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**Alberta Lamb Producers**

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# N'ewesletter

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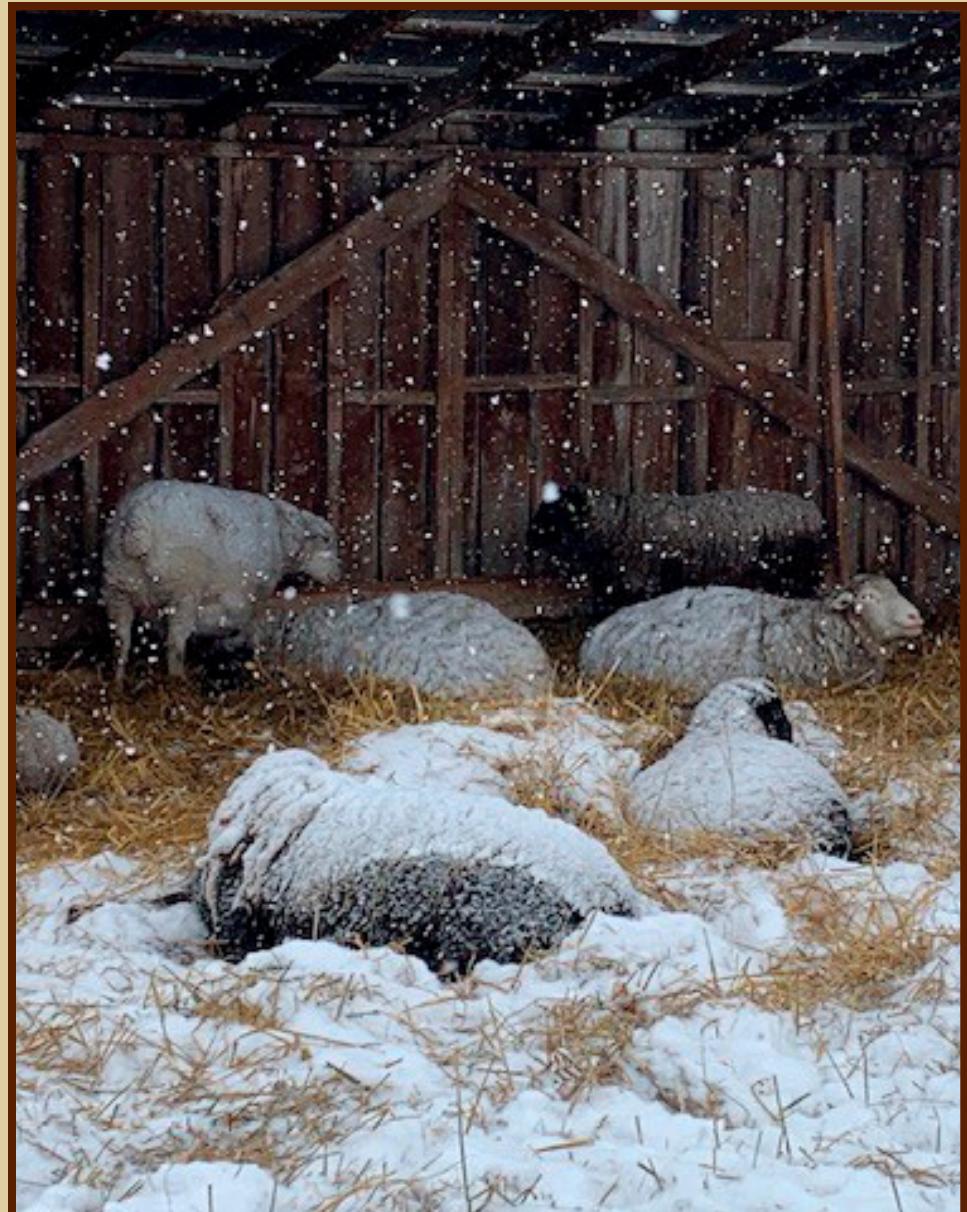
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PM#40050072 Photo Credit: Barbara Muller and Werner Krahl

**January 2026**



## Goat and sheep oiler/scratcher

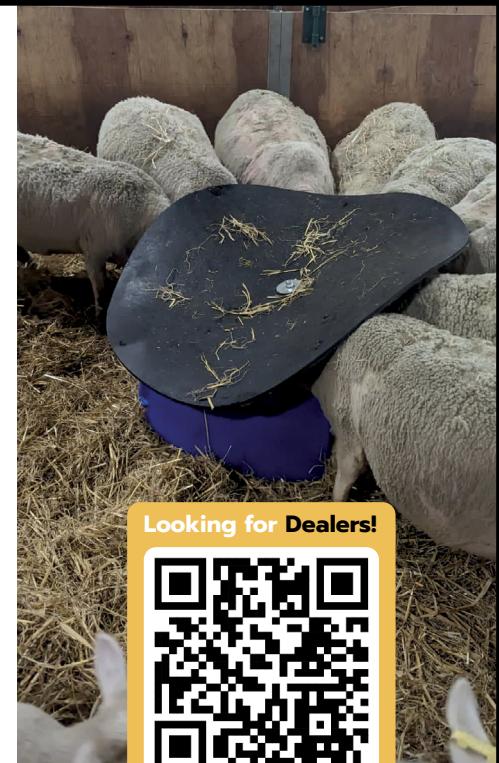
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## **Message From Your Chair**

As I sit here staring at a blank page, I'm trying to narrow down the things I'd like to share with lamb producers. Following last month's conference in Lethbridge, there is much to say—yet realistically only 500 words to say it. So what follows is a potpourri of reflections from an event that left me both inspired and optimistic.

**THANK YOU** – Our 2025 conference was one of the most well-attended and successful gatherings we've had in years. Staff and the organizing committee did an exceptional job preparing a full two-day program.

If there's a producer out there who doesn't enjoy visiting other producers' operations, I have yet to meet them. A sincere thank-you to Hejo Farms and Wilson Colony for opening your operations to us. Your innovation, efficiency, and hospitality made the tours a highlight of the weekend.

**WOW** – I was genuinely impressed by the effort people made to attend—and by the distances traveled. Producers came from every corner of the province, and the farther they came, the more organized they seemed to be. I suspect there was more movement of breeding stock that weekend than any other weekend of the year.

**NEVER BEFORE** – The lamb industry in Canada may not yet be on the same scale as cattle or the supply-managed sectors, but this year felt like a shift. Saskatchewan and Manitoba both traveled across provinces to join us in person. Ontario and the Canadian Sheep Federation attended online.

I'm convinced that the 2024 resolution from Alberta sheep producers to explore national unity has sparked renewed curiosity about what's happening across provincial lines. This renewed national interest in collaboration is already opening more dialogue about how we can strengthen the industry together.

**IMPRESSIVE** – Three producers (Karl Denwood, Catie MacLennan-Dobson and Glen Parker) stood up to share their operations, the traits they look for in animals, and the practices that make their farms unique. Keep in mind: public speaking is the number one fear for most people—and a producer panel is even tougher because it's completely unscripted. Ask five of your friends whether they'd like to stand in front of 150 peers and answer spontaneous questions. The list of volunteers would be very short. Their courage and openness deserve real recognition.

**SERIOUSLY** – What a fantastic trade show. When vendors attend a conference, it's not just about sitting at a booth; it's about supporting the industry. We could not host an event of this caliber without the commitment of our sponsors. Thank you again for your continued support.

**REMARKABLE** – I hope you met new people, exchanged ideas, and maybe even traded a few phone numbers. As I've said many times, your greatest resource is each other, and I saw many of you taking full advantage of that.



Looking ahead, I hope you're entering 2026 with optimism. I'm more encouraged about our industry than I have been in years. Prices are strong, we have excellent producers, a dedicated board, fantastic ALP staff, better communication with several provinces, and renewed national interest in unity.

Your ALP board is excited to build on the momentum of the last few years and continue pushing forward in 2026. Please feel free to reach out to your board members with your thoughts and ideas.

According to the Chinese zodiac, 2027 is the Year of the Sheep. With the progress we've made recently, we'll continue working hard to bring the "Year of the Sheep" a little early—and keep it around a lot longer.

Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas and a happy New Year.



## Message From Your Director: Edward Machuk

Hello all,

It was a dry fall in my area this year, with very few rain showers. Most farmers, myself included, finished harvesting early, which has given me plenty of time to continue converting my fencing from cattle to sheep. With all the quarters that were previously used for cows now needing to be changed over, I usually plan to upgrade about one mile of fence per year. Through these changes, I have increased field containment and predator protection to about 85%.



Over the past six years, I have also converted my outside pens from cattle to sheep pens. I've built a new 5,000-square-foot heated barn, along with an additional 1,500-square-foot heated area dedicated to lambing. Inside that space, I built 35 lambing pens. With this facility, we have divided our 300-ewe lambing program into two groups: 150 ewes lambing over 17 days, followed by the next 150 doing the same. There are always two or three stragglers, but this system has worked very well for us.

Despite the challenges of lambing in early February, our 300-ewe operation has consistently maintained a lambing rate of 1.87 lambs per ewe, with no complications.

I appreciate the opportunity to serve as a Director on the ALP Board. We are constantly learning from one another, and there are many great people here at ALP to learn from. I am always happy to hear from producers; your input is essential to the strength and direction of our industry.

Together, we need to continue identifying how ALP can best support our lambing sector and help ensure it remains strong, resilient, and successful for the future.



## 2025 ALP Conference

Planning for the 2025 Conference began early, driven by board members eager to make the event bigger and better than in previous years. Spanning two days, the event attracted producers, government representatives, veterinarians, and industry partners from across the western provinces. The decision to combine the conference with a farm tour proved to be an excellent combination.

### Conference Presentations

Dr. Laverne Seib enlightened the crowd with an interactive presentation on prevalent diseases and indicative symptoms. Producers were engaged with discovering symptoms and diagnosing. A post mortem is a valuable tool, and the [Feedlot Lamb Pathology Atlas](#) is a great resource.

Dr. John Gillear followed with a presentation on parasites and strategies to implement. Resistance to dewormers is a growing concern so using Famacha scoring can be helpful when deciding if treatment is necessary. Interestingly, alternative forages can help to reduce worm burdens.

