

SHEEP

Bannock County 4-H

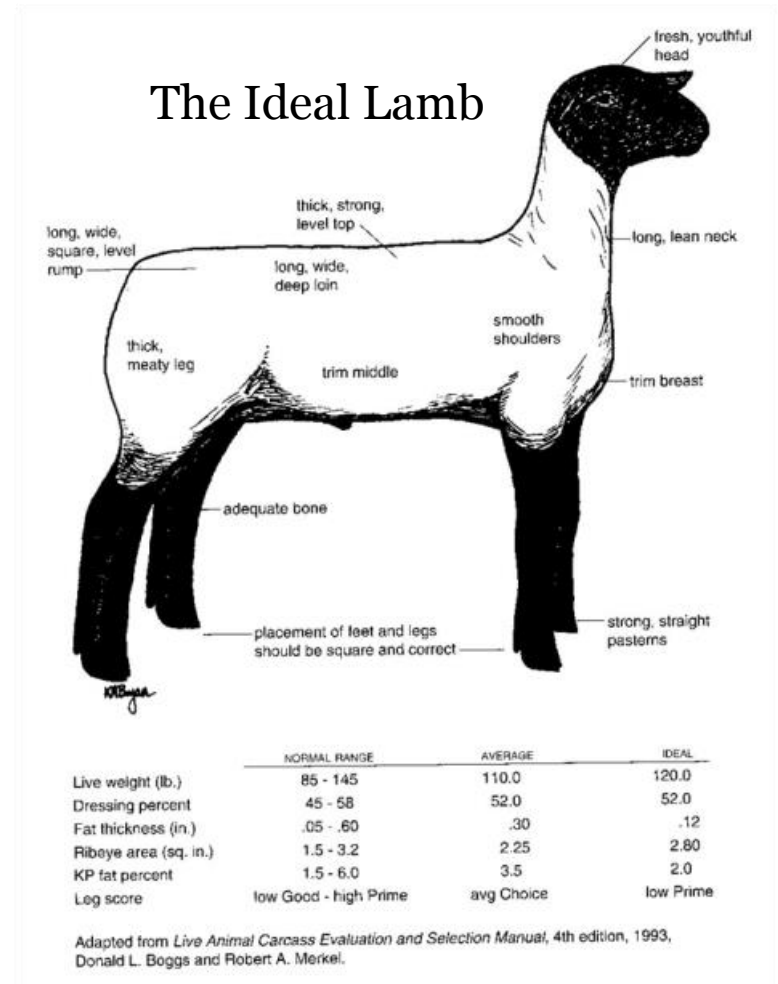
By Ashley Tolman



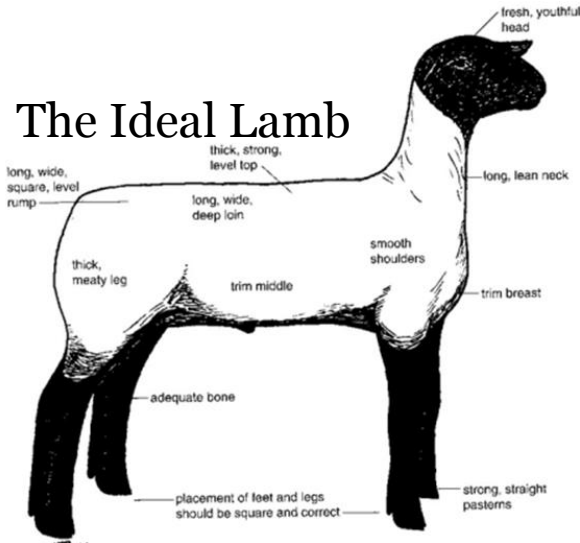
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Animal Selection

- What are the Priorities?
 - Structure
 - Muscle
 - Condition (fat or lean)
 - Balance (eye appeal)
 - Volume
 - Quality
 - Travel



Animal Selection(cont.)



Compare #1 vs. #2

Which market lamb is more muscular and is more like the picture above?

When selecting a project try to find one that closest resembles the ideal lamb.



Sheep Daily Care

- Some items to consider include
 - Feeding
 - Feeding hay
 - Watering
 - Halter breaking/ leading
 - Exercise
 - Washing with soap
 - Applying fly spray
 - Clipping/Shearing
 - Worming/ vaccinating
 - Cleaning out bedding
 - Trimming hooves
 - Practice showing

Feeding

- Provide sheep with clean, fresh water every day.
- Growing diets typically have from 15%-17% crude protein and finishing diets have from 12%-14% crude protein.
- Start your lamb on $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of grain morning and night. If they clean it up increase ration by $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. for the next feeding.
- Increase the amount until the lamb eats 3-4 pounds per day.
- Feed a hand full of good quality, leafy hay. Never feed more than one flake per day.
- Most lambs can gain between $\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 pound per day.
 - With that in mind, when purchasing your lamb make sure you get one that will have the chance to make weight at the fair.
- Bottom line is if you want your lamb to grow you must feed it.

