLOR YOUR PICTURE.



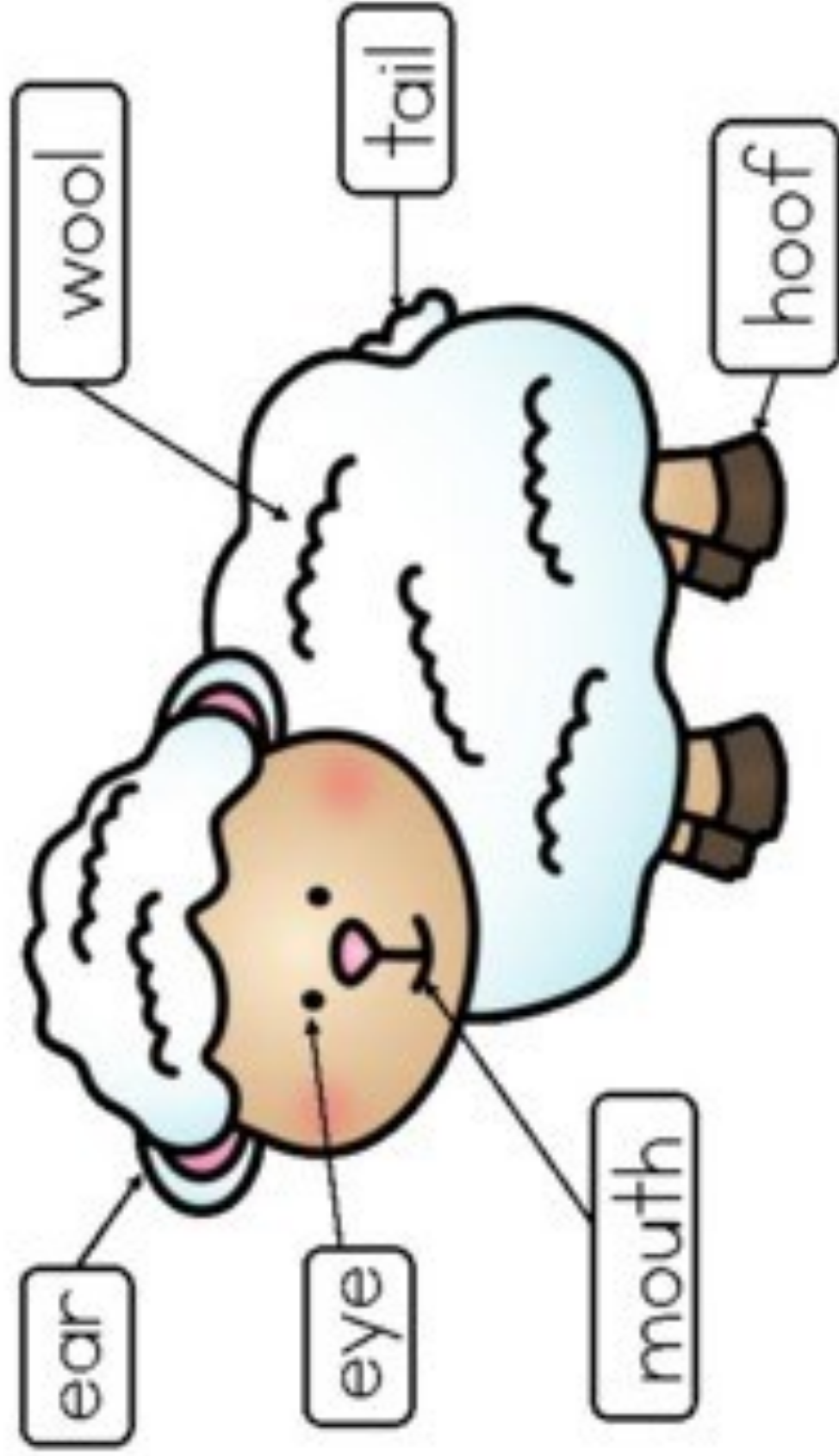
PRODUCTS MADE FROM SHEEP AND SHEEP BY-PRODUCTS:

There's more to sheep than lamb chops and wool!



