



# Texel Times

*February 2023*

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# From the President

Dear Texel Sheep Breeder Society Members:

Happy new year and lambing season to all of you! I hope your past year in the Texel industry has provided some wonderful opportunities. One of which was the Eastern Regional Texel Show and Sale in Ohio. Numbers are decreasing and in order to have our own Texel show, *we must have a minimum of ten Texels*. Demand in this area is high - last year's sale average was \$1,900. Another show was the National Show and Sale in Sedalia in June. Sixty rams and ewes sold for an average of \$1,104.17. Overall, the sale was a success. Let us not forget about the great opportunities that we have for our junior exhibitors as well, which includes the futurity program, exhibiting at Sedalia and the All-American Junior Show. Thank you, Ron Wilcox, for helping to organize the All-American Texel Show.

On the board front, we just welcomed two new faces to the board: We have been working on updating our bylaws, which will hopefully be ready to vote on in June at our annual meeting. The board is also really focusing on how we can better promote the Texel breed through advertising. We're actively looking for people to help with committee work. Please email [usatexels@gmail.com](mailto:usatexels@gmail.com) to express your interest in helping. One final aspect the board would like to provide is information to our membership that is valuable in producing and marketing our breed.

On that note, I would like to reflect to 1989, when I got my first sheep (and it was not a Texel). I was excited to feed a bottle lamb but had little knowledge of sheep at all since I was raised on a dairy farm. I made a few errors learning about them especially early on with feeding that bottle lamb calf feed, which was high in copper. I purchased a few other breeds over the next few years and showed them through 4-H. I learned a lot about lambing, feeding, and general care of sheep, but was really interested in the meat science component. Many of you may know my uncle, Gary Onan, who helped me get started in the Texel breed. I did a lot of cross breeding with the Texel breed and found that my lambs had superior carcasses. In 1996 I purchased a purebred Texel ewe and have been raising them ever since with a flock of about twenty breeding ewes today. To bring you full circle from my first bottle lamb, I have had some issues with copper toxicity yet again this past year. It has been determined that my alfalfa hay that I feed primarily to the flock, except during grazing season, is higher in copper. I am collaborating with a local sheep nutritionist to develop rations for my sheep during their various stages of gestation that includes mineral containing higher concentrations of molybdenum to counteract the effects of copper intake from the dry hay. It is also important for everyone in the Texel industry to know that Texels are more susceptible to copper toxicity because they are a British breed.

I am by no means an expert in the sheep industry; even after 30 plus years of experience, I cannot solve every problem, and still have so much to learn. If there is a specific topic or information you would like presented in our newsletter, please let me or any of our board members know so we can best serve you.

Let us make this next year in the Texel sheep industry even better than last year!