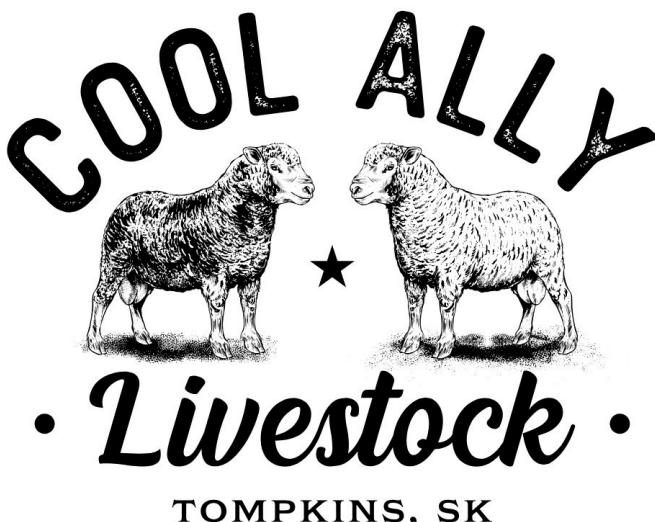
Forages high in condensed tannins such as birdsfoot trefoil and sainfoin can help to reduce loads. The [UCVM sheep parasite website](#) is a great resource.

Jared Epp joined us from his ranch in Saskatchewan. An experienced grazier, Jared is a guru of all things stock dog and a wealth of information on grazing sheep. His experience has taught him that there is a difference between a production paradigm and a conservation paradigm. Grazing dry ewes results in a production animal that is muscled up and fit, ready to flush before breeding.

### Farm Tour

Hejo Farms and Wilson Colony were both generous enough to allow us to tour their operations. Hejo Farms is a state of the art barn newly in sheep production. With 176,000sq ft of barn space, ewes are lambed and lambs fed to finish as they are moved through the facility. Doing chores takes on a new meaning when a robot is programmed to do it for you!

The Wilson Colony prides themselves on their Rambouillet genetics. Saddle pads made from their own wool were being finished up in the shop, getting leather wear pads sewn on. Wilson Colony was featured in the [Fall 2025 newsletter](#) and are a great example of producers invested in the sheep and wool industry.



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### Producer Panel

A huge thank you to Glenn Parker, Catie MacLennan-Dobson and Karl Denwood for taking their time to be on our producer panel. Shaun Haney of RealAgriculture did a fantastic job of moderating the afternoon, and ideas and production practices were shared. Experiences shared included sheep grazing corn (yes it's possible!), to wool use, to opportunities in the ethnic market and we could all agree at the end of the day that each producer in the room has a different idea of what that 'perfect' ewe looks like!

The two day event offered a fantastic opportunity to network with fellow producers and pick up valuable insights along the way. We look forward to seeing you at next year's event!

Directors Darlene Hawco and Alison Neale doing conference preparations.



Representatives from Saskatchewan and Manitoba joined the ALP Board.



The producer panel was a great opportunity to learn from three producers with very different management styles.



*Left Image: The robotic feeding system was a highlight at Hejo Farms.*



*Right Image: Biosecurity was important before entering the barn at Hejo Farms.*



*Left Image: Putting the finishing touches on a saddle pad made from their own wool at Wilson Colony.*



*Right Image: The Wilson Colony is proud of their genetics and the products they make from their home grown wool.*

## AGM Results

The ALP Board of Directors welcomed 33 eligible producers in person, five eligible producers online and 35 other guests to the 2025 annual general meeting. This year's meeting was held in Lethbridge on November 15.

ALP Chair Jordan Allen commenced the meeting with board and staff introductions. This year, we were fortunate to welcome industry representatives and producers from both Saskatchewan and Manitoba. ALP's mission, vision, and organizational values were reviewed.

There were five Director-at-large positions open for the upcoming year, including three, 2-year terms and two 1-year interim terms. Five eligible producers submitted valid nomination forms before the August 15, 2025, deadline to be entered as candidates in the 2025 election. As we received five valid nomination forms for the five director-at-large positions, no election was needed. Congratulations to Martin Winchell, Darlene Hawco, Richard van Driesten, Cody Legault and Edward Machuk. These producers will join Alison Neale and Adam French in representing producers on the ALP Board. We are also pleased

to announce that Esther Hoogland has joined the board as a Director in Training.

Finance Chair Adam French introduced Mr. Shannon Troke from King & Company Chartered Accountants, who reviewed the 2024/25 financial statements via Zoom. Adam then presented the 2025/26 budget. To note is a pattern of reduced tag sales resulting in a lower income projection. The budget includes reduced spending to manage the budget.

There were no proposed producer resolutions received for the 2025-2026 year. Martin Winchell reported on the progress of the 2024-2025 passed resolutions. The first was a request to negotiate a reduced shipping rate with CCWG, that was successfully accomplished. The second was a resolution to explore rejoining the Canadian Sheep Federation. At this stage, the board believes additional investigation and discussion are needed before any recommendation regarding membership can be made. The board continues to maintain open dialogue with other provinces and is assessing information as it is received. The goal is to ensure that any future recommendation and decision is based on a complete understanding of the potential implications for Alberta producers and the broader national industry. The third resolution passed last year was to Lobby for a national non-refundable check-off. To achieve a national levy all provinces will need to come together and collectively lobby for this change and would require approval by sheep producers across Canada. The board discussed the options and feel that until national unity is achieved, they have no opportunity to lobby for a national non-refundable check-off. Until Alberta has a non-refundable provincial check-off, we are not equipped to request a national non-refundable checkoff. The Chair and Executive Director had a formal meeting with the Provincial Agriculture Minister in January 2025 and suggested a national non-refundable check off would enable Canada to apply a levy on imports that would fund our domestic industry and help moderate import volumes.

Jordan Allen presented the 2024-2025 annual report. Highlights of the year included launching the Targeted Grazing course, updated learning module and financial planning tool, continued research on the Lidoband to include an insecticide, website rebuild (soon to launch), and promotion of lamb through Alberta on the Plate. The board looks forward to continuing to strengthen relationships with fellow provincial organizations in the upcoming year.

Jordan Allen was recognized for completing two terms on the board, as well as time spent acting as Executive Director while the organization was between staff in 2024. She has been instrumental in establishing relationships across provinces and her board leadership will be missed.

The AGM is an important opportunity to communicate with producers but is just one day. ALP staff and board of directors encourage you to reach out throughout the year. Through your feedback and input, we can ensure you get the most from your



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Stay up to date and informed by viewing the annual report.  
[AGM and Annual Report - Alberta Lamb Producers.](#)

# Strategic Plan Survey - Have Your Say!

The Board of Directors is looking for input as to the direction ALP should take over the next five years. The current strategic plan runs until 2027, and we are now beginning preparations for the next plan that will guide ALP. To help shape this new strategic direction, the ALP Board is seeking input from eligible producers across the province. Your feedback is essential in identifying priorities, challenges, and opportunities for Alberta's lamb industry. Your responses will directly impact where ALP focuses its energy, resources, and advocacy efforts.

A strategic plan provides a clear path for an organization to achieve its long-term goals by outlining the direction, priorities, and actions needed to move from the current state to the desired state. We encourage you to take a few minutes to share your perspective - your voice matters in shaping the future of our industry.

All responses are anonymous. [Strategic Plan Survey for Alberta Lamb Producers](#)

## New ALP Executive Announced

Elections for the ALP executive and committee positions were held on November 15, 2025, during the first Board meeting following the 2025 AGM. Elections results are:

- **Chair - Martin Winchell**
- **Vice Chair - Adam French**
- **Finance Chair - Darlene Hawco**
- **Finance Vice Chair - Edward Machuk**
- **Directors at Large - Alison Neale, Richard van Driesten and Cody Legault.**

Thank you to these producers for their leadership during this optimistic time in the sheep industry.



2025/2026 Board of Directors Back Row: Edward Machuk, Adam French, Martin Winchell, Richard van Driesten. Front Row: Alison Neale, Darlene Hawco, Esther Hoogland (Director in Training), Cody Legault

# Invitation to Submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) for Research Funding

## Invitation to Submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) for Research Funding in Fiscal Year 2026-27

Alberta Lamb Producers (ALP) is dedicated to advancing research through strategic funding. We prioritize collaboration with other organizations to enhance value by sharing expertise and leveraging resources and funding.

In 2021, ALP restructured its research proposal submission process to ensure proper budgeting and alignment with our strategic plan. The structured process is as follows:

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1. Call for LOIs: Annually, starting in January, ALP invites researchers to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) for projects seeking monetary or in-kind investment. A submission deadline will be provided.
2. Review of LOIs: The ALP Board of Directors will review submitted LOIs by the end of April each fiscal year. Selected projects will be invited to submit full proposals.
3. Submission of Full Proposals: Researchers invited to submit full proposals must do so by the end of June each fiscal year.
4. Final Review and Decision: The ALP Board will review full proposals and decide on funding by mid to late August.
5. Notification: All applicants will be informed of the decision by the end of September each fiscal year.

Researchers are invited to submit their LOIs using the form provided (see page 07) by March 31, 2026. Full proposals will be requested in April, with final approvals targeted for September 2026.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

- Alignment with ALP Priorities: Projects addressing multiple priorities will be noted. Priority areas are listed on the ALP website.

- Funding Leverage: Projects with additional funding partners will be ranked higher. Maximizing leveraged funds is advantageous.
- Communication of Results: Effective knowledge transfer to producers is crucial. Mandatory activities include articles in the ALP quarterly Newsletters, fact sheets, reports for producers and the ALP Board. Additional activities may include presentations at producer events and articles in agricultural press. Failure to provide communication materials may result in loss of funding or future funding opportunities.

For inquiries, please contact Jolene Airth at [info@ablamb.ca](mailto:info@ablamb.ca) or 403-948-8533.

*See Next Page for Letter of Intent Form*



For a review of

## Predation Control

<https://ablamb.ca/index.php/resources/new-producer-information/predation-control>

# Alberta Lamb Producers

## Letter of Intent

Date of Application (month/day/year):		
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### APPLICANT INFORMATION

Organization:

Project Coordinator Name and Title:

Mailing Address:

City:	Postal Code:	County:
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Phone:	Fax:
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E-mail:	Website Address:
---------	------------------

Signature:	Date:	
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### PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title:

Project Start Date:	Project End Date:
---------------------	-------------------

1. Provide a brief project description: (Use plain language terms) (Maximum 150 words):

2. List the goals and objectives of the project:

3. Project Activities:

Provide a brief summary or a list of the activities of the project:

4. Anticipated Benefits and Impact on the Industry: (Maximum 100 words):

5. Communication:

Provide a brief description of how you plan to share the details of the project and results.