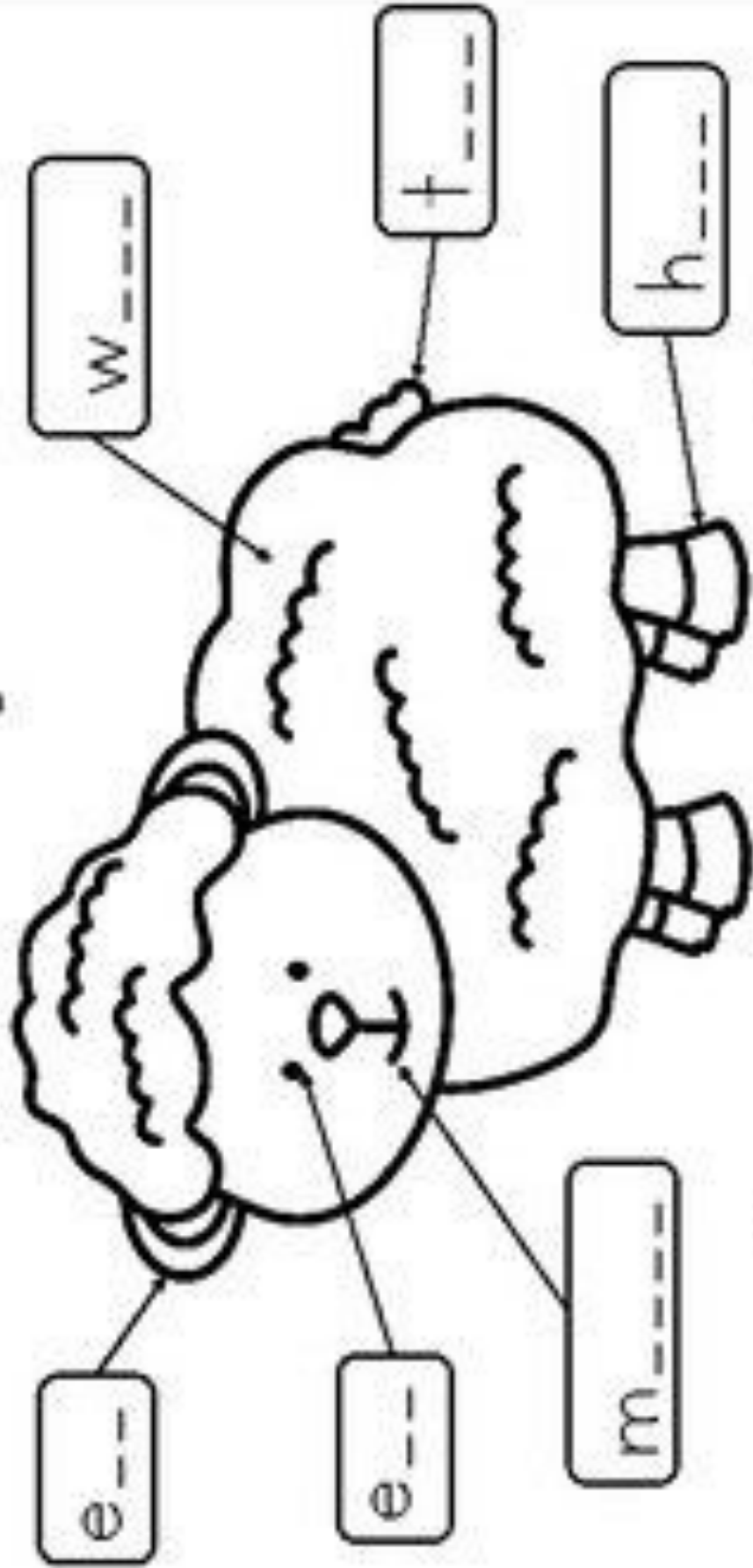


Label the sheep



Name _____

Sheep



ear eye wool
hoof mouth tail

HOW TO CHOOSE AND CARE FOR A 4-H SHEEP

<https://www.raisingssheep.net/4h-sheep>

While you are in Mini 4-H (Cloverbuds) you will not take your own sheep to the fair, but rather use a sheep belonging to an older sibling, relative, friend or other 4-Her when you participate in the Mini 4-H show. This information will help you learn so you will know what you need to do when you become a 4-H member.

Keeping Records

Once you are in third grade and enrolled in 4-H in the Sheep project, you need to begin your record keeping.

You will receive a Sheep Resource book from the Extension Office, as well as a record-keeping sheet for your sheep. Your sheep superintendent, sheep leaders, club leaders, and older 4-Hers will help you learn how to keep records on your sheep.

Either way, your project record keeping worksheets are valuable to you as a producer, it can also be used to earn recognition at your county Achievement Day and in county and state level competitions.

As your flock of sheep grows, you can use your records to choose which lambs to keep for breeding stock, and which to sell.

4H Sheep Project Equipment List

For the sake of this article we will assume you are properly prepared to raise your animals by having adequate fencing, water and shelter resources and equipment.

If you aren't sure where to start in stocking up on supplies for your 4H show lamb project, we've provided a basic equipment list to help you get started:

- Sheep fitting stand
- Sheep Halters
- Hoof Trimmers
- Curry Comb
- #2 or #3 Wood Carder
- Hand Sheers
- Electric Sheep Shears (optional, but recommended)
- Orvus Paste Soap for Livestock
- Show Blankets for sheep
- Grain Feeders and Hay feeders
- Portable Electric Fence and Fence Charger (optional, but recommended)
- Sheep minerals

The list below is a more extensive list of items needed in your showbox for showing sheep at the fair:

<https://www.uidaho.edu/-/media/UIIdaho-Responsive/Files/Extension/county/Gem/4-h/4-H-FFA-sheep-supply-list.pdf>

Sheep Show Supply List:

Grooming Supplies	Shampoo	Water Hose W/Nozzle	Wool Card or Slicker
Brush	Rags	Clippers	Plastic Garbage Bags
Carry Case (Container)	Trimming Stand	Hoof Clippers	

Animal Supplies:

Signs Feed & Containers	Water Containers	Rope Halters	Show Halters
Lead Sheep Blanket/Lamb Tube			

Other Supplies:

Shovel	Rake	Extension Cords	Wheel Barrow
Marker for Stall Sign	Staple Gun w/extra staples		String or Tie Wire
Box Fan	Tack Box	First Aid Kit for Humans and Animals	

Tips for Success:

1. Be the producer. Do not expect to take on this project in name only; expecting your parents to do the work for you. Raising sheep is a year-round responsibility ... it's much more than simply showing up at the fair and leading your sheep into the show ring. Approaching your 4-H sheep project with anything less than a 100% commitment isn't fair to either you or your parents. It is not fair to your parents because they did not sign on for the work. It is not fair to

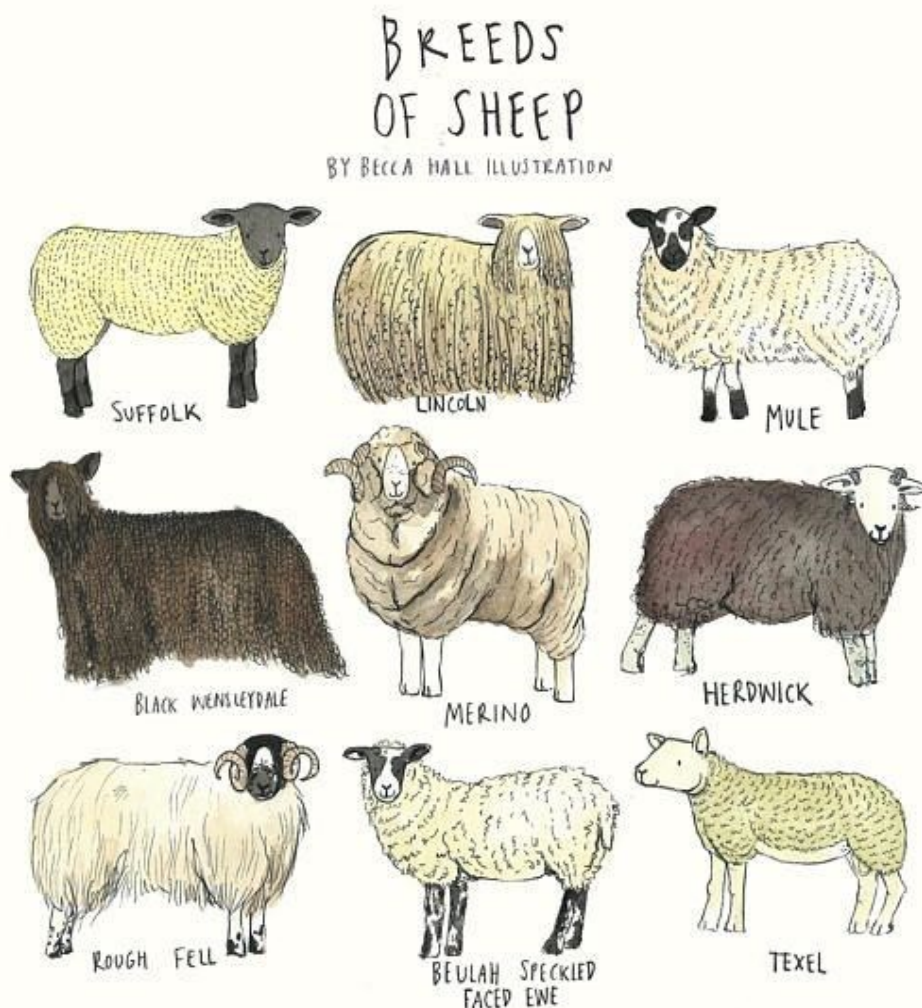
you because you are losing out on learning responsibility, the pride that comes from working hard and developing a strong work ethic, on learning about farming and livestock health and production and on the maturity that comes with seeing something through to the end. Leading your lamb into the show ring will mean a lot more if you've worked with your lamb every day since it was born.

2. Participate. Attend all or nearly all of your project meetings. Your project leader is volunteering his/her time to help you. Be respectful and appreciative of their efforts.