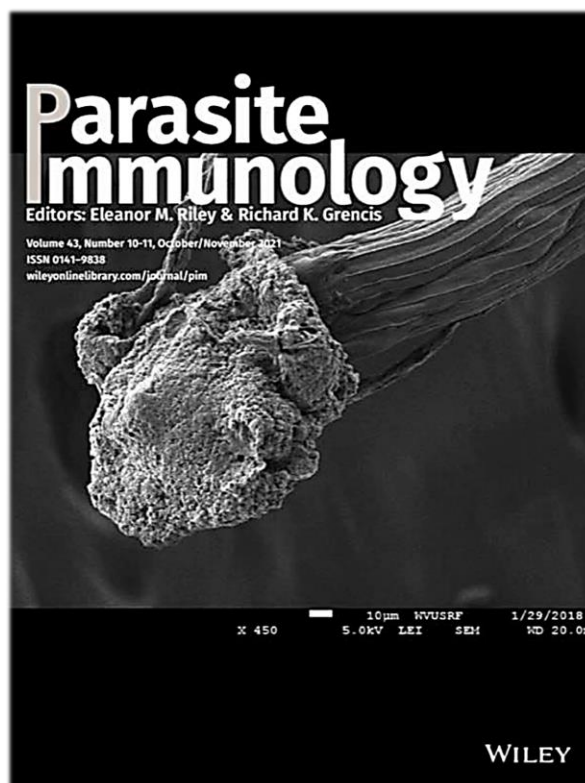
All the best,  
*Crystal Retzlaff*

## West Virginia University Disperses Texel Flock

By: Austin Brown

The Texel project has been vital for promoting the breed, especially in the southeast, as many pursued a crossbreeding system using Texel sires with their Katahdin hair sheep. It is neat to have been around long enough to have seen this research come full circle for the breed since Dr. Scott Bowdridge first presented the research to our membership at our annual meeting in Sedalia. The Texel Sheep Breeders Society would like to sincerely thank Dr. Bowdridge, his team, and collaborators at Virginia Tech & NC State. Thanks to them we now have a greater understanding on the mechanisms of parasite resistance in Texel sheep. A great picture of their work can be found on the cover of *Parasite Immunology*-volume 43, Number 10-11, Oct./Nov. 2021 issue. The image featured a *haemonchus contortus* adult worm head covered in immune cells and serum from Texel sheep. For those interested in learning

more about this work, I interviewed Dr. Andrew Weaver - current Sheep Extension Specialist at NC State and former graduate student of Dr. Bowdridge's. This interview will be made available on social media as clips and the whole interview to the membership. You can also read more about the Texel project online at Dr. Bowdridge's website.



**Above:** Oct./Nov. '21 cover of *Parasite Immunology* - A *haemonchus contortus* adult worm head covered in immune cells and serum from Texel sheep.

**Below:** Texel ewes sold in WVU's dispersal sale

However, all great things must come to an end. The Texels were no longer needed for Dr. Bowdridge's future research endeavors and the flock was dispersed through Production Livestock Auctions' online platform on September 15<sup>th</sup>. The sale ended past midnight! Dr. Bowdridge will now be working with numerous collaborating sheep flocks to improve the genetic associations tied to the EPDs offered through the National Sheep Improvement Program (NSIP).

### Sale Summary:

- 94 Head + semen lots totaled \$60,349
- High Selling Ram = \$ 2,001
- High Selling Ewe = \$ 1,500
- Mature Rams | Avg. = \$ 1,567
- Ram Lambs | Avg. = \$ 334.19
- Mature Ewes | Avg. = \$ 577.55
- Ewe Lambs | Avg. = \$ 508.67
- Semen lots | Avg. = \$ 51.07
  - Sold per unit. Units per lot varied based on availability of straws from different sires.
- Five **NEW** NSIP flocks generated that'll be submitting data this year!!!



## Texel: A Maternal Advantage?

By: Austin Brown



The benefits of the Texel breed as a terminal sire are well known. Yet, it is critical to consider a recent trend I've noticed with several commercial producers who purchase Texel rams from me and end up keeping the ewes because they love the lambs. A prime example is Mr. Dale Hastings, who raises a commercial crossbred flock in Polk Pennsylvania. Hastings first bought a Texel ram from us in 2008 at the Mercer County sheep auction, formerly held at the Mercer County 4-H Park. At that time, he had a flock of over one hundred ewes with Dorset, North Country Cheviot, and Targhee influence. Today, his flock size resides in the high eighties and consists of ewes that are approximately fifty percent Texel crossed. When he purchased another Texel ram from us, it provided a perfect opportunity to visit his beautiful farm and discuss all the benefits he has found in the Texel breed as a producer.

Hastings lambs on pasture in April, so it is especially important that he can walk up to the ewes and the lambs. This is where the Texel offers value, as he can approach them so much easier thanks to their docility. Moreover, both ewe and lambs need to be very hardy. He also cited benefits such as easier fleshing ewes. This is a particularly important attribute for his ewes to have as he only gives them round bales of hay when necessary and some occasional grain just to "bait" them inside the barn. Additionally, he noted that the milking and conformation of his



ewes' bags significantly improved with Texel influence. As a result, he can market around twenty-five percent of his lambs earlier (in October). Hastings achieved all these desirable traits while concurrently experiencing no reduction in his lambing percentage or lambing ease.