6. Indicate whether this is a new project, part of a larger project or a continuation of a project previously funded and now complete.

New       part of larger project       continuation

### SOURCE(S) OF FUNDING

Applicant Cash	\$
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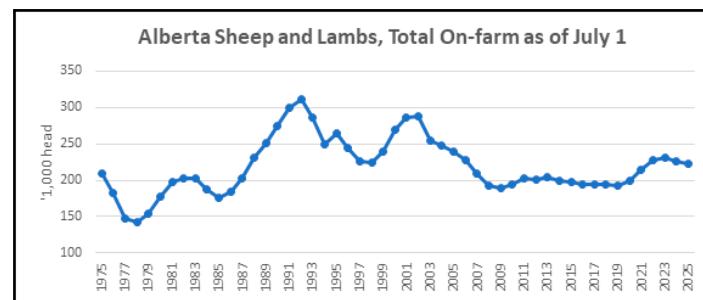


national migrants. Many newcomers traditionally eat lamb as a staple in their diet. Lamb holds a cultural and religious significance in many regions, including the Middle East, North Africa and parts of India and Europe. Alberta's population is expected to continue to grow for decades to come, but at a slower rate. This growth is expected to drive increased demand.

Lamb sales have traditionally peaked during festive season, but as more consumers begin to seek lamb in their everyday meals, it is important to ensure that there is enough lamb available in the store showcase to meet the demand.

### Limited domestic supply

Over the last 50 years, Alberta lamb and sheep on-farm inventory has varied from the peak production in 1992 of 311,000 head, to current level of 222,700 head as of July 1, 2025, which suggests that Alberta does have capacity for greater production.



Source: Statistics Canada

The Ontario government estimated that Canada produced 43 per cent of its own lamb consumption in 2023. Nationally, Canada doesn't produce a sufficient amount of lamb product to meet its domestic needs. When supplies are limited, the opportunity for imports to capture market share exists.

Statistics Canada reports that for the first eight months of 2025, Canada imported over 20,700 tonnes of lamb meat, valued at \$242.7 million. Alberta imported 4,852 live lambs valued at \$1.853 million and over 52.9 tonnes of lamb carcasses and half-carcasses valued at \$509,734 over this period from the U.S. The carcasses were imported over the last four months. No lamb carcasses were imported in 2023 or in 2024.

The U.S. have made concerted efforts to increase their lamb crop. USDA projects lamb and mutton production at 137 million pounds in 2025, up 2.2 per cent from 2024. U.S. lamb slaughter from January through October rose 2.8 per cent over the same period in 2024.

The American sheep industry is advocating for further protection of their sheep producers. On October 31, 2025, the U.S. sheep industry formally requested that the U.S. Trade Representative initiate a Section 201 investigation into imported lamb, citing economic injury to American sheep producers because imported lamb meat was being sold below domestic market prices, displacing U.S. products. Australia dominates U.S. lamb imports at 74 per cent, followed by New Zealand at

## Lamb & Sheep Market Update

**Ann Boyda, Provincial Livestock Market Analyst, Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation**

This market update looks at the current lamb and sheep market trends with a focus on what is driving current demand and supply dynamics.

### Demand for Alberta lamb is strong and growing

According to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), lamb per capita consumption is expected to remain constant in 2026 at 1.3 pounds per person in the U.S., in comparison to 59 pounds of beef per person.

Per capita lamb consumption in Canada was estimated at 2.4 pounds of retail yield per person in 2024, an increase of 16 per cent from 2023. This level of consumption is still relatively low in comparison to Mongolia which consumes 145 pounds per person annually, followed by Bahrain and Iceland which consume 54.3 and 44.5 pounds per person, respectively. Factors that influence consumption include consumers' preferences and the rate of population growth.

Alberta has the highest population growth rate in Canada. As of July 1, 2025, Alberta's population exceeded five million and represented a 2.5 per cent increase over 2024. Between July 2024 and June 2025, Alberta welcomed more than 73,000 inter-

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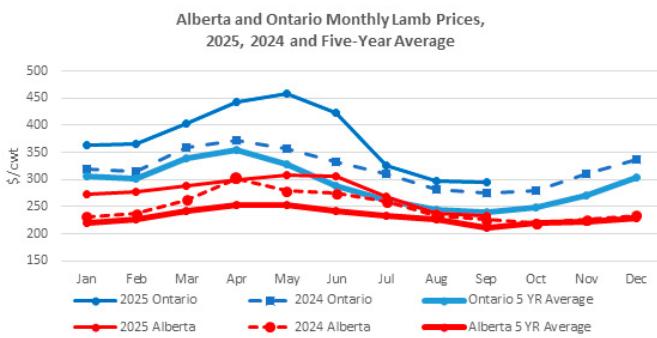
March 8, 9 & 10, 2026 at the Hyatt Regency, Calgary, AB

Call Iris Meck for details: (403) 686-8407  
[AdvancingWomenConference.ca/2026west](http://AdvancingWomenConference.ca/2026west)

25 per cent. The request alleges imported lamb products are pressuring U.S. lamb producers to lower prices.

#### Higher prices needed to simulate expansion

Lamb prices within Canada, in 2025, continue to exceed those of last year and the five-year average. Data from Statistics Canada shows an average Alberta lamb price of \$276.95 per hundred weight (cwt) for the first nine months of the year, which was over eight per cent higher than the same period 2024. Ontario, Canada's largest lamb market, reported an average of \$375.14 per cwt, nearly 16 per cent higher over same period. The Ontario market lamb prices exhibit greater variability than that of Alberta market prices.



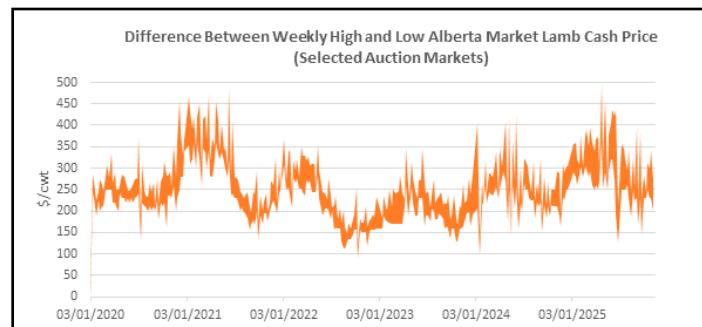
Source: Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0077-01 Farm product prices, crops and livestock

More recent estimates of Alberta weekly live price equivalent for slaughter lamb reinforces the stability of prices year-to-date (November 14, 2025). The average year-to-date price of \$287 per cwt remains over eight per cent higher than the same period last year.



Source: Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation

Prices at the auction markets show greater volatility. Market lamb estimates based on the average at select Alberta auction markets, ranged from a weekly average of \$253 per cwt to \$338 per cwt year-to-date up to November 14, 2025. The spread, or difference in the low and high range price, was an average of nearly \$85 per cwt over this period. The average low weekly price for feeder lamb was \$301 per cwt and the average high price was \$399 per cwt, year-to-date.



Source: Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation

#### Slaughter levels track the five-year average

For the first 10 months of 2025, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency reported 66,131 head of lamb and sheep slaughtered in federally inspected packing plants in the West (including Ontario), a 2.8 per cent increase from 2024 for the same period. Alberta imported 4,852 live sheep from the U.S. Sourcing live lamb from the U.S. helps to meet the seasonal market demand.

#### Outlook is promising

As 2025 draws to a close, lamb prices are looking stable. With feed costs easing and strong retail demand, the prospect of profits for producers is brighter. Demand for lamb in Alberta remains high and the potential for increasing lamb production is strong. Consumers are realizing more and more that lamb is a nutrient-rich food, an excellent source of vitamin B12, sele-



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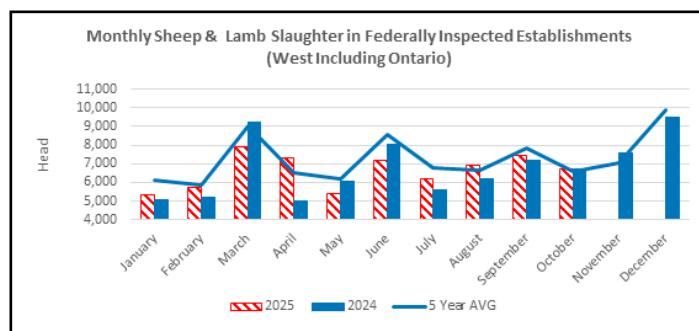
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Source: Canadian Food Inspection Agency

## Producer Spotlight Section: Insights from Our Producers

We are currently seeking producers to feature in our N'ewesletter!

Last year, ALP introduced the Producer Spotlight section in our quarterly N'ewesletter to help our producers connect and learn about the diverse sheep operations across Alberta.

We invite you to share your story. Would you like to contribute an article about your business and activities? Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Your Farming Operation:** Describe your operation, including the number of animals, your experience in the industry, the breeds you raise, and whether you use an intensive or extensive system. Highlight what you do best, regardless of the size of your flock.

- Personal Perspective:** What are you passionate about in the sheep industry? Why did you join the industry, and what keeps

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you interested? Discuss any topic that excites you—innovation, wool, breeding, feed, medication versus holistic approaches, machinery, tips and tricks, or any other area of interest.

**Future Plans:** What are your aspirations for the future of your sheep operation? Is there something you hope to see in the industry? Share your personal goals and ambitions for your farm.

These articles are an opportunity to showcase your operations and foster networking among producers. By sharing our experiences and knowledge, we can strengthen our industry.

## Alberta Scrapie Surveillance Program: Now Accepting Samples

**Purpose:**

The [National Scrapie Eradication Program](#) (NSEP) aims to eradicate scrapie from sheep flocks and goat herds, protect animal health, and support market access for Canadian small ruminant producers.



Scrapie is a federally and provincially reportable disease. This means that, by law, animals suspected of being infected with scrapie must be reported to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and the Office of the Chief Provincial Veterinarian (OCPV). Click this link to see current numbers of ["Flocks infected with scrapie in Canada"](#).

Surveillance testing of deceased animals not suspected of having scrapie is an important piece of the NSEP. The Alberta Scrapie Surveillance Program exists at the provincial level to facilitate scrapie

testing of small ruminant heads submitted through our labs directly from producers (or their veterinarians). Participation is voluntary and there is no cost for testing.