3. Keep records. We've talked about this already, but keeping records (especially financial and breeding records) is excellent practice for any future job and will be the proof of how well you did or did not do.

4. Take initiative. Don't just stop with project meetings and club meetings. Attend local and regional farm shows and other fairs to see what your peers are doing with their sheep. Visit sheep farms in your area and learn from those who have been through the challenges you're facing.

5. Consider this your job. It is always obvious which young people have spent time feeding, caring for and working with their sheep (or other animals) prior to entering the show ring at the fair. If you are not willing to work with your animals enough to gain their trust, you do not need to be there. Sheep are very much creatures of habit. They only trust what is familiar to them. So if you want them to trust you enough to lead them around the show ring, to the sale or even at home on the farm, they need to be familiar with who you are. Take pride in your work each day and the fair will be a fun experience for you and for your lamb.



BUYING A 4-H LAMB

There are four things to consider prior to visiting a farm to purchase your show lamb. These are:

1. **Breeder Reputation** - Is the person you're buying from an honest, trustworthy person who will sell you or your child a healthy lamb at a fair price? Will they stand behind the sale and be available to answer questions, guide and support you as you embark on your first market lamb project?
 2. **Lamb Size** - The frame and size of your lamb when you purchase it will be used to predict how large your lamb will be at the time of the fair. Most market lambs finish at 105-130 pounds and lambs will typically gain between 0.5-0.75 pounds per day. Larger framed lambs with superior genetics may grow faster and smaller framed lambs may grow slower. When you buy a lamb you should know when you want the lamb to reach its 105-130 pound weight range and be prepared to do some math based on the size and skeletal frame of the lambs you're choosing from to select a lamb that will be well suited to your 4H project schedule.
- Sex of the Lamb** - A ewe lamb will typically be more expensive than wether lambs (castrated rams), so if you do not have plans to keep and breed your show lamb, selecting a wether lamb for your first market lamb project may be a better choice.
- Age of the Lamb** - Even the fastest growing lambs will need to be at least two months of age at fair time, so you should keep this in mind when selecting your 4H project lamb.

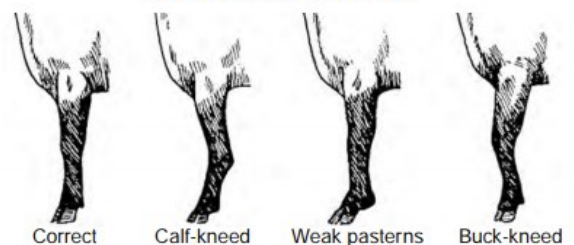
Some of the major features you should base your buying decision on when choosing a show lamb for your 4H or FFA project are:

- **Structural Soundness**
- **Muscling**
- **Growth Traits**
- **Eye Appeal**

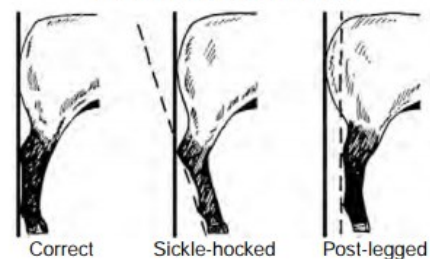
These images illustrate the ideal market lamb conformation, as well as some common structural defects which you may identify when buying your first lamb.