"There may not be the perfect pasture sheep," said Hastings, "But, to me, I'm pretty close to it."



*Dale Hastings' Texel composite ewes on pasture*

Overall, though the Texel breed may not be the key to every lock they most definitely have provided A LOT of good for a whole lot of people and the industry they serve. Stories like these are motivators to me in promoting this breed. Texels have an opportunity to offer value across the country in varied production systems, especially with the drastic rise in demand for a lighter finishing lamb in the United States. Just yesterday I was on a California Woolgrowers meeting where producers were discussing the need to change their breeding objectives. This flux in selection priorities fit exactly what breeds such as Texel & Texel composite sires offer the sheep industry.

As a side note, most every place my father visits as a shearer have a unique attribute as to how they leveraged their available resources to their advantage. One of the tops of his list was Hastings' farm because he has a natural flowing spring that they've piped through a network of tires providing for a year-round, free flowing, energy free, fresh water supply to their sheep that doesn't freeze.



*Mr. Dale Hastings' watering system*

## **Pull the Wool Off Your Eyes: Texel Fiber Offers Value to Spinners**

**By: Austin Brown**

An undersold Texel trait is the quality of their fleece. By no means would I suggest that their fleece quality outweighs their merit as meat animals. However, it is not uncommon for Texel fleeces to roll into wool shows and wind up winning supreme champion. To me, that's unique that a Texel can show up in either a wool OR carcass contest and be just as liable to win either one. Texels produce a long 1/4-3/8 staple medium grade fleece that is uniform, dense, and free of black hair contamination.

For meat breeders, wool production and marketability may not be a priority; however, shearing is a fixed expense and a necessary task. A cost which the Texel breed's influence, when compared to most other meat breeds, will be of benefit. Though you may not expect it, during the mid-1800's limited importations of both Lincolns and Leicester Longwools were crossed with the native breed which had been selected for superior muscling.

Distracted Acres in Oregon is one such example of breeders who've found success with their Texel wool! They had a remarkably successful

showing at the Oregon Flock and Fiber Festival. Their Texel fleece took first place in the purebred white medium wool class, followed up by taking Champion White Medium Wool, then rising to take the Judges Choice Award!!! Judge Dr. Ken Gossard was very delighted by their entry and explained to the audience the many qualities of Texel wool that is often overlooked in the U.S. The 60<sup>th</sup> episode on Ewethful Fiber Farm and



*Ch. White Med. Wool & Judges' Choice Fleece at the 2022 Oregon Flock & Fiber Festival was a Texel fleece from Distracted Acres*

Mill's YouTube channel offers an in-depth explanation on the traits that make a Texel fiber marketable and spin so beautifully. She fell in love with a Texel-crossed fleece many years ago and notes the fleeces Distracted Acres offered them as "absolutely stunning." She appreciated their ability to take dye, uniformity, handle, and distinct crimp as well as the stitch definition Texel fleeces offer.

## Meat the Market: What`s the difference between ethnic and traditional markets?

**By: Abdullah Hussaini, Equity Cooperative Livestock Sales Association Commodities Broker**

In the western region of the U.S. many sheep producers market their animals through the traditional commercial trade. Typically, in this market, feeder lambs come off pasture and find themselves in a feedlot prior to reaching their harvest weight, then are directed to packing plants and eventually consumed in standard commercial industries. With all the uncertainty over the past few years, many producers continue



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*Texel & Texel-sired lambs are in high demand within various ethnic lamb markets. These are lambs sired by a Texel ram sold to LSU University in Baton Rouge Louisiana. The ewes were half Hampshire and half Gulf Coast sheep. They reported these as the best all-around lambs they've raised. (Image provided by Matthew Givs and taken by Randy Wright, LSU AgCenter research associate)*

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to look for opportunities to become more competitive. One of those opportunities exists in marketing your livestock through the ethnic trade.