#### Scrapie Overview:

Scrapie is a rare, fatal prion disease (a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy, or TSE) that affects the central nervous system in sheep and goats. Clinical signs may or may not be present. When present, they may include unexplained weight loss, lack of coordination, and sudden death. Scrapie is not known to infect humans.

Transmission occurs through direct contact with contaminated saliva, urine, feces, blood or birthing fluids, or indirectly by ingesting anything from a contaminated environment like a barn or pasture.

The disease progresses slowly, with clinical signs typically appearing in animals aged 2-5 years (sometimes older).

There is no treatment, vaccine, or cure, however, some small ruminants are genetically resistant to scrapie.

Please visit the [CFIA webpage on "Sheep genetics and scrapie"](#) for more information on scrapie genotyping and selective breeding for scrapie resistance.

The [Scrapie Canada website](#) contains more information on genotyping and a live animal testing method for scrapie.

#### Eligibility:

The Alberta Scrapie Surveillance Program accepts fresh or frozen heads from small ruminants over one year of age that have been:

- (i) euthanized due to disease,
- (ii) found dead, or
- (iii) slaughtered on-farm.

- All Alberta sheep and goat producers that have a Premises Identification (PID) number may participate regardless of farm/flock size. A PID account can be applied for at the time of submission by using this link: [Premises Identification Program](#)
- Sheep must be individually identified with an approved indicator (e.g. a Canadian Sheep Identification Program (CSIP) tag). Note: proposed changes to traceability regulations aim to bring the requirements for goat identification inline with those for sheep in the near future.

## Other updates: Canadian Scrapie Surveillance Eradication program

### Are you a Sheep/Goat Producer?

The University of Calgary and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) are seeking to understand the economics of small ruminant production and the current awareness of scrapie among Canadian producers.

Follow the QR code or  
Link to the Survey



[https://survey.ucalgary.ca/fo/form/SV\\_0JUNThnQ/dxxVQ](https://survey.ucalgary.ca/fo/form/SV_0JUNThnQ/dxxVQ)

Responses will support the goal of scrapie eradication; enabling safer livestock movement, expanding export opportunities, enhancing access to global genetics, and strengthening the health of Canada's national flock and herd.



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- Heads must be intact and in good condition when submitted (i.e. fresh or frozen). An approved indicator (e.g. CSIP tag) must be attached.

#### **Submission Process:**

- Samples may be submitted directly by producers or through a veterinarian.
- Heads should be bagged individually and zip-tied shut.
- Place bagged head(s) in a leak proof container such as a Rubbermaid tub or a plastic pail for transport to the lab.
- A completed submission form must accompany each head.
- Stockpiling frozen heads for up to three months to minimize trips to the lab is acceptable.
- Submit the heads of eligible sheep or goats to any of our four laboratories: Fairview, Edmonton, Airdrie, or Lethbridge.
- Please call 780-427-3448 and ask to speak with a scrapie program veterinarian to arrange for sample drop off (directions and submission form will be provided).

#### **Results Reporting:**

Results are reported directly to the submitting producer or veterinarian. The CFIA is responsible for responding to positive cases. To learn about what happens in the rare event that an animal tests positive, go to the CFIA website: [Understand what to expect if scrapie](#) has been detected on your farm.

#### **Summary:**

Small ruminant heads from deceased animals over one year of age are now being accepted directly from producers and their veterinarians for scrapie surveillance sampling and testing at designated Government of Alberta laboratories. Please call ahead to arrange for drop off.

#### **Targeted Grazing Course**

The Targeted Grazing Course has completed two learning sessions, and the information is proving to be valuable to producers and also to those looking to enter the industry.

Maximizing the use of available land and exploring unconventional grazing opportunities can help both new and experienced sheep producers expand their operations. Designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of grazing management for sheep and goats, the Targeted Grazing Course focuses on vegetation control, land sustainability, animal welfare, and business planning. The final module includes detailed Canadian case studies on grazing under solar panels, in cut blocks, in forested and urban areas, and to control unwanted vegetation.

Chynna Freisen, a course participant from the Fall of 2025, is using the course to plan ahead for a sustainable and profitable operation. Having newly purchased a quarter of land, she is putting the time and research in to help drive decisions for her operation. Maximizing her land base usage and educating herself on sheep will be sure to help her operation be more successful once she takes the plunge and purchases her first flock. Freisen is enthusiastic about her future involvement in the sheep industry, stating "This course has proved to be a valuable start in my planning of utilizing my land. The ability to work through the material on my own time and have access to an instructor has really helped open my eyes to the possibilities."

The Targeted Grazing Course with Unique Grazing Scenarios is an online course developed by ALP and Lakeland College. Offered online, the course costs \$250 and takes 10-15 hours to complete. Support is provided by Marisa Schuebel, a Lakeland College instructor and urban grazier of goats, and online check in points are scheduled for discussion and idea sharing. The course is offered twice each year, September to December and January to April. Producers are encouraged to register early within these periods to ensure they do not miss any online sessions.

Schuebel emphasizes the importance of planning ahead but also being able to adapt during a grazing season. Schuebel shares her strategies during the course with online meets and feels connecting with fellow graziers is a great way to learn.

Canadian Forage and Grasslands Association will be accepting rotational grazing implementation projects starting February 1, 2026. This funding is through the On Farm Climate Action Fund where producers can get 75% cost shared funding for projects like fencing and watering systems to accommodate for managed grazing livestock including sheep and goats. There is also 85% funding available to help with building out the grazing plan using a mentor. These applications for use of mentors are still open and ongoing. British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Quebec are the only provinces currently enrolled in this government funding. Schuebel states that planning ahead for such funding is crucial. "There can be lots to consider when creating a rotational grazing plan and planning ahead and accessing existing resources will help you be successful."

For more information on the Targeted Grazing Course, please [visit our website](#).

## Grazing Corn as a Winter Forage Source for Sheep

By Ken Van Driesten, MSc, CCA (Prairie Provinces), an Albertan, shepherd, and forage specialist for More Than Just Feed



An extended autumn in southern Alberta meant not only more time for farm projects, but also a grazing season that stretched into November for my ewe flock. Our irrigated fall pasture works as a great flushing ration (tested at 28-29% CP and 231-246 RFQ this year!) so the day we sorted breeding groups was the day they finally went into the corrals. Their fed ration of alfalfa/grass hay needs over 1 lb of grain to replace some of the energy they were getting from the pasture and prevent a reverse-flushing effect during the breeding season. The good

weather made it harder than normal to get away from the farm to attend the ASBA Symposium in October and the ALP Conference in November, but we did make them a priority once again and always appreciate the learning and networking opportunities.

Winter finally arrived the last week of November, and I migrated into my office to catch up on my off-farm career and a lot of over-due record-keeping. I also took the opportunity to travel to a few farms to discuss forage strategies in November, including the ALP Conference farm tours. When one of the ALP Conference producer panel participants, Karl Denwood, mentioned his success with a couple of years of corn-grazing, he received a lot of interest from the audience, myself included. I made a quick trip out to Lone Valley Farm near Arrowwood, Alberta in the last week of November to see the system for myself. Karl and his wife Megan run a Dorper ewe flock, a lamb feedlot of home-raised and purchased lambs, do their own butchering, and direct-market meat around southern Alberta.

Some of the 450 ewes at Lone Valley Farm were in corrals with new lambs afoot. I had also come to see Karl's creep-feeding system, utilizing dry distillers' grains (DDGs) combined with a custom mineral, and the lambs looked great. The lactating ewes are bunk-fed a diet based around wrapped bales of cereal-silage, which fits their system well.

The main ewe flock, however, were out in the corn field where I was hoping to see them. It was fascinating to see the ewes emerge from a forest of corn stalks several times their height onto the previously grazed field, where only the odd naked stalk remained. Karl shared a few details of their experience so far. In 2024 the corn got about 6 feet tall and had small cobs due to a dry growing season but still yielded well relative to other crops. 2025 is a different story. Karl applied all of the manure available on the farm to the corn field before planting this spring. A warm June and wet July produced an impressive stand of corn. An herbicide application pre-planting gave the crop a clean start, and the crop only needed one in-crop herbicide application to achieve a clean field, critical for the corn to perform. I estimated the stand at up to 12 feet tall, with cobs 4-5 feet off the ground. Kernel counts gave me a yield estimation of 150-170 bushels per acre! Karl confirmed that a nearby cattle operation had estimated a 16-18 tonne per acre silage yield from this crop. For the Arrowwood area, I think you'd call this crop a bumper.

Karl drove his skid-steer back and forth through the corn field earlier in the fall to create lanes to run electric fence. He is currently moving fence approximately once per week. More frequent moves would give a more consistent diet to the sheep, but there is a trade-off in labour requirements, and he is working on finding that balance. The initial plan was electric net-fencing, but this proved short-lived due to tangling in corn stalks. He is currently running three poly wires and has had no problems keeping the ewes where they belong. The ewes have access to back-graze the field and have to walk back to the yard



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for water, and this space to move plus their contentment on the corn prevents them from testing the fences.

On the day I was there, the ewes had been given access to new corn a day earlier. They had been knocking down stalks and stripping kernels off cobs to start the new break but had also done a number on the smaller leaves and tassels. In the grazed area of the field, Karl showed me how they will progressively work their way through the corn plants, starting with the kernels, then the leaves, tassels, husks, cobs, and finally work their way down the stalks, leaving only the lignified lower portion of the stalks behind. They also have access to a greenfeed bale in a feeder at the far side of the field, and Karl uses the bale as a gauge on when the ewes are getting less content on the corn. The large mineral feeder showed a lot of traffic. This is one of the most critical components of the system. Karl feeds a custom mineral premix from Blue Rock that is built to compensate for the mineral imbalances, mainly a lack of calcium, that comes with grazing an exclusively corn diet.



As the ewes get further into gestation, Karl will let the ewes leave more residue behind on the corn field and will supplement with more high protein bales to balance the diet. The fall-lambing ewes who are currently in the corrals will be sent out to the corn field after weaning to clean up whatever is buried under snow or left behind by this group.

How much feed is grazing corn providing? Karl introduced 230 of his 145-lb Dorper ewes to the field mid-October; another 70 ewes joined them mid-November. By the beginning of Decem-

ber they've grazed 2.5 acres, plus four 1000-lb greenfeed bales for supplementary protein. That works out to 4256 ewe-grazing days per acre, or in shepherd-talk, the 300 ewes are using a half-acre of grazing-corn and 800 lbs of greenfeed per week. The remaining 9.5 acres of corn will last these 300 bred ewes at least another 135 days. Karl estimates he'll also get a further 6 weeks of clean-up grazing out of the dry fall-lambing group, bringing the total ewe-days per acre close to 4800 (including the greenfeed bales).

