



Rams, Lamb, and Ewe....I mean you! If you have, a passion for animals that come in different shapes, size, and colors consider exploring the 4-H Sheep project. 4-H members have the opportunity to learn basic animal science principles by owning, caring for, and keeping accurate records for the flock. Also, demonstrate a knowledge of sound breeding, nutrition, and management practices. Sheep 4-H project members will learn about the meat and fiber industry as they learn their role in growing food and wool for the United States and the world.



Exploring 4-H Sheep

Spark Activity: Breeds of Sheep

There are more than 40 breeds of sheep in the United States. A breed is a group of animals that have common ancestry. They will look similar and have similar production traits. Sheep can be large or small; and come in different colors like black, white, or red. To learn more about sheep breeds, check out the Website: www.ansi.okstate.edu/breeds.



Can you find an example of each of the following breeds?

1. Meat Breed
2. Fine Wool Breed
3. Coarse Wool Breed
4. Hair Breed
5. Ewe Breed
6. Black-Faced Breed
7. Dairy Breed
8. Dual-Purpose Breed

4-H Project Levels and Goals

Beginner

- Nutrition, feeding, and daily care
- Identify breeds
- Parts of the sheep
- Select, care for, and train sheep
- Show at a 4-H exhibition

Intermediate

- Preparing for the show ring
- Vaccinate your sheep
- Learn breeding best practices
- Care for newborn lambs
- Understand digestive processes
- Read feed tags for nutritional content

Advanced

- Design a breeding program
- Learn to dock and castrate lambs
- Calculate feed rations
- Organize production records
- Manage expense records
- Identify quality forages
- Identify sheep industry issues

Put Your Project Into Action

Show Your Skills

- Create a poster showing the costs associated with purchasing, caring for, and showing sheep
- Develop a video demonstrating how to properly groom a sheep for show
- Show at the county fair
- Make an exhibit showing many vaccinations and what they prevent
- Make a blanket or tube for your sheep
- Make a sheep fitting stand

Service and Leadership

- Volunteer your sheep to a petting zoo
- Lead a sheep demonstration for students
- Share lamb recipes at the local grocery store
- Recruit other youth to enroll in the sheep project
- Help plan a showmanship clinic in your county
- Invite club members to tour your farm
- Teach people how to properly handle sheep

Entrepreneurship

- Provide sheeps' wool to sewers or crafters
- Write a business plan for sheep products, from blankets to meat cuts
- Use sheep's milk to make and sell soap

Technology Connection

- Robotic sheep shearing
- Robotic milker
- Automatic feeder
- Barn camera-used to observe ewes in labor
- Wool spinning and raw-wool processing

Connecting with a Mentor

- Local Breeder
- Veterinarian
- Community college or college staff
- 4-H alum
- Agriculture Teacher

Events

- 4-H show
- County fair
- State fair
- Jackpot shows
- Illinois Club Lamb Association Circuit



Careers for People Interested in Sheep

Breeder
Veterinarian
Agriculture Teacher
Animal Nutritionist
Meat Inspector

Start a Conversation

What is your favorite part about raising sheep?
What is your goal this project?
What is your favorite part of raising sheep?
What is most difficult about raising sheep?

Want to learn more?

go.illinois.edu/4Hsheep

Explore more at Illinois 4-H!

4-h.extension.illinois.edu



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Sources: UC ANR 4-H Youth Development Program (2016). <http://4h.ucanr.edu> Author: N. Wilson | Steve Austin, Extension Associate for Youth Livestock Programs, University of Kentucky | Iowa State University Extension, 2011, Iowa 4-H Project Hot Sheet. Retrieved from <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/projects> | University of Wyoming-Sheep Project "What's it all about?" | 4-H Spark Sheets are a collaborative effort of 4-H staff, volunteers, alumni and teens from across Illinois. A big thanks to the many contributors and reviewers!