Unlike the traditional commercial market, the ethnic markets prefer a different type of product. The ethnic market is made up of *all* market segments other than the traditional commercial trade. For example, Greek demand for lighter lambs during Easter, Hispanic demand for cull ewes, Muslim demand for 50 – 80 pound fleshy lambs, or the Native American demand for fleshy old ewes, the list goes on. For a producer to be able to market into this trade on a consistent basis can be quite challenging, especially for producers who are accustomed to producing for the traditional trade.

In the ethnic market every year looks different. Some ethnic markets have changing holiday dates. For example, Muslims follow the lunar calendar and the date for the Eid al Adha holiday adjusts every year. Direct marketing into this type of trade works great for producers who raise a small number of head. Smaller producers can adapt to changing ethnic schedules quicker than larger operations. But how can larger producers benefit from this ethnic business?

First off, you might already be contributing product to this trade through your current buyers and may be unaware. If not, you may want to seek out buyers that represent this trade and who may be able to use your product to sort and ship into the ethnic business. Often, ethnic processors are not set up to take a full load of lambs at one time. Therefore, many of these buyers will buy full loads of lambs and sell them to ethnic processors in smaller groups. These buyers can also comingle groups and sort from several different locations to fill orders they may have. One way to get connected with these buyers is by working with a marketing agency who has representation from all types of buyers, both ethnic and commercial.

## Nutritional Needs of the Ewe

**By: Barbie Casey, M.S. Small Ruminant Consulting, LLC.**

The ewe is the premier profit maker for many flocks, but with that comes great inputs. In fact, over 70% of your input cost will likely generate from feed sources of some kind. That may be grain, stored forage such as hay, or even pasture. Considering the inflated prices of grain over the past couple of years, it is more important than ever to know what to focus on when it comes to nutritional needs of the ewe at various stages of production. While this will depend highly upon your style of operation and expectations of your flock, let us talk some basics!



### 1. Body Condition Scoring (1-5, 1-emaciated, 3-average, 5-obese)

Use this scoring system (BCS) to determine the level of fat around the ewe's loin edges, spine, and tail head to measure performance level. Ideal BCS should maintain 2.5-4 average over the entire year with late gestation being the highest at 3.5-4. The lowest BCS should be after weaning and should be no less than 2.5. By using this scale, you can evaluate your ewes to determine many things that are difficult to put numbers to, such as milk production and the amount of stress she is going through. It can also tell you when she is doing poorly compared to others in the flock. Next time you make a note for treatment of any kind, try adding a BCS to each animal you evaluate. It is a great place to start and always something to consider when evaluating the diet of the animal.

### 2. Focus on Nutrition During Times of Stress

There are many times of stress in a ewe's life, but the most important is 30 days prior to lambing and 30 days after. Not only does she have three times overall nutrition needed



Credit: Hilltop Acres, NY

during the last trimester of gestation, but her body must adapt from putting most of her nutrients into growing a fetus and then switch to producing milk. Her body fat level will always come last, so a ewe that is too thin going into lambing is at much greater risk of Ketosis and Pregnancy Toxemia. Unfortunately, if she is obese, her body does not always understand how to take the fat and mobilize it into energy quickly enough to get it to the lamb. This can also lead to Ketosis. Unfortunately, once there is one metabolic (nutritional) disorder, it can be a bouncing ball that leads very quickly to others. Heavy milkers will be more susceptible to milk fever. The goal is to prevent ALL metabolic diseases and make a smooth transition.

Weaning is another high stress period. Do not make the mistake of removing water completely to dry-up the udder. However, do take the time to reduce feed prior to weaning and lower the magnitude of nutrition to limit milk production for at least 1 week prior. This will also help prevent any digestive upsets in the ewes.

### 3. Maintain a Balanced Nutrition Program

I get many calls asking why ewes are eating too much mineral. Often this is the result of not having mineral available all year. It is like a child in a candy store. If you cannot have it all the time, you want more when you see it! There are many ways to balance minerals throughout the year, but make sure

that they fit with your entire program. Some minerals are intended to be fed with diverse types of forages. Have your forages tested and know what you're feeding.