From a nutritionist's perspective, does this add up? The actual feed intake of these ewes is the big unknown, but assuming 4 lbs DMI and the math in the last paragraph, 300 ewes grazing for 170 days is 93 DM tonnes. Subtract 20 bales of greenfeed and get 84 DM tonnes of corn, which is 7 DM tonnes per acre, which lines up nicely with the 170 bushel corn grain yield I estimated for this field. Impressive!

What does it cost to grow corn? A basic roundup-ready corn hybrid will cost you up to \$120 per acre. Adding insect resistance traits will bring you closer to the \$150 mark, while a non-GMO, open-pollinated variety may be below \$50 per acre. Most corn-growers utilize an herbicide pass before planting and at least one post-emergence. Non-GE varieties will be cheaper to



plant but more expensive chemistry will be needed for weed control. Any weed competition is highly detrimental to corn yields; a sprayer or maybe a row-cultivator is going to be a part of every corn program. Corn appreciates a fertile field, and it sure responded to Karl's generous manure application. A big corn crop will pull a lot of nutrients out of the soil on a per acre basis, but if measured per ton of forage produced, it is typically less demanding than many other forage-crops we grow on the prairies. It can also make more biomass per inch of precipitation than any other crop we grow on the prairies, other than possibly kochia in some environments.

Winter corn-grazing is not new to the cattle industry on the prairies, but I came away from this farm visit appreciating the vision it took for Karl and a couple of other innovative shepherds to adapt this system to sheep. And appreciating how much we underestimate the ability of sheep to go out and forage, even when the grass is 12 feet tall!



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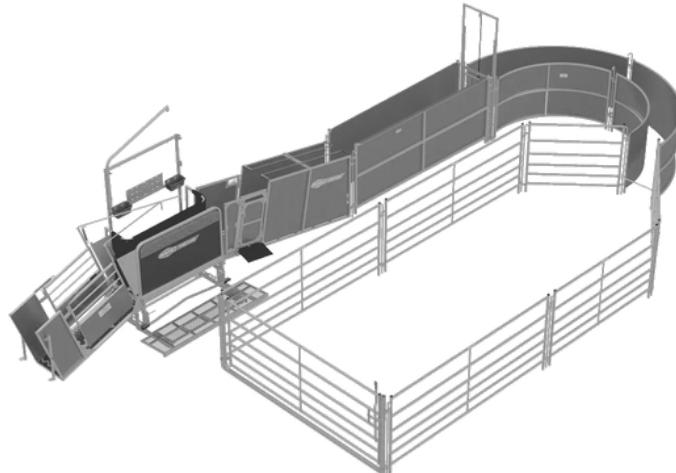
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### Producer Spotlight: Ethnic Cultures are a Marketing Opportunity on Lone Valley Farm Ltd.

Lamb has been an important part of cultural, religious, and seasonal celebrations for thousands of years. From ritual meals to national holidays, its use is often tied to tradition, symbolism, and community. While customs vary widely, many celebrations place emphasis not only on serving lamb but on ensuring the animal is slaughtered in a manner consistent with cultural or religious beliefs. This desire has created a marketing opportunity for Karl Denwood of Lone Valley Farm Ltd of Arrowwood, Alberta. Denwood runs an intensive operation of just over 450 black and white-headed Dorpers in both purebred and commercial genetics. As the flock grew Denwood worked hard at finding private avenues to market lamb. This included selling to local butchers, a diverse ethnic clientele and direct marketing at various Farmers Markets throughout the year. Diving into the ethnic market has proven to be worthwhile as 300 plus lambs are butchered on farm annually.

Allowing slaughter on farm by the public requires a license under the On-Farm Slaughter Operation (OFSO) Program in Alberta. The licensee is responsible for ensuring that those using the land and conducting the slaughter are competent and follow all legislative requirements. This licence requires that slaughter waste be disposed of according to the requirements for meat facilities in the Disposal of Dead Animals Regulation including the additional options of disposal by on-farm burial, composting, or burning. As the slaughter must occur outside, Denwood invested in sinks, meat hooks and chains to streamline the process. In Denwood's experience, the majority of the carcass is used, resulting in very little waste to deal with on farm. Typically, the stomach contents and hide are what is left to compost. Denwood has fine tuned the process on farm by setting up clear expectations ahead of time. Clients are expected to be respectful of the property and use the bins designated for compost and garbage.

As a recent grad of the Olds College butchering course, Denwood also offers various butchering assistance but finds that most of his customers are capable. At certain time of the year, there is a demand for additional rituals to be conducted, and

Denwood does open an area of his yard for extra ceremonial events by his customers. While these add-ons generate some added income, he also finds if the butchering can be done on their own, his time requirement of offering lamb to the public is not huge. Over time, he has learned that weighing the lambs ahead of time is useful as some of his clients prefer a heavier lamb, and some much lighter, in the 70 pound range. Denwood does require his customers to sign a waiver to cover liability around injuries, property and meat safety.

The most recent population statistics indicate the Muslim population in Canada has more than doubled, increased from [Lone](#)



*With an On Farm Slaughter License, Denwood has built a successful enterprise of marketing lambs directly to the ethnic community.*

2% to 4.9% in the timeframe of 2001 to 2021. Alberta statistics show the Muslim community in Alberta alone increased 4.8%. The Christian Orthodox population has also increased. This growing population creates an opportunity for lamb producers willing to diversify operations and delve into selling animals and allowing slaughter on farm. Denwood notes that there can be challenges, with the difference in cultures being one of the most obvious. Different from our Western culture, negotiations are common practice among other cultures. Being confident in a bottom line and staying polite while standing firm on requirements while on farm can help to find the customers who will

value the process and access to quality lamb. While it is often weekend work, customers know that an appointment is necessary for a smooth and efficient process. Denwood admits it took a couple of years to build a clientele, but the effort paid off.



**Lone Valley Farm Ltd finds success direct marketing their lamb year-round. Also on offer is pork, beef and chicken sourced from neighbouring farms and butchered at a provincially inspected facility.**

Allowing slaughter on farm provides a service and puts producers in a good position to charge a premium. Denwood finds that while there were some costs and growing pains up front, the premium he can charge for the lambs slaughtered on farm is a worthwhile venture.

Knowing his operating costs helps to price the lamb accordingly. Trial and error taught Denwood what price points the market tolerates, and charges a flat rate for lambs, increasing the price at every ten pound increment over 70 pounds.

The quality of lamb and transparent expectations on farm have proven to work for Denwood, with many repeat customers and little need to advertise. As with any new venture, Denwood recommends doing your homework first and starting small. Building a relationship with the ethnic community is essential to ensure a shared understanding that benefits both sides. Denwood encourages producers to ask questions of those ethnic populations to help with business perspective and mutual understanding.'

Denwood emphasizes that a business model can take time to develop, "Putting the time in to build the business is worth it in the end to have repeat customers." With the population of ethnically diverse residents in our province continuing to grow, this may be an opportunity that lamb producers are well-positioned to explore.

## Solar, Sheep Provide Valuable Farm Diversification

By Lee Hart, published with permission from the Western Producer

Eric Steeves says raising sheep on forages grown under thousands of acres of solar panels provided economic stability and perhaps even saved his family's fifth generation southern Alberta grain farm.

It certainly wasn't an overnight process, and it involved a steep learning curve, but Steeves says being involved in Canada's largest renewable energy, solar power generation project has been a game changer, not only for his family's Yetwood Farms but also for several other family farms in the Lomond-area, about an hour north of Lethbridge. The system of grazing sheep (or really any agricultural activity) under arrays of solar panels is known as agrivoltaics. For most, that is not a household term. Agri, of course, relates to agriculture, and voltaic (pronounced vol-tay-ick) refers to some process that generates electricity. Put them together and the term refers to producing an agricultural commodity under these solar fields.

Agrivoltaics is a relatively new concept to Canada but has been used with solar power generating projects in the United States and other parts of the world for many years. The Steeves were just regular grain farmers, cropping about 6,000 mostly dryland acres of grains and oilseeds when they were approached in 2017 by Calgary based Greengate Power Corp., asking if they would make land available for a solar power project.

"I thought the first phone call was a joke," says Steeves.

"Some sort of scam, as they were talking about a large solar project. There was a second call and I said, if this is legitimate, why don't you come here and have a meeting with the people to properly explain the project."

So they did. Starting in July 2017, the company met with several farm families in Lomond during a number of meetings, which resulted in contracts being signed in October 2017. That was the beginning of the Travers Solar Project, "a trail blazer among solar power projects in Canada," says Steeves.

The project itself, today the largest solar project in Canada, involved installation of 1.3 million solar panels in arrays covering about 3,400 acres of farmland. The Steeves family have leased about nine quarters, or 1,440 acres, to the project, while several nearby farm families leased another 14 quarters, or 2,240 acres, to Greengate.

It took about two years for the company to obtain all the necessary permits. Construction started in 2020, and the project was completed and producing power by late 2022. The \$700 million project is designed to generate 465 megawatts of electricity, which in general terms is enough to power more than 150,000 homes.

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So how did the Travers Solar Project benefit Yetwood Farms and the other producers who leased their land to the project?

First of all are the lease payments from the energy company.

Depending on the project, lease rates can range from \$700 to \$1,200 per acre per year. On top of that, if the landowners are contracted to look after vegetation control — keep the grass and weeds cut under the panels — that can be worth another \$200 to \$400 per acre per year.

"When we looked at the project, here we are farming in the Palliser Triangle — the brown and dark brown soil zone — and on average our net return from crop production would be around \$70 per acre," says Steeves.

"That's an average. Some years better and during several years of drought conditions, we could collect crop insurance, which was less. Whereas on those acres leased to the solar project, a person can potentially earn from \$900 to \$1,600 per acre just to have the project there. We saw getting involved with the solar project as an excellent opportunity to diversify the farm. With mostly dryland crop production and years of drought, this project has perhaps saved our farming operation, along with other family farms in the area."

But don't these solar projects take good farmland out of production? That's where agrivoltaics kick into gear.

