

NSIP 101: Minimum to Get Started for Texel breeders

Through the National Sheep Improvement Program, you can begin analyzing and improving the genetics of your flock with just a few simple records.

Most flocks already have everything they need to get started.

NSIP takes data you likely already collect and evaluates it over multiple generations and multiple contemporary groups versus just one year on your farm.

Data collected is not just used to evaluate progeny (offspring) but adds more power to data behind sires and dams over multiple years.

What You Need to Record:

- ✓ **Animal ID**
- ✓ **Birthdate**
- ✓ **Birth type: single, twin, triplet**
- ✓ **Rear type: raised as single, twin, triplet**
- ✓ **Dam (required) and Sire (strongly recommended)**
- ✓ **At least 2 weights per lamb**
 - **Birth Weight** (optional) – highly encouraged but least important
 - ✓ **Weaning Weight** between 42 to 90 days of age - evaluates early growth and mothering ability - very important for milk production and good mothering ability (this doesn't have to be at the true date of separation of lamb from mother)
 - ✓ **Post Weaning Weight** after 91 days of age or at least 30 days after weaning weight is collected - evaluates later growth

Weight Guidelines – Ideally measure at least 2 of these and the date taken:

- Birth weight: Within 24 hours of birth
- Weaning weight: 42-90 days of age
- Early post-weaning weight: 91-150 days of age
- Post-weaning weight: 151-304 days of age

- Weights must be taken at **different ages** (*ideally over 30 days apart*)
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That's It.

No complicated system required. Start with the basics, submit your data, and you're in.

You can always add more later (additional weights, carcass data, parasite resistance) as your program grows.

Why It's Worth It:

Even at this basic level, NSIP helps you:

- Differentiate genetic from environmental (management) differences in animal performance
 - Make sure you're selecting true genetic differences vs. management differences between you and other breeders
- Better identify your **most productive lambs**
- Make more confident **keep/cull decisions**
- Begin building a flock backed by **measured performance—not guesswork**

Flocks of any size can benefit—larger groups and multiple sires will increase accuracy over time, but **you can start with what you have today.**