#### 4. Make Feed Changes Gradually

Making feed changes will be the most important and most difficult during lambing times. It is a good idea to keep a probiotic on hand so that you can give that if the ewe appears to not feel well. Remember, you are actually feeding bugs in the ewe's digestive system to work for you. Having the gut working well is key to keeping a ewe happy and producing without problems. The one exception I recommend is forage amount after lambing. When a ewe is in late gestation with multiple lambs, her nutritional demands are at their peak. However, her capacity for feed and forage is at the lowest point. Therefore, we often feed more grain and less bulky forage just prior to lambing. Then after lambing, it is important to allow the ewe to fill that excess space in the body with hay. This is where a high-quality forage is most needed.

Barbie grew up on a small farm in SW Ohio where she fell in love with ag at a young age and has raised sheep with her family for the past 31 years. Barbie received a B.S. in Animal Science from Wilmington College and a M.S. in Ruminant Nutrition from Michigan State University. In 2022, Barbie combined her passion, education, and 12 years of animal

nutrition experience to consult as a Small Ruminant Nutritionist through her own business. Barbie collaborates with sheep and goat farms of all types to help them combine management and nutrition to maximize their productivity.

#### Ovine Progressive Pneumonia: What to Know and How to Control It

**By: Austin Brown**

The Texel Sheep Breeders Society is adamant over the control of Ovine Progressive Pneumonia (OPP) in our flocks. As such, all Texels consigned at society sponsored sales must have a negative OPP test thirty-days prior to sales. Last summer, I traveled around California with Dr. Rosie Busch, UC Davis's sheep & goat veterinary extension specialist, to collect samples and further explore the prevalence of OPP in California sheep flocks. Considering her interests in maternal health, she was an excellent mentor to teach me about the testing process and to run a prevalence study with. This project will also hopefully aid entities like Superior Farm's improve the genetic test to screen for OPP resistance in flocks such as yours. The following handout was made and distributed to shepherds at the 2022 California Lamb and Woolgrowers convention as part of the requirements to obtain my certificate in extension outreach. It covers how you create a plan to mitigate/prevent the spread of OPP in your flock and what signs to look out for.





## OPP INDICATORS

Mastitis is a health and welfare concern for the breeding ewe as well as nursing lambs. The most recent NAHMS study of the sheep industry in the United States indicated that mastitis was one of the leading reasons for culling breeding ewes and was second to respiratory disease for antibiotic use in sheep operations. Additionally, producers indicated starvation as the second most common cause of lamb mortality, which can commonly be related to udder issues. The American Sheep Industry Association, Inc. reported in 2016 that producers identified mastitis as one of the highest disease management challenges in breeding ewes. Mastitis is a flock disease issue with substantial economic impact, second only to internal parasites. However, in lieu of its importance to the industry, few papers characterizing mastitis in ewes in the Western United States have been published. General information is lacking on the seroprevalence, risk factors, and subsequent economic effects of raising orphaned lambs, reduced lamb weaning weights, and early culling of ewes infected with Ovine Progressive Pneumonia (OPP). Subsequently, biosecurity measures for OPP control on California operations are not widely implemented.

OPP, caused by the OPP lentivirus (OPPV), is transmitted horizontally from infected sheep to uninfected sheep via exposure to body secretions containing the virus. This could include colostrum/milk, blood, respiratory secretions, feces, or semen. After an incubation period of up to two years, symptoms of OPP include thin ewes with decreased oxygen capacity (often phrased as “lungers”), decreased vigor, and signs of progressive pulmonary disease. Retroviral mastitis is a common subclinical feature too. It is often described as “hard bag” among producers in relation to an udder that feels firm and has little to no milk production from an otherwise healthy-looking udder [1]. OPP-infected ewes are found to produce lambs that weigh approximately twelve pounds less at weaning and require an increased amount of milk replacer and labor [2]. This is due to the decrease in milk production as the ewe ages. Symptoms