When these large solar projects were first introduced in Alberta, for example, the asset owners wanted the bare ground under-

neath the solar arrays covered with forages. However, it was soon realized that the real risk to these solar panel arrays wasn't hail, although that can be a concern, but potential for grass fires that could wipe out the whole operation. Hence the need for vegetation control.

There could be mechanical means for removing the forages, but with spacing of 21 feet between solar arrays and only about four feet of clearance under the panels when they are in the table top position, mowing and perhaps even baling the forage for removal would require specialized equipment.

For vegetation control in other solar projects around the world, grazing livestock — namely sheep — under and around these solar panels was a common practice.

"My dad had raised pigs at one time, and we did run some cows at different times years ago, but I had zero experience with sheep," says Steeves.

In preparation for providing vegetation control for the solar project under construction, Steeves bought 50 sheep in 2020. He wanted to get some idea of what it was like to manage the animals.

"I soon realized that sheep are a lot different than cattle, and for a project this size I was going to need some expert help with management," he says.

Steeves did some research, located an expert on sheep, a professor specializing in small ruminant livestock, who was man-

aging a ranch raising sheep and goats connected with the University of Mexico in Mexico City. He was interested in working on the Yetwood Farms project. In late 2023, he moved to Alberta and has been managing the flock.

Today, Yetwood Farms, which is managing the sheep and vegetation control for the entire Travers Solar Project, is running 2,000 breeding females. The plan is to increase that to 3,500 ewes over the next year and within five years grow the flock to about 8,000 head.

The family have built lambing facilities as well as a feedlot for finishing lambs. The plan is to manage the flock so it is producing lambs on a year-round basis. Lambs are finished to an average of 130 pounds and marketed through the Westfine Meats processing plant at Innisfail in south-central Alberta.

Steeves says when the flock is fully stocked, it has potential to produce about 13,600 lambs per year, with a total carcass weight of about 850,000 lb. of meat. If the price averages about \$5 per pound, that meat has a total value of \$4.25 million.

Along with land lease rates to farmers, agrivoltaics provides further return to producers through sale of agricultural commodities such as lamb.

Interestingly, the wool from the sheep has no value as a fibre.

The sheep are shorn annually, and all the wool, which is high in nitrogen, is mixed with manure, composted and applied to Yetwood Farms' annual crop acres. The farm hires contract shearers to shear the flock. Shearers are paid about \$6 per head. A shearer with proper technique can shear up to 30 sheep per hour.

While sheep are a very common commodity for agrivoltaics, Steeves says there are other options as well.

A number of research projects across Canada, including at Olds College, are looking at the potential to produce poultry, hogs, beef cattle, hay and even annual crops under properly designed solar projects.

The sheep flock at Yetwood Farms is managed in an intensive rotational grazing system.

The ground beneath the solar panels has been seeded to a forage blend.

Right now the flock is divided, with 1,000 head of sheep grazing on about 60 acres and moved weekly. As numbers increase, multiple flocks will move through the field of solar panels.

With rotational mob grazing, the Steeves are able to run two to two and a half sheep per acre for the grazing season. With more extensive grazing management in the early days, carrying capacity was in the 0.8 to one sheep per acre range.

Steeves says the farm did invest in a low-profile Avant 860i loader, which can travel between the arrays. It can be outfitted

with a boomless sprayer to apply herbicide. For seeding, they also have a small custom built air seeder that works between the solar arrays.

"If we have bare ground, the air seeder is probably the best way to get grass established," says Steeves.

"But in areas where we want to renew or add forage species, we found the best approach is to hire a drone applicator, apply the seed by air, then turn the sheep on to that area to graze. The hoof action of the sheep works the seed into the soil."

Shade from the solar panels provides the sheep shelter from the sun and also creates a micro-climatic zone under the arrays, which suits forage production.

As they tried to establish forages during dry years in some areas, the kochia took over before the grass. Some areas of the pasture areas were at one time 85 per cent kochia and 15 per cent grass. However, through grazing management and seeding where necessary, those percentages have been reversed.

"We do have a couple areas of foxtail that we will address with herbicide, but for the most part forage production is trending in the right direction," he says.

Steeves says the agrivoltaics project has been an intense learning experience.

"When we started nine years ago, it really was the wild, wild west," he says.

"There were no guidelines or regulations. We had to learn this system from scratch, and we are still learning. There were a number of pain points as we went along, but the fact is that the benefits far outweigh any pain we experienced. It is a diversification opportunity that could benefit many farms."

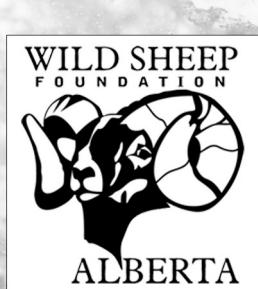
## Opportunities for Sheep and Goat Producers in Western Alberta: Free Programs That Support Domestic Health and Wildlife Conservation

### Have Your Say - Win a \$75 UFA Coupon

Producers are invited to share their views on the M. ovi program. Complete the short 5-10 minute survey (<https://form.jotform.com/253366925348265>) to enter a draw for a \$75 UFA coupon. The survey closes February 2, 2026.

Are you a sheep or goat producer [within 50 km of bighorn sheep range](#)? You may qualify for free fencing materials and installation as well as free M. ovi testing of your flock/herd through a joint initiative from Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation (AGI) and Environment and Protected Areas (EPA).

# LETHAL BACTERIA FOUND IN WILD SHEEP



**Mycoplasma Ovipneumoniae**, or Movi for short, can be found in seemingly healthy domestic sheep and goats. This bacteria is transmissible typically from nose-to-nose contact to wild Bighorn Sheep. With deadly consequences, most Bighorn Sheep are dying within a week. This can have devastating impacts on Bighorn populations for many years to follow, due to low lamb survival rates.

**Funding may be available from GoA for producers to test their sheep and goats for Movi in high-risk areas of the province**



Report any sightings of Bighorn Sheep near domestic sheep and goats, or domestic sheep and goats in crown land/forestry areas. Report any sick bighorns to WSFAB or Fish & Wildlife



[wsfab.org](http://wsfab.org)

**Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae (M. ovi)** is a bacterium commonly found in domestic sheep and goats across North America. While it usually causes mild illness in domestic animals, it can lead to fatal pneumonia in bighorn sheep. Preventing direct contact between domestic and wild sheep is the most effective way to stop disease transmission.



flock or herd health while contributing to bighorn sheep conservation.

To take part, contact your veterinarian.

## Research to Reduce Disease Risk

Since 2022, EPA has radio-collared 86 male bighorn sheep in southwestern Alberta to better understand their movements. Rams often travel 30–50 km or more, especially during the fall mating season, increasing the chance of contact with domestic animals. This work has informed [policy](#) to help reduce disease transmission risks by managing bighorn sheep near domestics. This winter, EPA will collar 40 female bighorns south of Highway 1 to further monitor herd health and movement patterns. Combined with citizen science and aerial surveys, these efforts support healthy bighorn populations across the province. This research is part of a broad collaborative effort involving EPA, the University of Alberta, the Wild Sheep Foundation Alberta (WSFAB), and National Parks. Funding has been provided by the Ministers Special License grant and WSFAB.



Participation is voluntary, confidential, and there are no consequences for positive results. M. ovi is not a reportable or notifiable disease in Alberta. Producers gain valuable insight into

### How You Can Help - Please report:

- Bighorn sheep outside their normal range to an EPA wildlife biologist | Call 310-0000 or email [bhs\\_mtngoa\\_reporting@gov.ab.ca](mailto:bhs_mtngoa_reporting@gov.ab.ca)
- Bighorn sheep within 5 km of domestic sheep or goats, or any sick bighorn | Call the Report A Poacher hotline: 1-800-642-3800

### To Learn More

Contact Dr. Anne Hubbs, Provincial Wildlife Science Specialist, EPA | [Anne.Hubbs@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Anne.Hubbs@gov.ab.ca)

### Additional resources:

- [Fact sheet for producers](#)
- [Alberta-made YouTube video](#)

**Photo Credits:** Darryn Epp and Mike Grue.

## Alberta Sheep Revitalization Project

Business and extension materials have been updated and are now available on our website. These resources include a detailed sheep-specific business guide, an advanced cost-of-production computer program, and a comprehensive producer resource guide linking to more than 100 extension documents.

- [Sheep Business Guide](#)
- [Flock SnapShot](#)
- [Sheep Infrastructure](#)

## Nutrition Strategies With CAFLA

For sheep producers, nutrition sits at the heart of every successful flock. From ewe fertility and lamb survival to growth rates, immunity, and wool quality, nearly every performance indicator ties back to how and what sheep are fed. Yet nutrition remains one of the most commonly overlooked management tools on many operations.

With this in mind, the Central Alberta Forage and Livestock Association (CAFLA) is placing a strong emphasis on practical nutrition strategies at this year's Livestock Roundup: Ruminating on Nutrition, taking place March 13–14, 2026 at the Pomeroy Inn & Suites in Olds. The two-day event brings together nutritionists, researchers, and producers for grounded, applicable discussions that matter to both beef and sheep operations.

### Getting the Fundamentals Right

Sheep have changing nutritional needs throughout the production cycle, and meeting those needs requires more than a one-size-fits-all ration. Energy and protein demands rise sharply

during late gestation to support lamb growth, and post-lambing for milk production. When these requirements aren't met, the results show up as weak lambs, lower milk production, slower growth, or potentially higher mortality. Minerals and vitamins are equally essential. Many flock health issues can be traced back to mineral imbalances or deficiencies. A good mineral program must align with forage and water quality to be effective.