<https://www.raisingssheep.net/lamb-buying-guide>

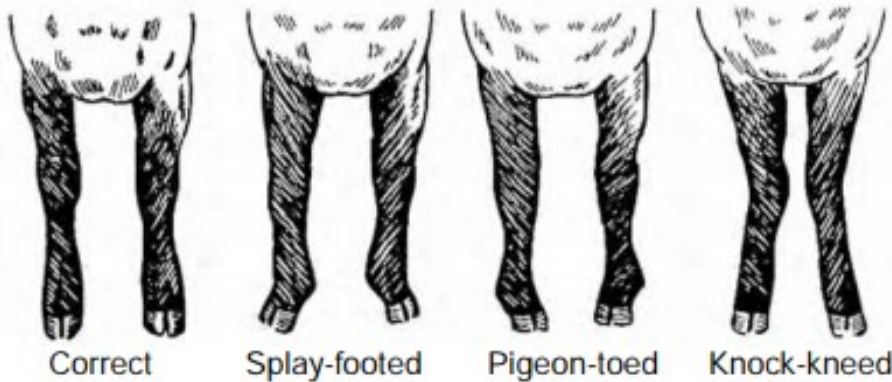
SIDE VIEW FRONT LEGS



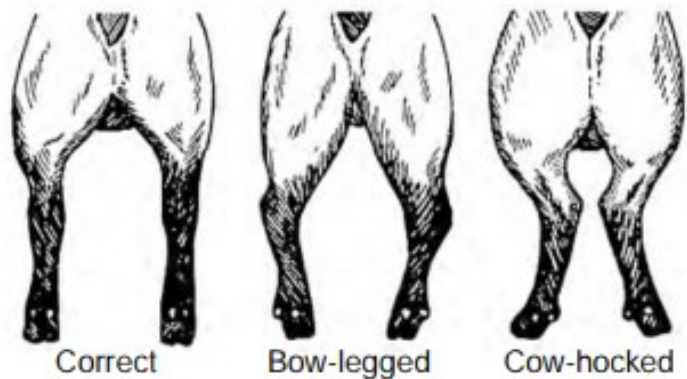
SIDE VIEW REAR LEGS



FRONT VIEW

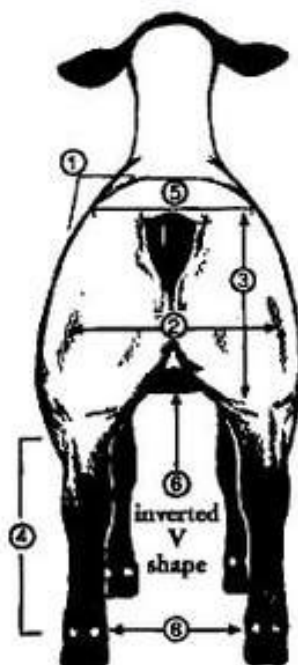


REAR VIEW



Market Lamb Muscling & Hip Structure

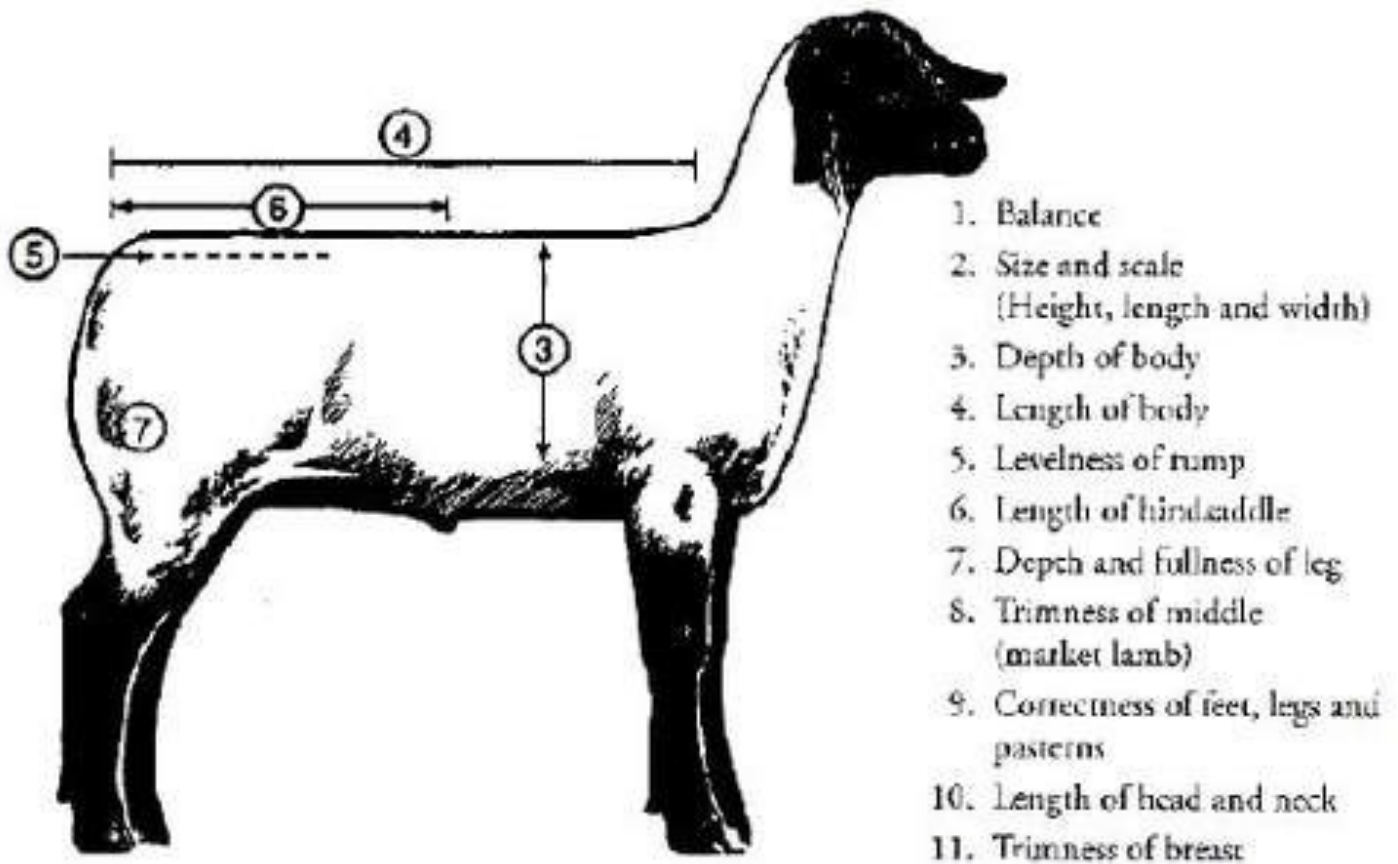
After narrowing the group based on structural soundness, evaluate the lamb's length, muscling, and hip structure. The most expensive cuts of lamb are in the rear portion of its body (behind the last rib), so when you are selecting a market lamb you should pay careful attention to how the lamb's rear end is structured.



Handle each lamb and compare the length of their body from their last rib to their hip, and from the last rib to their dock. In general, the longer the lamb is, the better, but equal weight should be paid to muscling down the lamb's topline (it should be firm and consistent in width), and over the dock (the lamb should remain thick and carry out evenly through the hips). The width of the loin (from the last rib to the hip) should also be considered, in addition to the length of the lamb's loin. Finally, the lamb should exhibit good muscling in the rear leg.

Evaluating Market Lamb Growth Traits

When evaluating a market lamb's growth traits, ask the producer you're buying from if he has data about how quickly the lamb has gained weight. Most sheep farmers keep track of 30, 60, and 90 or 120 day weights on all of their lambs which will tell you how much weight the lamb has been gaining per day throughout its life. This can give you a good sense for when it will reach its finished weight, and whether that lamb's growth schedule will align with when you will exhibit your market or club lamb.



Additional things to consider are the bone structure of the lamb. Long, tall, heavy-boned lambs with a large skeletal system tend to grow faster, but may fill out and reach an ideal market lamb finished weight slower than a small, trim well balanced lamb.

How to Safely Wash Your Sheep

People wash their show flock in different ways, and the equipment that you have available to you will likely define which method works best for you. No matter how you wash your lambs for show, make sure they have limited mobility, and never leave your lamb unattended. Keep at least one hand on your sheep at all times to steady it and keep it in position.

Never attempt to wash a sheep that is not restrained. A sheep halter tied to a sturdy eye bolt with a short lead can do the trick, but using a sheep fitting stand is best for two reasons. First, it raises the sheep to a comfortable height for you to work (this will save your back). Second, these stands are sturdy and are designed to be comfortable for you and the sheep.



Remember - the first time you wash your lamb for show, it will be a surprising experience for the sheep, so you should take steps to ensure the lamb doesn't get scared by the water, and that it does not have the opportunity to hurt itself, or you.

The basic equipment you'll need to wash your sheep for show will include a hose, a fitting stand (if you have one), a spray attachment, livestock soap, a curry comb, a blow dryer (optional, but recommended if you wash a lot of sheep), and sheep blankets to keep your lambs clean until the show day once they're washed.

- **Livestock Soap** – Orvus Livestock Soap is good for use on sheep. One tub will last you a long time, and it's a great product that hasn't changed in many years, because it is the go-to livestock soap for most sheep farmers.
- **Fitting Stand** – The Weaver Leather sheep fitting stands are popular models because they're stable, collapsible, and easy to transport to and from the fairgrounds. They're also readily available to order online.
- **Spray Attachment** – A regular garden hose spray nozzle will work just fine for washing sheep, but a sprayer can be a great choice as it's designed specifically for washing livestock. This can be used with Orvus soap as well, just warm the Orvus up prior to uses you to dry the sheep thoroughly before putting the blanket on, which helps keep blankets cleaner and last longer.
- **Sheep Blankets** – Once you've washed your show lambs, outfit them with a properly sized blanket to keep them clean as you wait for their big day in the show ring! You can buy spandex sheep tights (also called lamb tubes) for market lambs that are slick-sheared, fleece under-blankets, or standard blankets.
- **Curry Comb** – While you will use your hands to wash your sheep, I recommend having a good-quality curry comb. Curry combs are reversible, with longer teeth for working longer wool, and shorter teeth for working short wool fibers. This tool can help remove dirt and manure tags as you wash your lambs for show.

Market or club lambs, and breeds like Southdowns which will be slick-sheared, should receive a rough shearing on the farm about 3 weeks before the date of your show, then washing them 3 days before the show, which leaves time to do the final slick-shearing a day or so after they're washed (so they're completely clean and dry).

If you're showing a **meat breed** like Hampshires, consider doing a rough cut-out job with some electric shears on the farm 3-4 weeks before the date of the show, which will leave less wool to wash. It is recommend to wash meat breeds like this 4-5 days before the show, which leaves you plenty of time to do fine blocking with both electric and hand shears, prior to entering the show ring.