*“OPP is a slow and silent productivity monster. Why?”*

*Ewe lambs born to your best ewes can get this disease from others in the flock. These ewe lambs may have the genetic potential to give you twins or even triplets every year. But year after year she seems to lose her ability to raise them, even though their udder seems to be full of milk. Lambs fail to thrive. They either starve, get grafted, or orphaned. By 4 to 5 years old these ewes fail to regain condition after weaning their lambs and tend to hang at the back of the flock when moving them. These ewes tend to be treated multiple times with dewormers or antibiotics and, eventually, tend to be culled at 6 to 7 years old. Without any clear signs of disease, she lingers in the flock spreading the virus. Costing you more in feed year-round as well as orphan lamb feed and labor during lambing season.”*

*- Dr. Rosie Busch*

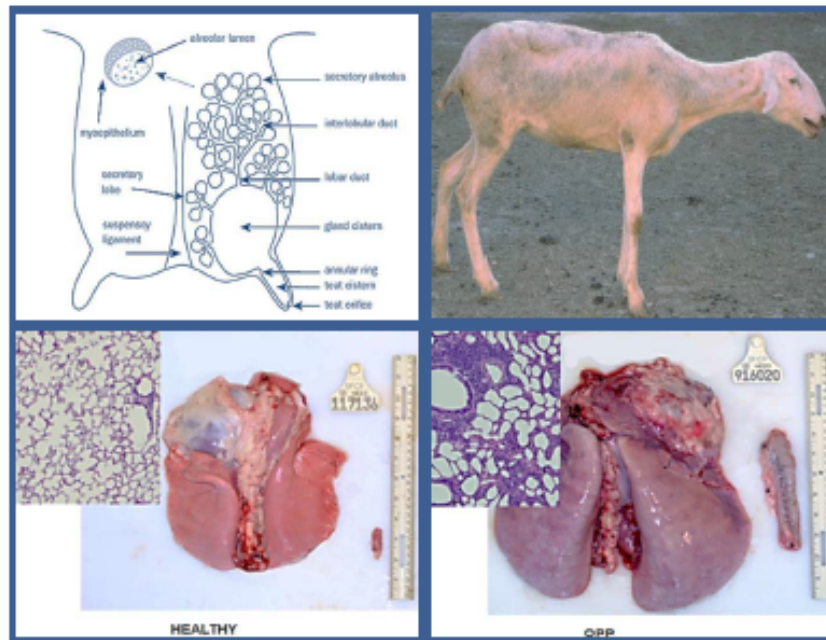
**VETERINARY MEDICINE EXTENSION  
 UC DAVIS**

of OPP-infected sheep are often like those with bacterial pneumonia or mastitis. Additionally, subclinical OPP infection can predispose ewes to secondary bacterial pneumonia or mastitis. Both effects lead to an elevated use of antibiotics in OPP-infected flocks. A recent study at the USDA MARC in Nebraska found that 70–90 percent of new infections occur by adult-to-adult transmission, and only 10 to 30 percent of infections occur from the dam to the lamb in the time before weaning [3]. This suggests that transmission from dam to lamb through the milk is not the major route for OPP transmission [2]. It is not unusual to find negative lambs born to positive-testing ewes and vice versa.

## DISEASE MANAGEMENT

Ultimately, you cannot manage what you don't measure. Eradication of

OPP is a venture that requires planning and commitment.



**Fig 1:** Udder anatomy (top-left) [6], an OPP+ “lunger” ewe (top-right) [7], infected lung (bottom left) and OPPV-infected lung (right) [8]. Key signs of OPPV infection at necropsy are interstitial pneumonia characterized by blotchy grayish-lavender color, increased size, firm texture, and lack of deflation of the lungs. Similar effects target udder tissue causing the characteristic “hard bag”. Also characteristic of OPPV infection is the cigar-sized enlargement of the mediastinal lymph node (right of lungs).

