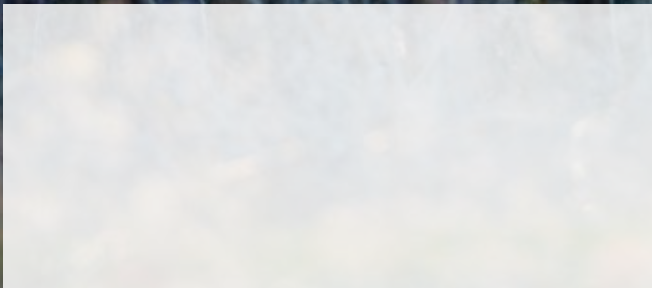


# ONTARIO SHEEP NEWS

Vol. 41 - Issue 3 Fall 2023

## MOTIVATING CHANGE ON THE FARM

LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY TACKLES HOW  
TO GET RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE



Do you have Freeloading Ewes?  
OSF 2023 Convention and AGM  
What is Maedi Visna – The Disease?

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Spring Issue - February 3rd • Summer Issue - May 4th • Fall Issue - August 3rd • Winter Issue - November 2nd

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# License Fee Increase Adds Value to Ontario's Sheep Value Chain

It's hard to believe that the summer, which feels like it just started, has come to an end. The Autumn season is always a busy time for the Ontario Sheep Farmers (OSF) team which includes board, staff, and producers. I am excited that we are back to our first (in-person) AGM since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and that event is now fast approaching. I know both myself and by board colleagues very much looking forward to seeing producers at the OSF Convention/AGM scheduled for late October.

As many producers will know the OSF board have recently reviewed the financial position of the organization and determined that after thirteen years with no change, an increase in license fees was needed and is important for the future success of the organization and industry. The license fees will increase from \$1.80 to \$2.20, plus applicable taxes, per live animal sale taking effect on October 1, 2023, as previously communicated to producer members. Further information can be found by visiting [www.ontariosheep.org](http://www.ontariosheep.org)

In 2021, OSF launched a new five-year plan, Building Strength for a Better Future, that was created with your valuable input and insights from across the entire sheep value chain. The OSF board of directors has committed funds to new initiatives to carry out the goals within this plan including market research, data collection, a wool pilot project and new course offerings within the Sheep Institute. This new strategic plan prioritizes the relationship between the OSF board, the districts, and the members and further assists our growing industry.

To further support producer members, a new part-time Member Relations role will begin in the Fall with an aim to improve dialogue with districts and coordinate activities across the province to ensure ongoing engagement and support of district committees and members. OSF will also maintain the delivery of our current programs at their current levels, including supporting our local districts and members. The OSF Board of Directors and staff are committed to developing innovative solutions to industry issues. OSF provides support, leadership, information, and education to Ontario's sheep farmers, and acts as the united voice of Ontario farmers to industry, government, media, and the public.

The OSF board of directors have committed funds to new initiatives to carry out the goals within the plan including

market research, data collection, a wool pilot project and new courses within the Sheep Institute. As a lobby organization, speaking on behalf of Ontario's sheep farmers, there are many important decisions made by government each year that impact our members. As we work to improve our markets, we anticipate that our advocacy activities will grow. We must remain active and present with government to ensure that our voice is heard, and Ontario sheep producer members remain a top priority for OSF.

Most of OSF's strategic goals require collaboration within the agricultural sector and throughout the value chain. All organizations that OSF financially supports are looking for increased sponsorship due to rising costs. The increase in license fees will allow us to continue working with our valued partners. OSF is actively engaged in a range of issues and supports its membership in the following ways: Advocating on federal and provincial sheep related issues and initiatives, Policy planning, Development of industry programs and services, Industry and environmental sustainability, Market information and analysis, Production and marketing research, Promotion of lamb, Industry communication through various mediums, New marketing plans including both a lamb and wool plan, Ongoing development of educational resources and programs within the Sheep Institute, Research and Innovation, Increased collaboration provincially/nationally and internationally, Addressing our data needs, Investing in our people (producer members and staff). Should you have any questions or wish to discuss the OSF license fee increase further, please contact me or your Provincial Director.

As I write this last editorial as the OSF Chair a positioned I have enjoyed doing to ensure that Ontario's sheep farmers continue to have an organization that they can continue to trust. As producer and member of the OSF board I know it is important that the leadership of the organization be motivated to make responsible decisions for the betterment of the entire industry and continue to make strategic investments in our future. Thank you for the time that you have allowed me to be at the helm of such a wonderful, productive, and important organization. Our industry over the years has collectively worked in many ways to support and grow the sector as it truly has been a wonderful experience that hope to see continue to move in a positive direction. **OSN**

**Editorial policy:** Ontario Sheep Farmers welcomes and encourages letters to the editor and article suggestions from farmers and industry partners as a means of communicating with the Ontario Sheep Farmers board of directors and other farmers on issues of importance. Letters may be on any sheep industry topic, including Ontario Sheep Farmers' policies, programs and procedure. Letters may address previous articles or letters to the editor, and the editor may comment on the accuracy of the information in letters. Letters should not exceed 300 words and may be edited for style and grammatical errors. When submitting a letter, please include the name of the author, address, phone number and/or email address (for verification purposes). Printed letters will include the author's name. Potentially defamatory or libelous material, or personal attacks on individuals will not be permitted. If an author feels that the editor has inappropriately edited or not print a letter, a written request can be submitted to the board of directors for review to determine if there has been a violation of *Ontario Sheep News'* editorial policy.



## Reflecting on the year!

The first year at OSF has been exciting and full to say the least!