Wool breeds like Romneys, Merinos, and others should not be washed with shampoo, because it will remove the natural luster of the wool, and can damage their crimp. If you are raising a wool breed which has an especially dirty fleece, you can give them a water-only rinse at least 30 days prior to the fair, at low pressure. This allows time for their wool to bounce-back from any damage it may receive during their wash.

HALTER BREAKING YOUR SHEEP

<https://www.raisingssheep.net/how-to-halter-break-a-lamb>

One of the first activities you and your child will be engaged with when you purchase your first 4-H or show lamb is learning **how to halter break a lamb**. Training your lamb to walk on the halter is an important part of preparing for the show ring, and if you only have a few sheep, halter breaking your lambs will make life easier when it comes time to handle your flock, administer worming medicine, trim hooves, etc.



Halter breaking lambs is best done early on when your sheep are easier to manage and it's easier to train a young lamb to walk on a halter than it is to "teach an old sheep new tricks."

The first step to halter breaking a lamb is to safely get your lamb used to being handled. If you have a sheep blocking stand or rack which you can use to get your lamb accustomed to being restrained this is a good way to start.

It's best to position the lamb with one side of its body against a solid wall and you can sit on an overturned bucket next to your lamb to keep him calm and prevent your lamb from injuring himself.

Make sure **never** to leave your lamb unsupervised - especially in the early stages of training your lamb on a halter. Start off slow and only restrain your lamb for a few minutes the first day, and reward him or her with some grain afterward.

Once your lamb has been restrained for a few days you can introduce the halter. It's best to do this in a familiar way - using the same area and the same routine.

Position the halter on the bridge of your lamb's nose, under the chin and behind its ears. **Make sure that the halter lead comes up under the chin and into your hands on the left side of the lamb.** If you stand to the lamb's left and pull on the halter lead the force should pull the lamb's head up from under its chin, not down. It's usually best to tie the lamb against a solid wall (so its legs won't get injured between panel slats if it fights the restraint) and to gradually increase the duration for which it is tied up with the halter.

I recommend tying your lamb up at first so its first experience walking on a halter comes after it is accustomed to the feeling of wearing its halter.

Choose a cool, shady area and make sure your lambs have access to plenty of water after each training session.

How to Halter Break a Lamb: Final Stage

Once your lamb has been restrained a few times and stands fairly still while tied up on the halter it's time to begin walking your lamb.

Position yourself just off of the lamb's left shoulder at first so that he or she is urged to move forward (their natural instinct will be to move away from you).

It's important not to try to pull or drag your lamb ... encourage your sheep to walk forward willingly, and if it balks you can "goose" him gently by pinching just under the sides of its tail, holding the lead loosely in your left hand so the sheep is free to move forward away from you.

If your lamb is still being difficult, remember that sheep have difficulty resisting when moved forward at an angle, so encouraging your lamb to move forward and to the left for a few steps at 45 degrees and then alternate, moving him or her forward to the right at 45 degrees. This technique prevents your lamb from digging in his or her heels and pulling backward. Eventually your lamb will learn to walk willingly on its halter.

The most important thing to remember when learning how to halter break a lamb is to be patient and to encourage your kids to do the same. Remember that this will be a rewarding experience, but that it is a process and your lamb won't be trained to walk on a halter overnight.

Take your time and set a goal that with a short session each morning or afternoon your lambs will all be walking on a halter by the end of a week. This way your kids can be proud of their hard work and accomplishment when they attend their first show with a docile, halter-broken lamb.



Feeding Your Market Lambs: A Youth Guide

By Tom Platt, Extension Educator

Feeding your market lambs to reach proper weight and finish at show time is a challenge you and your family will enjoy. Following the simple guidelines in this fact sheet will help you successfully complete your market lamb project.

Selection is important. Select young, healthy lambs that have plenty of growth potential. Be sure that they are in the right weight range. A growthy, properly fed winter-born lamb should gain around 0.7 pounds per day from weaning until a spring show. For example, a lamb selected on February 25 has 74 days to grow until a May 10th show. Gaining at the rate of 0.7 pounds per day, it will gain 52 pounds during the feeding period. If it is to weigh 110 pounds at show time, it must weigh about 58 pounds when selected ($110 - 52 = 58$). A 40 pound lamb probably won't make it. Take a scale to the farm when you select lambs if there isn't one already available.

The same approach can be used when selecting lambs for the fall fair, although in this case, it is important not to select a lamb that is too big or too old and consequently might be too fat at show time. Spring born lambs should be selected for fall shows. A simple calculation of final weight and expected daily gain will help you select a lamb of the right starting weight. For example, a lamb selected in the middle of May for a show held the first week in September will have about 105 days to reach market weight. Spring born lambs shown in the fall can be fed to gain at a slightly slower rate over the summer than winter born lambs that must be pushed to finish for a spring show, because the feeding period is longer. Your spring born lamb can be fed to gain about 0.6 pounds per day during the summer. At this rate, it will gain a total of 63 pounds ($0.6 \times 105 = 63$) from selection until show time. A 50 to 60 pound lamb selected in May should be just right in September.

Be sure your lambs were castrated as babies. Worm them if they have not been wormed within a month, and vaccinate them for type C and D enterotoxemia (overeating disease) if they haven't already been vaccinated. Check for keds and treat them if necessary.

Now you are ready to feed your lambs. Keep their pen, feeder, and water trough clean. Lambs should have fresh water and trace mineralized salt with selenium available at all times. Use sheep salt because it has less copper in it than cow salt, and lambs are more sensitive to copper toxicity. Weigh your lambs again and record their weight and date on a chart tacked to the wall. Weigh lambs every other week before their morning feeding and calculate daily gain since the last weighing. The wall chart record of these weighings will tell you at a glance if your lambs are performing as expected and that they are being fed and cared for properly. If daily gain has fallen off, ask your parents or club advisor for some help in determining why.

Lambs should be fed twice daily at the same time every day. You should ask a family member or friend to do your feeding chores if you are not available at their regular feeding time.

Lambs fed for spring shows need to grow a little faster and consequently need a little higher proportion of grain in their ration than lambs being fed for fall shows. Ration guidelines listed

below are for two classes of lambs: young lambs (2 to 3 months old) Feeding Market Lambs.wpd, revised 1/06 requiring rapid growth for spring shows and older lambs (4 to 7 months old) requiring moderate growth for fall shows.

	Lamb Weight, lb.	Daily Gain, lb.	Daily Feed, lb.	Daily Grain, lb.	Daily Hay, lb.	Total Protein %
Young Lambs	44	.66	2.8	2.4	0.4	15.0
	66	.72	3.4	2.9	0.5	13.5
	88+	.88	3.7	3.1	0.6	13.0
Older Lambs	66	.65	3.3	2.0	1.3	13.0
	88+	.60	3.9	2.9	1.0	10.5

The hay in these rations should be good quality alfalfa or alfalfa-grass mix. Grain for sheep can be fed whole; it does not need to be ground or rolled. A protein supplement such as soy-bean meal or a commercial protein supplement containing at least 35% natural protein should be mixed with the grain at the rate of 1 pound of protein supplement for every 3 to 4 pounds of grain, depending on the protein content of the supplement. Alternatively, a commercial grain mix can be used that already has a crude protein content of 14% to 16%. Using a commercial mix is certainly more convenient, and there is less chance of mixing error. Make sure the commercial feed is labeled for feeding sheep or general livestock.