It's important to collect a random sample of various ages when screening. Moreover, animals should have been in the flock for at least two years. If the virus is found, explore all options with your veterinarian before your next steps. Multiple serological tests are necessary to confirm OPP status and eradicate the disease if that's your goal. Testing for the disease, culling any seropositive animals, retesting in six months then yearly and any new incoming animals is an idyllic management practice. The OPP Society offers numerous management strategies online [4] which producers of all sizes can follow to build a plan that offers them the best prospect of success by minimizing losses due to culling and lack of longevity in the ewe flock. When animals are tested for the first time, a partial flock screening (see table 1) can reduce costs for commercial flocks. Genetics may also be a potential avenue for OPPV mitigation. Haplotype variants within the genetic marker *TMEM154* impact lifetime susceptibility to OPPV infection in naturally exposed ewes [5]. This marker test is commercially available through Superior Farms<sup>®</sup>, Inc. Flock54 panel as well as by Neogen.

Flock Size (Sample Size)		
<30 (test all)	100 (43)	350 (54)
30 (26)	120 (47)	400 (55)
40 (31)	140 (48)	450 (55)
50 (35)	160 (49)	500 (56)
60 (38)	180 (50)	600 (56)
70 (40)	200 (51)	700-800 (57)
80 (42)	250 (53)	1000 (57)
90 (43)	300 (54)	2000 (58)

**Table 1:** Sample size recommendation set by the OPP society for flock screening of OPP presence. [4]

### RESEARCH SUMMARY

Recent results on OPP transmission routes are relatable to the industry in California. The 2001 National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) report for sheep described 36.4% of *all* flocks and 24.2% of all the sheep in the U.S. were infected with the OPP virus. In the Pacific region (California, Oregon, Washington), 21.6 percent of flocks and 17.8 percent of sheep were positive for OPP. Additionally, 80.7 percent of open-range flocks in this study had one or more animal test positive for OPP, and 45.1 percent of all sheep tested from open-range flocks were positive. While one in three operations (31.5 percent) participating in the same study reported never having heard of OPP. However, currently there are *no* studies that identify the seroprevalence or risk factors associated with

OPP status in California sheep flocks. We seek to utilize a serological survey to establish a baseline for the presence of OPP in the state and distribute further outreach materials detailing how to handle positive cases and improve maternal flock health with a specific emphasis catering to management settings in California. Recruitment for this project is ongoing and additional information can be found by scanning the QR code or emailing Dr. Rosie Busch (rcbusch@ucdavis.edu).



### CONCLUSION

Ewes must be able to produce enough milk to support a higher lambing rate. Better disease management contributes to the American Sheep Industry's objective to increase the national lambing percentage to 150% or 1.5 lambs per ewe. California is the second largest sheep-producing state in the United States. According to the USDA, National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS), Sheep & Goats, there are about 555,000 head of sheep in California as of Jan. 29, 2021. About half of these sheep were raised and fed for market. As such, it is of *utmost* importance that maternal characteristics contributing to desirable weaning weights are a crucial selection criterion to be proactively pursued to maximize genetic potential.

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## How Much Should You Charge? Pricing Your Meat Cuts

**Brian F. Moyer, Education Program Associate, Business and Community Vitality, Penn State University Extension ( Previously published online, Penn State Extension – December 22, 2022 )**

Pricing meat for direct-to-consumer sales.

It does not matter if you are selling halves, quarters, or single cuts, **you need to know your cost of production first.** What are your costs of raising that animal from day one until the day of slaughter? In any business endeavor, *keeping good records is essential* to knowing if you are going to be profitable or not. Once you know your cost of production, there are some tools you can use to help you determine what price you may want to attach to your fine, farm-fresh product.

Mike Debach of the Leona Meat Plant in Troy, Pennsylvania, has a nifty process you can use that **will help you figure out your costs after processing so you can determine your retail price.** For this example, understand that the cost of production will vary depending on the breed of the animal and production methods (i.e., grain-fed, grass-fed). According to Dr. John Comerford, retired Penn State faculty, the percentage used to determine the “carcass weight” varies depending on what kind of animal it is (beef, hog, lamb), what breed the animal is, and the method of production. So, for this example, let’s say we have a grass-fed, Angus steer that dresses out to a hanging carcass weight that is 58% of its live weight and your cost to get that animal to slaughter weight is \$1.35 per pound of live weight.