Halter Breaking/exercise



Remember that this process takes time and patience.

- **The key thing to remember when halter breaking is to be extremely careful and ALWAYS watch your animal when it is tied up.** If sheep are not watched closely, especially when they are first introduced to the halter, they could hurt or even kill themselves.

Here are some helpful hints to assist the initial halter breaking process:

- Start halter breaking early.
- Nylon sheep rope halters work best, are generally the easiest for people to use, and minimizes stress of the animal.
- Adjust the halter so the nose piece is halfway between the eyes and mouth.
- Tie the lamb up for 10 to 15 minutes while touching it all over to get the animal used to you.
- For the first few times you lead your lamb, try walking in the pen and leave more lead than what you would normally use. Simply let the animal get used to the feel of the halter. The lamb could possibly jump, fall, or twist once the halter is put on the first few times. Just remain patient, and comfort your lamb with voice rewards. Using hay or feed to reward your animal may also be helpful.
- Once your lamb gets used to the halter, you can firm up on your grip . Lead your lamb with their head held high, so they walk naturally but still look appealing.

Exercise your lamb every day. This is extremely important if they are housed in a small pen.

Grooming



- It is important to keep your lamb clean. Not only to prevent sickness and disease but to keep your project comfortable.
- Wash with soap and water once a week during the hot summer months.
- To keep your lamb cool rinse with cool water in the morning.

Trimming your lamb's hooves



- Securely hold the leg of the sheep
- Inspect the hoof and remove any mud, manure, or small stones between the walls of the hoof
- A rotten smell is usually indicative of foot rot
- Begin trimming around the perimeter of the hoof
- Avoid cutting off large chunks of hoof
- Stop at the first sign of pinkness
- A pink color means you are getting close to the foot blood supply
- The foot should be trimmed from the heel to the toe to remove excess growth of the "horny" portion of the hoof

Clipping/ Shearing



- It is best to have your lambs sheared off prior to spring weigh in
 - A sheared lamb will grow better in the warm summer months
- If you are using a Lister or Premier type clipper, it works well to wash your lamb prior to clipping.
- If you are using a Shearmaster type shearer, it is best to have your lamb dry prior to clipping.
- Steps in clipping/shearing your lamb
 - Clip in long smooth strokes.
 - Clip/shear parallel to the length of the body makes the lambs appear balanced and longer.
 - Do NOT clip below the knees and hocks-you want your lamb to appear to have an ample amount of bone.
 - Clip the entire head as well to complete a uniform look from head to tail.
- On breeds of lambs that have wool on the lower legs (Dorsets and Hampshires are examples), you will want to comb the hair/wool up. Make sure you blend the area at the hock and knee so that there is no obvious transition from where you stopped clipping. You can use the small clippers to clip any areas that need it at this time.

Healthy Vs. Sick



- Check daily (or twice a day) for injuries, sickness, unusual things or changes in behavior.
 - Lamb should have head held up, be alert, eating and drinking.
 - Provide shade from the sun and protection from wind, snow and rain.
 - De-worm and treat lambs for external parasites . Also use fly spray.
 - Replace dirty bedding periodically and provide straw for warmth and comfort.
- Signs of a sick lamb
 - Lethargic
 - High fever
 - Labored breathing
 - Nasal discharge
 - Diarrhea
 - Dehydration
 - Lameness
 - If your lamb is showing any of these signs call your vet immediately.
 - Normal Vital signs
 - Temperature: 102.3 °F
 - Pulse Rate: 70-80 per minute
 - Breathing: 12-20 per minute

Getting ready for the fair



- Practice makes perfect—introduce your animal to all the procedures you will be following when you arrive at the show.
- It is important to set the lamb's feet and legs properly as well as teaching the lamb how to brace. Occasionally, have another person handle your animal the way a judge would, so the animal becomes acquainted with this procedure.
- Allowing your animal to stand with their head held up high for about 20 minutes a day will teach them to keep their head high and be less stressful when they have to keep their head up in the show ring.
- While practicing take your halter off. You won't be using it for the show so you will need to train your lamb to walk and set up with out one.
- To set your lamb up follow the picture above.
 - Stand up straight
 - Use the inside of your leg and knee for your lamb to brace against.
 - Hold lambs head up high and straight.
 - Set feet and legs square and natural. (try to not stretch legs)

Getting ready for show day

- Slick shear your lamb.
- Trim feet
- For the show your lamb should be clean.
 - Wash with soap and water all over its body
 - Clean out ears and trim the long hairs inside of the ears and around the edges.
 - Clean between back legs. Lanolin and dirt collect there very easily.
- Use shoe shine or black polish on feet.
- Make sure lamb is free of saw dust and straw before entering show ring.



Sources



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