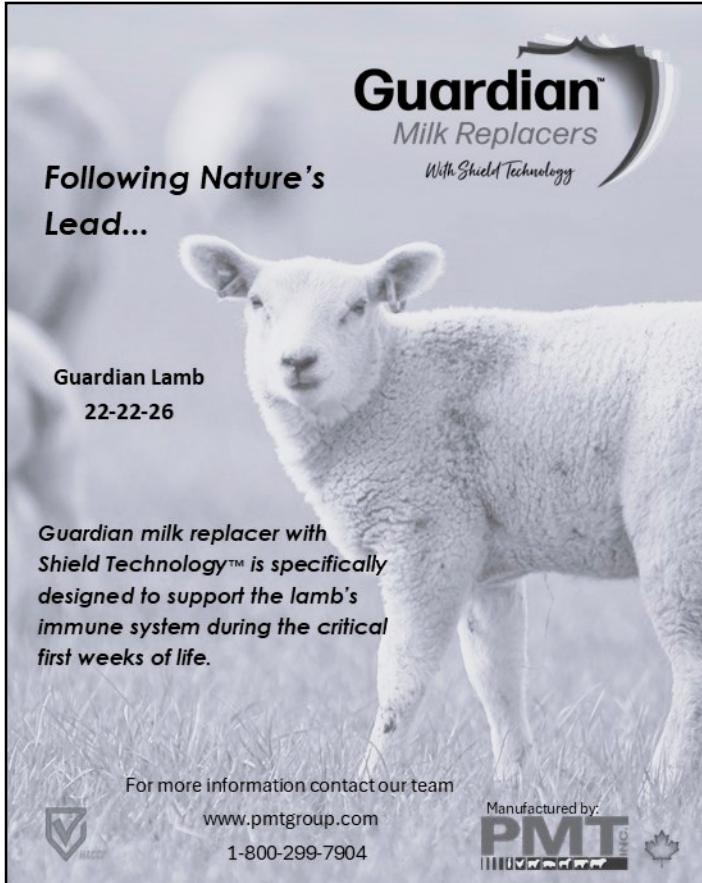
### Where Flocks Most Often Fall Short

Even experienced producers run into challenges. Relying too heavily on poor-quality forage, underestimating nutrient requirements during high-demand stages, overusing concentrates, or failing to test forage can all limit flock performance. Minerals are another frequent stumbling block, with improper supplementation leading to preventable health and productivity issues. In many cases, the problem isn't a lack of effort, it's a lack of information. A simple forage test can mean the difference between a ration that works and one that quietly limits performance.

### What You'll Gain at Livestock Roundup

The 2026 Livestock Roundup is designed to give producers the tools they need to build better rations and get more value from their feed.

**Continued on Page 24**



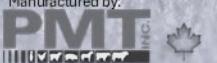
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## Raising Goats, Sheep, and Alpacas

*Essential information for first-time livestock keepers*

Have you been tossing around the idea of raising sheep, goats or alpacas? If yes, you should register for our upcoming sessions, which cover the basic areas that you need to consider before venturing into raising livestock.

Please note, you can register for one or all three sessions. Choose the session you want to register for in the form below.

- ▶ **Jan. 20, 2026** – Raising Goats – Speaker: Mallory Kaier
- ▶ **Jan. 27, 2026** – Raising Sheep – Speaker: Jolene Airth
- ▶ **Feb. 3, 2026** – Raising Alpacas – Speaker: Paityn Eidt

\*Each online session is from **7 to 8:30 p.m.**

**Registration closes at noon the day before each webinar.**

If you have any questions, please reach out to: [sharon@leduc-county.com](mailto:sharon@leduc-county.com)

Registration link: <https://www.leduc-county.com/visit-and-explore/local-food/raising-goats-sheep-and-alpacas>



## LIVESTOCK ROUNDUP: RUMINATING ON NUTRITION

Pomeroy Inn & Suites, Olds AB  
Serving Size

March 13 & 14, 2026

Amount per serving

**SOME TOPICS INCLUDE:** TICKETS STARTING AT \$120

The Importance of Feed Testing	% Daily Value*
Mineral and Vitamin Deficiency Symptoms	
Finishing Cattle on the Farm	
Learn to Use Rationing Tools Such as SheepBytes	
Forage Mineral/Vitamin Deficiency in Central Alberta	
Ruminant Nutritionist Panel	



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Please reach out to [general@cafla-ab.ca](mailto:general@cafla-ab.ca)



Visit [cafla-ab.ca/cafla-events/](http://cafla-ab.ca/cafla-events/) for more info

Attendees will learn how to interpret forage test results to quickly evaluate forage quality. Demonstrations with ration-balancing tools, including SheepBytes, will show how technology can help fine-tune diets and reduce feed waste.

A panel of nutritionists will be on hand to answer producer questions, offering practical, flock-specific insight. The event also provides an excellent opportunity to connect with other producers and industry specialists who are navigating similar challenges.

### Turning Knowledge into Action

Improving sheep nutrition doesn't require complex formulas it requires intentional decisions. Testing forage, adjusting rations to match production stages, providing species-specific minerals, monitoring body condition, and using modern rationing tools are simple steps that can create significant gains.

Better nutrition strengthens ewe condition, supports vigorous lambs, and builds long-term profitability. Small changes, made consistently, add up.

As feed costs rise and margins tighten, producers can't afford guesswork. This year's Livestock Roundup: Ruminating on Nutrition offers timely, practical guidance for sheep operations looking to sharpen their nutrition strategies and improve flock performance.

For more information visit [cafla-ab.ca](http://cafla-ab.ca).



**THE CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE IS COMING!**  
May 2026  
[www.statcan.gc.ca/en/census-agriculture](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/census-agriculture)

**LE RECENSEMENT DE L'AGRICULTURE APPROCHE À GRANDS PAS!**  
Mai 2026  
[www.statcan.gc.ca/fr/recensement-agriculture](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/fr/recensement-agriculture)

Alberta Lamb Producers  
Canada

## SheepBytes.ca

Ration Balancer



### Feed cost - Animal performance - Animal health

There's a lot riding on how you manage flock nutrition. SheepBytes ration balancing software helps take the guesswork out of getting it right.

#### What are SheepBytes users saying?

*'By using SheepBytes, we saved \$12-18 per finished lamb without sacrificing performance.'*  
*'SheepBytes helps us control our feed costs without guessing.'*

*'Since using SheepBytes, we've noticed the overall health of our flock has improved.'*

- ✓ Conveniently web-based
- ✓ Flexible customized ration formulation
- ✓ Affordable and easy to use
- ✓ Free on-line demo and training tutorial

**Learn more about what SheepBytes can do for your flock by visiting**

**SheepBytes.ca**



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at Alberta Lamb Producers  
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Contact Jolene Airth at ALP  
[info@ablamb.ca](mailto:info@ablamb.ca)  
or Scotiabank Yield More Finance  
[yieldmorefinancing@scotiabank.com](mailto:yieldmorefinancing@scotiabank.com)

Visit [ablamb.ca](http://ablamb.ca) for more details.

## CLASSIFIEDS

### *Selling or buying Purebred Registered Sheep?*

The Canadian Sheep Breeders' Association (CSBA) is dedicated to representing the Purebred Sheep Breeders across Canada. Purebred Registered Sheep signifies they have been registered with the Canadian Livestock Records Corporation (CLRC) and a certificate of registration will be provided with the sale of the animal. These records can be found online at [www.clrc.ca](http://www.clrc.ca) and is the responsibility of the seller to pay for and initiate the transfer of the registration to the buyer. These records will indicate the pedigree information and ownership status. We encourage you to confirm the animals you are interested in, are in fact purebred registered animals.

***Under the Animal Pedigree Act, it is an offense to offer to sell, contract to sell or sell, as a purebred, any animal that is not registered or eligible to be registered as a purebred by the association authorized to register animals of that breed or by the Corporation.***

If you are interested in purchasing any animals or are new to the industry, don't hesitate to reach out to any of the CSBA Board of Directors. CSBA is an organization of over 1100 breeders of purebred sheep across Canada, representing over 40 breeds of sheep.

[www.sheepbreeders.ca](http://www.sheepbreeders.ca)

**Classified ads are available free to Alberta producers. In addition to being published in the newsletter, they are available on-line under News and Advertising at <http://www.ablamb.ca/index.php/news-advertising/advertising>.**

**Email [info@ablamb.ca](mailto:info@ablamb.ca) or call 403-948-8533 to place, amend or delete your classified ad.** Alberta Lamb Producers does not endorse or promote any of the advertisements or advertisers in the N'ewesletter.

### 4-H LAMBS

Contact one of your ALP Directors if you have lambs suitable for 4-H projects or are looking for 4-H lambs.

### SHEEP & LAMBS - For Sale

**Registered Gotland sheep for sale (proven 3yr old ram, 1-2yr old ewes, spring lambs).** Hardy, beautiful fleeces and personalities. Located near Okotoks. Contact Carissa 403-629-9394

**Grass fed butcher lambs available February 2026.** Contact Terra Weaver at [r.weaver@mcsnet.ca](mailto:r.weaver@mcsnet.ca) or 780-808-1397

**Dry Lake Ranch AB Ltd., Rod & Bernadette Nikkel, Registered Canadian Arcott breeding stock available. Please contact [robenikkel@gmail.com](mailto:robenikkel@gmail.com), 780-674-6805 or 780-284-9805 cell**

**Polled and Horned Dorset breeding stock available. [www.coyoteacresranch.com](http://www.coyoteacresranch.com). Contact [coyoteacres@gmail.com](mailto:coyoteacres@gmail.com) or call 780-614-0569**

**Shropshire breeding stock available. [www.coyoteacresranch.com](http://www.coyoteacresranch.com). Contact [coyoteacres@gmail.com](mailto:coyoteacres@gmail.com) or call 780-614-0569**

**Sheep Trax Canadian Arcotts available. [www.coyoteacresranch.com](http://www.coyoteacresranch.com). Contact [sheepncats66@hotmail.com](mailto:sheepncats66@hotmail.com) or call 403-741-8597**

**Proven genetics from well bred and well muscled Suffolk and Dorset offspring! Yearling rams and ram lambs available. Please call or text Tom @ 780-978-4705.**

**Rideau Arcott ewe lambs and yearling ewes for sale. Commercial breeding stock, non-registered, available from a closed flock. Frisco Farms, Siemen & Terah Vandermeer. Located in Rocky Mountain House, AB. Contact [terahvdmeer@gmail.com](mailto:terahvdmeer@gmail.com) or 403-418-6441**

**Sheep and Lambs for sale, Sky Blue Farm - Contact Donald Johnston. Registered Canadian Arcott yearling and lamb rams and yearling and ewe lambs available. Delivery available. Donnelly, AB 780-837-1770 or [dolandallan1770@gmail.com](mailto:donaldallan1770@gmail.com)**

**Canadian Rideau Arcott Ile de France cross ewe lambs for sale. Age is 8-12 months. Please contact Paul at 403-332-2267**

**Purebred Suffolk Breeding Rams – non-registered. Born Feb '25. Great sires for weight gain and fast growth. From twins or triplets and fully vaccinated and dewormed. Email [wrwierenga@hotmail.com](mailto:wrwierenga@hotmail.com) or call or text 780 674 4760.**