Remember, these are only guidelines. Watch your lambs closely and make feeding adjustments as necessary. Your lambs should be full fed, meaning they will just clean up everything offered them between feedings and aren't standing around hungry during the day or night.

The rations listed above for young lambs contain 85% grain mix and 15% hay. For the older lambs, the rations contain 60% to 75% grain mix and 25% to 40% hay. Lambs unaccustomed to this much grain cannot be started on this much grain all at once without becoming sick and suffering damage to their stomachs. Rather, they should be started out at about 1/3 of the grain recommended for their weight and the difference fed in hay. Then, over a three week period, the grain can be slowly increased and the hay decreased until the desired amount of each is being fed.



SHOWING SHEEP

<https://www.raisingssheep.net/how-to-show-sheep>

Most beginners choose to halter break their lambs and show their lambs on a sheep halter. This takes time, and it's easiest if done well in advance of show-day. Even if you are more advanced and plan to show your sheep without a halter, practice leading it around so it walks with a natural gait and looks its best when on the move in the show ring.

Preparing your lamb for exhibition involves more than training it on a lead. You should practice setting your sheep's feet in the proper "Set Up" position to get your lamb used to bracing, and having their legs touched and re-positioned. The last thing you want is for your lamb to spook in the ring and to take you for a ride (or worse, escape!).

Your Appearance Matters Too

Some sheep shows have a specific dress code which they require for 4H or general sheep show exhibitors, but even if you are showing your sheep in a ring without a required dress code, you should take steps to present a clean, professional appearance. Tuck in your shirt and wear a belt. Don't wear a baseball hat, and make sure that your clothes fit well, are clean and in good repair.

Pay Attention to the Judge

It's important to maintain good eye contact with the judge of your class at a sheep show, and to be aware of his or her position in the ring, and the directions the judge is providing to showmen. It's easy (especially at your first sheep show) to become preoccupied with getting your sheep set up and positioned correctly and to forget that the judge will be moving around the ring and directing you to move your sheep and eventually place the class in the correct order.

Part of your job when showing your lamb is to maintain good awareness of what is happening in the exhibition arena around you, including the judge's position and the position of other showmen and animals in your class. Doing so will allow you to be prepared to brace your lamb so the judge gets the best impression of your animal when he gets to it in the ring, and you also will not miss directions, which can irritate a judge ... particularly in a showmanship class. By maintaining ring awareness at a sheep show you can move around your animal to always present the judge with the best, unobstructed view of your show lamb.

Finally, maintaining good eye contact with the judge (and remembering to smile every once in a while) can draw his eye to your lamb and give him a more favorable impression of you and your sheep in the show ring.

Setting Up and Bracing Your Lamb

Once you have approval from the show officials to enter the ring for your class at the sheep show, one of the first things you'll be asked to do is to line up for the judge and set up your sheep for his initial evaluation.

Every judge is a little different, so if you have the opportunity to watch a few classes before yours is called, do so. This will give you an idea of where he asks folks to set up their animals, how he asks them to walk around the ring, how he calls sheep out to place them in their class, etc. The judge may not be consistent every time, but most judges are, so if you have a general idea of when and where you'll be moving and setting up your lamb during the class, this will give you an advantage.

Setting Up Your Lamb for Show

"Setting up" your sheep during a sheep show is a term which describes getting the sheep's feet positioned squarely and naturally under it so that your show lamb appears balanced and looks its best. There's no single correct position that applies to all sheep ... some lambs look better more stretched out, and some look better with their feet set a bit wider in the rear. It's a good idea to speak with your 4H leader, or an experienced showman at the fair for tips, and to practice setting your lamb up on your trimming stand while you're preparing for the show so you (and your lamb) get used to getting its legs in position.

In general you want your sheep's feet set squarely under the four corners of its body. For most lambs, the hocks on the sheep's rear legs should be out an extra 1/2" or so beyond the position where they would be totally vertical. The front legs should be square under the sheep's shoulders, and the feet should be set a natural width from one another so they appear straight when viewed from the front or rear.

Your lamb's head should be raised to a natural position, with its nose pointed forward. Your hand should be under the lamb's chin, toward its neck, so that you can hold the lamb's head high, but allow its nose to come down enough so its jaw can be level with its back.

Bracing Your Lamb in the Show Ring

When you are showing your sheep, every judge will (on at least one occasion) approach your lamb to handle it, check its conditioning, length, thickness, and structure. Bracing your lamb properly can make your sheep handle better and give you a competitive advantage over your competitors. The ideal bracing position places your knee against the lamb's brisket (chest), and provides some gentle pressure as the lamb's head is held high. This encourages the lamb to push back against you, flexing its muscles to improve how it feels to the judge.

Bracing your lamb is something you should practice beforehand with a parent or friend. If your lamb spooks and jumps or moves about when handled, the judge won't be able to accurately evaluate it, and pushing back against your knee without moving its feet from the "set up" position is a learned behavior.

The most experienced showmen can get any lamb to brace properly, but for beginners it's important to practice. Aggressively pulling or twisting the sheep's neck, or lifting your lamb off the ground in the show ring is not necessary, and it is not the way to properly brace a sheep in the show ring.

More Sheep Showing Tips

- Treat the show staff, judge, and exhibitors with respect and patience.
- Handle your sheep with patience and an even temper. Never handle your sheep in an aggressive way that could be misconstrued (remember, this is a public event and all eyes are on you!)
- Show good sportsmanship, no matter the outcome (stay in the ring to listen to the judge's final comments and congratulate other exhibitors).
- Keep your area at the fair clean and orderly. This includes all feeding supplies and water buckets, trimming and tack, and any shared storage spaces for storing grain and hay at the fairgrounds. Cleanliness provides a good public image for all sheep farmers, and it's safer to not have shears and other equipment out in the open when not in use.

Showing sheep is a fun culmination of all of your hard work on the farm - work that goes without acknowledgement or congratulations. See each sheep show as an opportunity to be an ambassador for farming and raising sheep, and enjoy the friendships and company that come when you spend time exhibiting your flock alongside other shepherds with whom you share a common interest.