### Determining the cost of your animal

- 1) Start with your per pound cost of the live animal (as mentioned before, your cost to raise that animal).
- 2) Divide this amount by 58% to get your “hanging cost.” (That animal is now a “carcass” after it is slaughtered. This determines your new cost per pound at “carcass weight.”)



*Kara Kimzey, WY, is one of MANY Texel breeders who've begun selling their Texel lamb directly to consumers.*

- 3) Add in your processing fees, trucking, etc., to the “hanging cost.”
- 4) Divide the total by 65% to get your “cut-out” cost (breaking the carcass down into individual cuts of meat).
- 5) Divide your cut-out cost by the percentage mark-up you desire to reach the “retail value” price you will ultimately charge.

### Example

- a. Cost of the live animal = \$1.35 per pound
- b. \$1.35 divided by 58% = \$2.33
- c. \$2.33 plus \$0.65 (per pound processing fee) = \$2.98
- d. \$2.98 divided by 65% = \$4.58
- e. \$4.58 is the final cost of your animal becoming single cuts of meat. \$4.58 divided by 75% = \$6.11

A sale price of \$6.11 per pound would give you a 25% return on your product. As you can see, in every step of the process there is a reduction to your final yield of finished product. So, your cost per pound will go up with every step from live animal to cut and packaged product. The above example will give you a rough estimate which can help you to remain profitable. Keep in mind, it is a “rough” estimate. *A lot of variables can change these percentages.* For example, how

much fat was on the animal? What kind of cuts are you requesting? Are you getting bone-in or boneless cuts? If you want boneless cuts, this will reduce the total pounds of product returned to you from your butcher. What kind of animal you are processing will also make a difference in the percentage of product you ultimately receive. Dr. Christopher Raines, former Animal Science professor, has a handy sheet that describes the average percentage of yield in the butchering process for pork, beef, and lamb. Dr. Raines' document says when converting an animal into a carcass, the *average percentage of yield for pork is around 70%, beef 60%, and lamb 50%*. Turning that carcass into individual cuts of meat;

the average yield for bone-in cuts is 75-80% of carcass weight for pork, 65-70% for beef, and 70-75% for lamb. Dr. Raines points out that aging and further processing can decrease your final product weight. If your butcher is hanging (aging) the carcass for two weeks, there is moisture loss due to evaporation. If you are curing hams and bacons from your pig, applying a heat process to your meat cuts may also reduce your final yield. Using these tools, you should be able to make a rough estimate on the amount of product you will have for sale, what your costs are, and what you will need to charge your customers to remain profitable.

## Upcoming 2023 Events

\*Please inquire to any board member if seeking more information about upcoming event dates. Note the new schedule for our national sale and annual meeting. Thank you for your time and attention! We hope everyone's staying warm this winter and you'll have a wonderful set of lambs to offer for sale at our Eastern Regional and National Sales.

- ✓ Eastern Regional Texel Show & Sale – May 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> in Greenville, OH
- ✓ TSBS Annual Meeting – June 13<sup>th</sup> in Sedalia, MO at Best Western St. Fair Inn
- ✓ National Texel Show – June 14<sup>th</sup> in Sedalia, MO
- ✓ National Texel Junior Show – June 15<sup>th</sup> in Sedalia, MO
- ✓ National Texel Sale – June 16<sup>th</sup> in Sedalia, MO
- ✓ All-American Junior Show – June 28<sup>th</sup> to July 2<sup>nd</sup> in Madison, WI
- ✓ 2023 NSIP Online Sale – July 11<sup>th</sup> to July 13<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ Youth Sheep Expo – July 27<sup>th</sup> to July 30<sup>th</sup> in Greenfield, IN
- ✓ 17th Annual Center of the Nation NSIP Sale - July 29<sup>th</sup> in Spencer, IA