**Purebred Charollais Yearling rams for sale. Well-muscled, long bodied rams with excellent ADG for superior butcher quality lambs and great easy lambing replacement ewes. [fieldstone@telus.net](mailto:fieldstone@telus.net), 780-499-0066**

**Isle of Skye Cheviots: Registered North Country Cheviot Ram Lambs and Ewe Lambs available. Our NCC's make an excellent choice for breeding your ewe lambs. Easy lambing, hardy and thrifty. Contact Susan at [www.isleofskyecheviots.ca](http://www.isleofskyecheviots.ca) or [www.facebook.com/isleofskyecheviots](http://www.facebook.com/isleofskyecheviots) 403-588-3808**

Purebred Suffolk yearling & lamb rams for sale. Yearlings have been semen & vet checked. Long, deep bodied, well-muscled rams. Charles Iwan, Taber 403-331-7984, [charles.iwan@live.com](mailto:charles.iwan@live.com)

**Purebred** Canadian Arcott registered Rams for sale. If you want to improve your genetics – here is your chance! Ready to breed in the fall. Purebred ewe lambs are also available. Email [sheep@veterancolony.com](mailto:sheep@veterancolony.com) or 403-575-7794

**Sheep** Lake Suffolks - Registered Suffolk ram lambs & ewe lambs for sale. Contact Mike 780-307-3385 and follow Sheep Lake Suffolks on Facebook

**Moonshine** Dorsets - Registered and purebred Dorset ram and ewe lambs. Traditional conformation. Call Raelyn at 403-746-2140

**Parker** Stock Farm. Glen and Kathy Parker. GenOvis performance tested Suffolk breeding stock. [www.parkerstockfarm.com](http://www.parkerstockfarm.com), [parkerstockfarm1@gmail.com](mailto:parkerstockfarm1@gmail.com), 403-443-7220

**Alberta** Sheep Breeders' Association (ASBA) members are your source for registered breeding stock in Alberta. Join today! Visit [www.albertasheepbreeders.ca](http://www.albertasheepbreeders.ca) or 1-866-967-4337

### SHEEP & LAMBS - Wanted

**Wanted:** Feeder or fat lambs, cull sheep and all classes of goats in Acme or Stony Plain, AB. Call Roger Albers 780-777-7416 | [alberslamb@hotmail.com](mailto:alberslamb@hotmail.com).

**WANTED:** Feeder lambs in Provost, Alberta. We pay a premium for Preconditioned Lambs. Please contact us for details. Rick Cromarty, SOUTH CARA FARMS LTD. 780-753-1276 | [SCFLSHEEP@mcsnet.ca](mailto:SCFLSHEEP@mcsnet.ca)

**Wanted:** Quality Breeding Ewes and Rams. Looking to add up to another 100 ewes/ewe lambs to our hair sheep flock in 2026. Ideally from one breeder able to supply numbers suited for an extensive forage system with intensive accelerated lambing. Clean health record required; OPP testing preferred. Will consider hair breeds first. Also interested in breeding Rams. Contact Dalwind Farms at [dalwindfarms@gmail.com](mailto:dalwindfarms@gmail.com), 780-781-3319 or 780-781-8286.

### DOGS

**Inukshuk** Professional Dog Food: a high energy dog food for your hard-working livestock guardian dog. For details and pricing, please contact Karl: at [lonevalleyfarmltd@gmail.com](mailto:lonevalleyfarmltd@gmail.com) or 403-971-3426

Australian Kelpie pups for sale, DOB August 2024. Out of working lines and parents, ready to start and showing strong interest in working stock. 1 male and 1 female available. These pups will do whatever job you have for them. Also available, intact 3 year old male Kelpie, started on sheep and was going well but needs a refresher. Out of imported genetics. Selling due to downsizing our string of working dogs. Located by Two Hills AB, for more information email [schicklivestock@gmail.com](mailto:schicklivestock@gmail.com) or text 780-993-2037

**Purebred** non registered Kelpie dogs - 8 month old male and 3 year old male. Located north of Vegreville. 780-965-0097

**Purebred** Kangal pups, born September 7, 2025. Veteran, AB. Contact 403-575-7794 or [sheep@veterancolony.com](mailto:sheep@veterancolony.com)

**Maremma** guard dogs. Various ages. Raised on-farm and on-pasture with sheep. Outstanding, good-natured parents. Very reliable. The coyotes are the ones with the problems! Located near Carstairs, AB. Contact Richmond at 403-586-5638.

**Pyrenees** intact male 5 years old. Russell grew up with sheep and goats for 1 year, hunts and kills coyotes and gophers and a great guardian dog for a residence and animals. Very good with kids (loves them) but does not work well with cattle. My master wants me to go to a good sheep/goat farm so I can do what I am bred to do and enjoy doing it. I am free for relocation to a good sheep farm. Contact: Shane Davies, phone/text: 780-965-6348

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**Custom Lamb Grazing Spots Available!** Daily paddock moves, fresh forage, and top-notch care to keep your lambs growing strong all season. Minerals supplied, clean water set up, and 3 loyal guardian livestock dogs on duty 24/7. Secure 4-ft field-fence perimeter, with paddocks divided by 6-strand electric wire for safe, controlled grazing. Enjoy up to a 110-day grazing season (weather dependent) with excellent pasture gains. Optional grain finishing may be available at the end of the season.

Give your lambs the pasture advantage for optimal gains—book your grazing season today! Clover Cottage Farms, Sangudo, Iddon & Crystal Jeffreys, 780-305-1302, [Clovercottagefarm2017@gmail.com](mailto:Clovercottagefarm2017@gmail.com)



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## PUBLICATION SCHEDULE 2026



ADVERTISEMENTS OR ARTICLES RECEIVED LATER THAN THE SUBMISSION DEADLINE WILL NOT BE INCLUDED

ISSUE	DEADLINE
JANUARY	THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4 2026
APRIL	THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026
JULY	THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2026
OCTOBER	THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 2026

JANICE ECKSTRAND - ADVERTISEMENT COORDINATOR  
403-993-5245 | [ADS@ABLAMB.CA](mailto:ADS@ABLAMB.CA)



## Event Calendar & Board of Directors

What	Where	When & How
Saskatchewan Sheep Development Board Symposium	Regina, SK	January 9-10 <a href="https://sksheep.com/events/2026-symposium-agm/">https://sksheep.com/events/2026-symposium-agm/</a>
Grey Bruce Farmers Week - Sheep Day	Online	January 10 <a href="https://www.greybrucefarmersweek.ca/">https://www.greybrucefarmersweek.ca/</a>
Ladies Livestock Lessons	Cremona, AB	January 16 <a href="https://www.foothillsforage.com/ladieslivestock">https://www.foothillsforage.com/ladieslivestock</a>
Coming Back to the Farm	Olds, AB	January 28 <a href="https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/coming-back-to-the-farm-tickets-1962525732295?aff=odddtcreator">https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/coming-back-to-the-farm-tickets-1962525732295?aff=odddtcreator</a>
Ranching Opportunities 2026	Olds, AB	February 5 <a href="https://www.redbowag.com/ranching-opportunities">https://www.redbowag.com/ranching-opportunities</a>
FCC Young Farmer Summit	Lethbridge, AB	February 25 <a href="https://www.eventbrite.ca/cc/fcc-young-farmer-summit-2980199">https://www.eventbrite.ca/cc/fcc-young-farmer-summit-2980199</a>
Livestock Roundup: Ruminating on Nutrition	Olds, AB	March 13-14 <a href="https://cafla-ab.ca/event/livestock-roundup-ruminating-on-nutrition-2-2/">https://cafla-ab.ca/event/livestock-roundup-ruminating-on-nutrition-2-2/</a>
FCC Young Farmer Summit - Virtual	Online	March 17 and 31 <a href="https://www.eventbrite.ca/cc/fcc-young-farmer-summit-2980199">https://www.eventbrite.ca/cc/fcc-young-farmer-summit-2980199</a>
Peace Ag Update	Fairview, AB	January 22 <a href="https://npara.ca/events/2026-peace-agronomy-update/">https://npara.ca/events/2026-peace-agronomy-update/</a>
Raising Sheep Webinar	Online	January 27 <a href="https://www.leduc-county.com/visit-and-explore/local-food-raising-goats-sheep-and-alpacas">https://www.leduc-county.com/visit-and-explore/local-food-raising-goats-sheep-and-alpacas</a>
Farming Smarter Conference	Lethbridge, AB	February 11 <a href="https://www.farmingsmarter.com/farming-smarter-2026-conference-trade-show">https://www.farmingsmarter.com/farming-smarter-2026-conference-trade-show</a>
Northern Women in Ag Conference	Fairview, AB	February 19-20 <a href="https://www.peacecountrybeef.ca/upcoming-events">https://www.peacecountrybeef.ca/upcoming-events</a>
Calgary Aggie Days	Calgary, AB	April 15-17 <a href="https://ag.calgarystampede.com/events/year-round-events/aggie-days">https://ag.calgarystampede.com/events/year-round-events/aggie-days</a>
2026 All Canada Classic Sheep Show	Nova Scotia	July 8-11 <a href="https://sheepbreeders.ca/2026-all-canada-classic">https://sheepbreeders.ca/2026-all-canada-classic</a>

Please e-mail [info@ablamb.ca](mailto:info@ablamb.ca) or call 403-948-8533 to provide details of your event for the *N'ewesletter* and website sheep calendar.

## ALP BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2026

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ALP Office - Executive Director, Jolene Airth 403-948-8533 [info@ablamb.ca](mailto:info@ablamb.ca)

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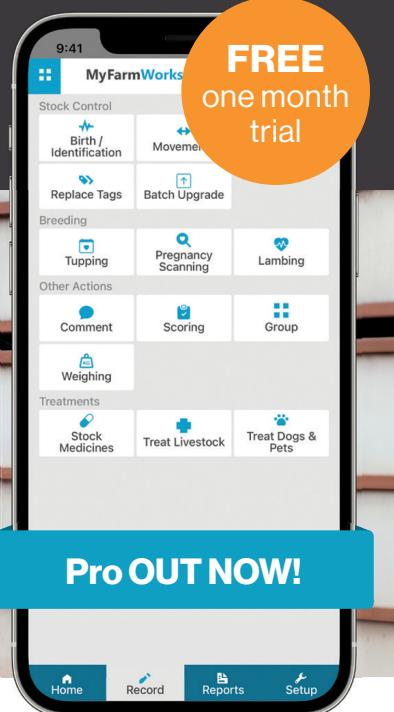
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