WORD SEARCH: FIND THE WORDS LISTED BELOW



Sheep

K	C	H	P	J	H	Y	M	R	L	O	I	N	Y	F
T	G	W	F	T	G	J	U	M	R	I	C	E	N	A
R	J	A	S	J	I	L	A	M	B	O	N	W	C	O
A	L	K	F	F	Z	M	E	R	I	N	O	E	M	N
M	E	A	I	L	Y	B	P	O	G	N	J	L	A	D
L	G	L	C	A	D	O	R	P	E	R	Q	A	Q	V
A	M	Q	I	N	I	S	H	A	N	K	S	M	R	Z
M	F	A	D	K	E	T	E	W	E	I	I	B	A	I
B	W	E	N	B	G	B	W	R	B	N	S	O	E	O
B	Q	F	R	K	U	J	R	A	M	T	P	G	Y	R
H	J	N	I	D	S	J	E	Y	N	E	C	K	D	U
R	M	V	W	I	V	H	O	G	G	E	T	C	U	M
Y	R	L	H	D	Z	T	P	U	Q	R	I	Z	N	P
R	Y	B	X	N	X	Z	K	W	E	T	H	E	R	E
F	A	A	I	Y	U	W	O	O	L	R	B	U	J	Z

LOIN
EWELAMB
RAM
EWE


HOGGET
FLANK
NECK
RUMP

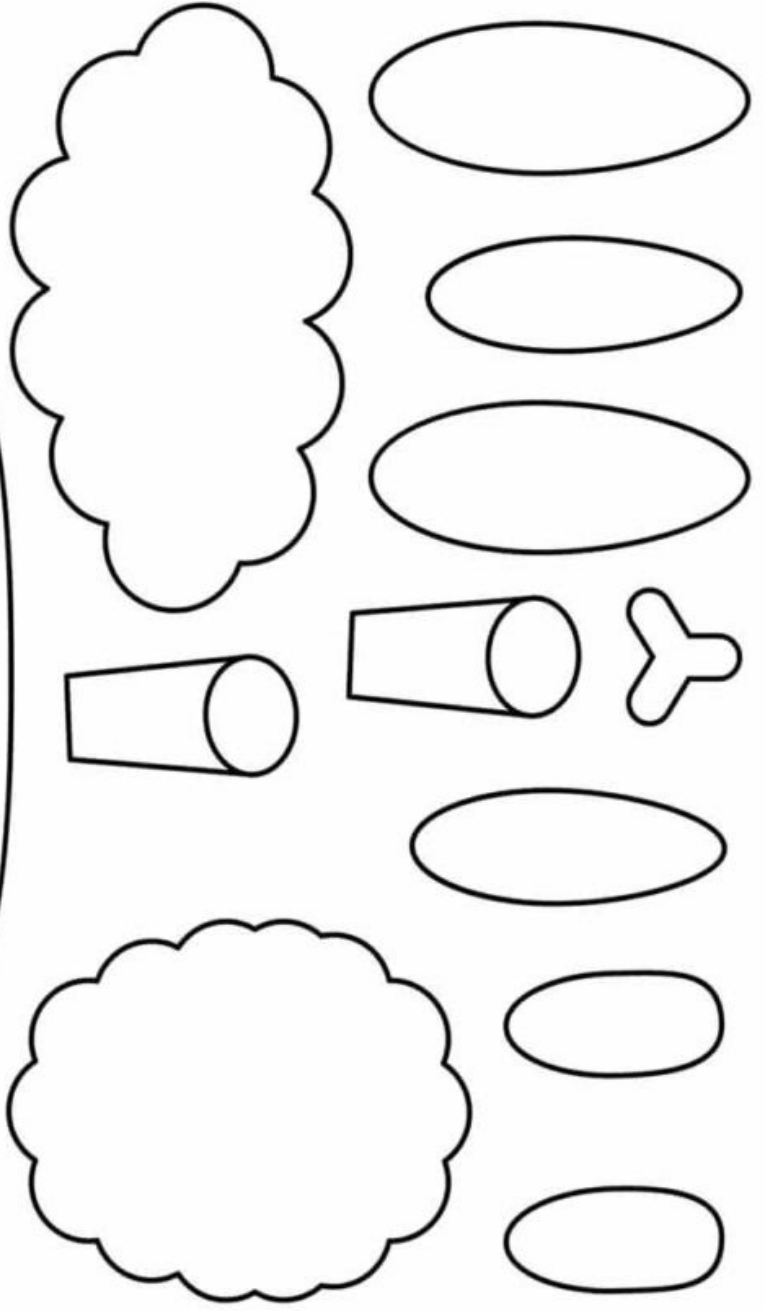
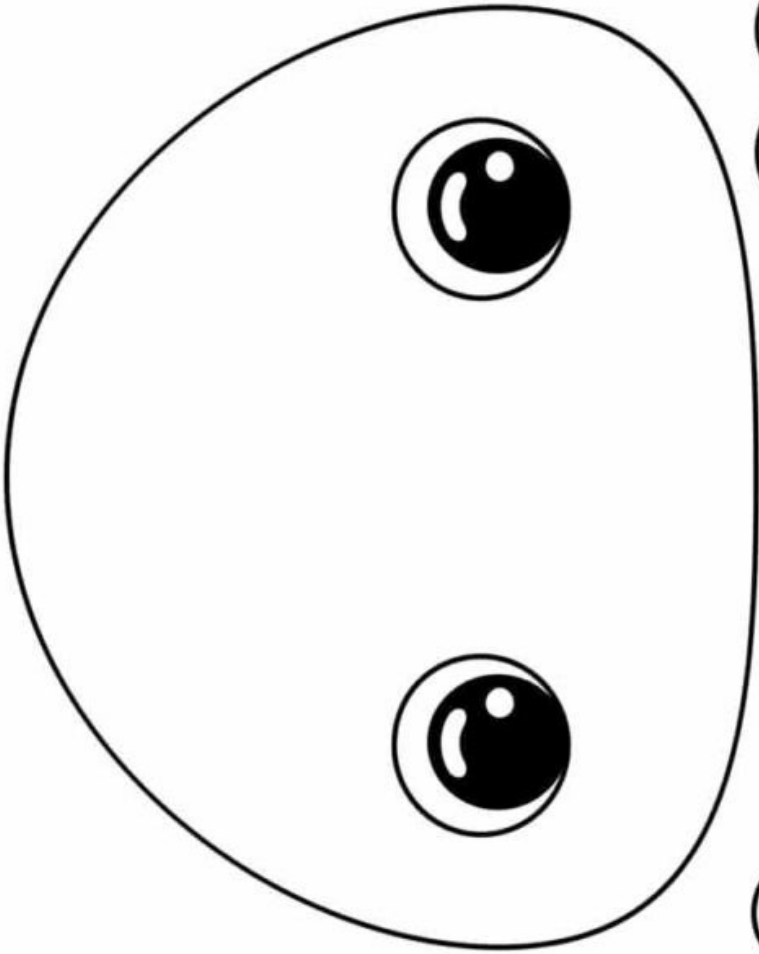
RAMLAMB
WETHER
LAMB
LEG

WOOL
SHANKS
DORPER
MERINO



Instructions for next page: Color the pieces that will create a sheep.
Cut out the pieces for the sheep.
Put the pieces together with glue or tape. Use
the picture of the sheep on the left side of the page.

	<p>Sheep</p>	<p>1. Color</p> <p>2. Cut out</p> <p>3. Glue</p>
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sheep

A sheep's body is covered in fleece.



A sheep's foot is called a hoof.

Sheep spend most of their time out in the pasture, grazing on grass. In spring, sheep have their fleece cut or sheared. The fleece is used to make wool for clothing and other products.



A male is called a ram



A female is called a ewe



A baby is called a lamb

A group of sheep is called a flock.

Sheep give us meat and milk. We also get wool from sheep.



lamb chop



sheep's milk
cheese

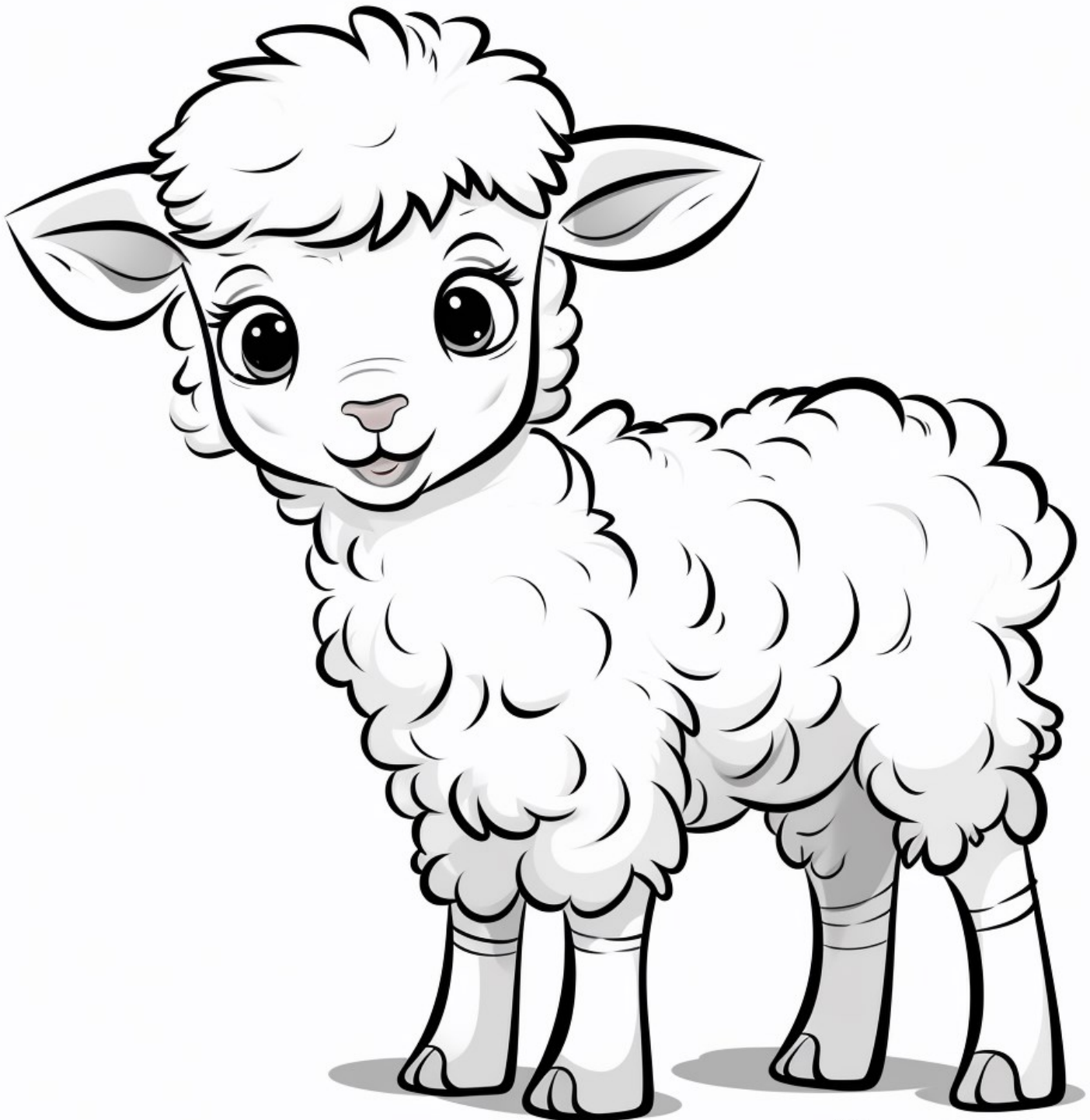


wool



woolen
hat

Color the cute little lamb.



Cut out the lamb mask—pretend you are a lamb!

BAA BAA BLACK SHEEP- DRAMATIC PLAY

Activity Cutout



Cut out the sheep's face on the previous page.

Cut out the openings for the eyes very carefully.

Cut open the small holes on each side. Have a helper help you attach

Something to help hold the mask on your face

If you wish, you can glue cottonballs onto the face for the sheep's fleece.

Have fun pretending to be a little lamb!

Cottonball Sheep—see instructions on back of this page.





Using the sheep on the front of this page, create your own Cottonball Sheep. You may turn the sheep in for a 4-H project at the fair.

If you use the picture for a project, don't forget to cut out and attach one of the project labels on page 43 of this booklet.

Color your sheep. Use glue to attach cottonballs to the sheep to resemble wool.

WHAT TO EXHIBIT

1. Your main requirement for the Mini 4-H Sheep project is to participate in the Mini 4-H Sheep show during the Decatur County Fair. Check with the sheep superintendent and project leaders to find out when the show will be held.

You do not bring your own sheep to show while in Mini 4-H. Instead, you will use a sheep belonging to a sibling, relative, or other 4-H member. Experienced sheep members will assist you in learning how to lead the sheep and show the sheep correctly. You will answer simple questions asked by the judge.

Following are some additional ideas for sheep projects that you can turn in for judging for the Sheep project. These projects would be turned in to the appropriate 4-H building during judging times.

2. Color one of the pictures from this booklet, or do one of the activities and turn the page in for your project.
3. Have a family member take photos of you learning to care for sheep or working with sheep. Display these photos on a poster, and label the photos as to what you are doing. Turn your poster in for judging.
4. Any other activity or idea for a project that you have. If you have questions about a project, please call the Extension office (812-663-8388).

Cut out the Exhibit name tags at the end of this booklet to label any posters or projects that you turn in for judging.



Help Milly and Finn find their lost sheep.

Draw a line from Milly and Finn to find their lost sheep.



Exhibit Name Tags

Below are name tags for you to cut out and attach to the project that you will be exhibiting at the fair. Attached the tag to the bottom right-hand corner of your poster or project. If you have another type project such as a model farm, attach the tag to the tack with the tag hanging down where it can be seen at the bottom right corner of the project.

DECATUR

Name

Club

Project

Grade

MINI 4-H/CLOVERBUDS

DECATUR

Name

Club

Project

Grade

MINI 4-H/CLOVERBUDS

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iStock

Credit: Bullet_Chained

MINI 4-H



Cloverbuds

I pledge...

my **head** to clearer thinking,
my **heart** to greater loyalty,
my **hands** to larger service, and
my **health** to better living for
my **club**, my **community**,
my **country**, and my **world**.

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Email: stacyn@purdue.edu

Created 1/04/2024

MINI 4-H