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to welcome me into the sheep industry and provide background and knowledge to support my learning.

This year, we have really focused on delivering the elements of the Crossroads Challenge and resulting 2021 strategic plan that were highlighted by producers as the priorities for the organization. There are five elements of the strategic plan – Community, Prosperity, Mastery, Invest and Operations.

Under community, we have developed initiatives to address the goal of building public policy and public trust relationships. This has included advocacy for an increase in funding to the Risk Management Program of \$100 million with our commodity partners from Grain Farmers of Ontario, Beef Farmers of Ontario, Ontario Pork, Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association and Veal Farmers of Ontario. We have also worked with the sheep and lamb value chain through the Sheep Industry Advisory Committee to develop a market research initiative to study international and domestic market trends for lamb flavours and cuts.

Within the Prosperity pillar, we are not only working with our auction market, processor and retail partners on the market trends study, we are also partnering to address our collective data needs. Work has commenced this fall to gather the various technology needs of our value chain partners to develop a solution that will meet OSF's data reporting requirements while also providing our auctions and processors with tools that meet their needs.

Under the Mastery banner, OSF has been given a clear mandate – to develop the Sheep Institute. This will be online at first and will be a repository for all professional development assets of the OSF. This includes the Introduction to Small Ruminants course for beginning farmers, the parasite management course for intermediate farmers and the Master Shepherds topics offered as individual modules for online learning. This year, OSF will be developing new skills development workshops and wool handling course to take place this spring and our webinar series will be offered monthly throughout the fall and winter. There is also a new certification course in development for farmers wanting to offer grazing services to other businesses to bring in additional income or access additional grazing land. This course will be online and self-directed to produce a business plan for a grazing business

that will be evaluated by a farmer expert in the field as a mentor.

Within the Invest category, OSF is engaged in research to continuously improve sheep farming knowledge. OSF is currently engaged in three projects, two are wrapping up this year and we have committed to two new projects starting this fall. One of the new projects will address the control of gastrointestinal nematodes given the limited drench options available and the rising rates of drench resistance. The project will inform efforts to incorporate genetic selection for gastrointestinal nematode immunity based on the carbohydrate larval antigen (CarLA) antibody in the Ontario sheep industry.

Also within the Invest category, OSF is partnering with 4H over the next two years to update the resource manuals for sheep clubs to improve our engagement with 4H and invest in our future OSF members.

There are many more projects and initiatives underway at OSF to address each of the elements in the strategic plan. We hope you will join us at our upcoming Convention and Annual General Meeting on October 26 and 27 at the Nottawasaga Inn to learn more about the work of our organization.

Thank you again to the members, the board and the staff of OSF for a very interesting and enjoyable first year. I look forward to meeting many of you in person at our upcoming meetings and events this fall and winter. **OSN**

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# Professional Development and the Beginning of the Ontario Sheep Institute

As many producers know Ontario Sheep Farmers (OSF) have and continues to develop and deliver programs for sheep farmers to help improve farming operations. OSF professional development programs have been created, both at a provincial and national level, to address flock health, marketing, biosecurity, the environment, record keeping, risk management, and traceability.

Professional development or producer education for producers in the OSF Strategic Plan has one very clear goal – the creation of The Sheep Institute. The Sheep Institute “Sheep U or Sheep Ewe” once launched this platform will create a place where all educational and professional development assets of OSF live under one banner. There will be resources for new producers, intermediate producers, and the Master Shepherds Course (MSC).

To begin, this fall, OSF will continue the work behind the scenes to launch the Sheep Institute website with the current course offering including the Introduction to Small Ruminants course for beginners, the parasite management course and fecal egg count labs for intermediates and the Master Shepherds topics available individually for online learning. The new website/portal planned to launch in late 2023 or early 2024 will also include research reports from OSF funded projects and a link to our OSF YouTube videos on past webinars and other educational sessions.

To further compliment this ongoing work OSF will be working on new skills development workshops and wool handling courses to take place in the spring of 2024. Also, the OSF former Fall Webinar Series will be offered throughout autumn and winter as one webinar per month on subjects like new approaches to veterinary care, parasite management and group sizing. We are excited to roll out the webinars and offer new topics of discussion to sheep farmers.

OSF also have a new grazing project made possible through a grant from the University of Guelph. OSF's Vegetative Abatement Committee will work with a student at the University as well as grazing experts from the OSF membership to develop a certification course for farmers wanting to offer grazing services to other businesses to bring in additional income. The course (once completed) will be offered online and self-directed and result in a business plan for a grazing business. Resources will include sample contracts, insurance considerations, transportation, predation management and watering and will compliment a grazing course in development in Alberta for the nutritional and grassland management side of grazing. There will be opportunities for our members to participate in project development either by helping design the course for which you will be paid, and beta testing at the end. We will keep you updated with more information as it becomes available.

In addition to ensuing OSF offers meaningful programs to assist producers in knowledge building we know that communications such as Ontario Sheep News, The Messenger remain key communications vehicles. OSF is excited to share the news that we are planning to start a podcast series this fall. In these pod cast interview, OSF will interview researchers, speak to processors and retailers, and share many items of interest throughout the year via this audio format.

Lastly, I would like to remind producers about the upcoming OSF Convention and Annual General Meeting being held in Aliston Ontario at the Nottawasaga Resort on October 26th and 27th 2023. Don't miss the ultimate Ontario Sheep Convention and AGM, where sheep enthusiasts gather for an exciting program and network opportunities. Further details can be found on page 20 of this publication or at [www.ontariosheep.org/2023AGM](http://www.ontariosheep.org/2023AGM). **OSN**

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ARE WELCOME

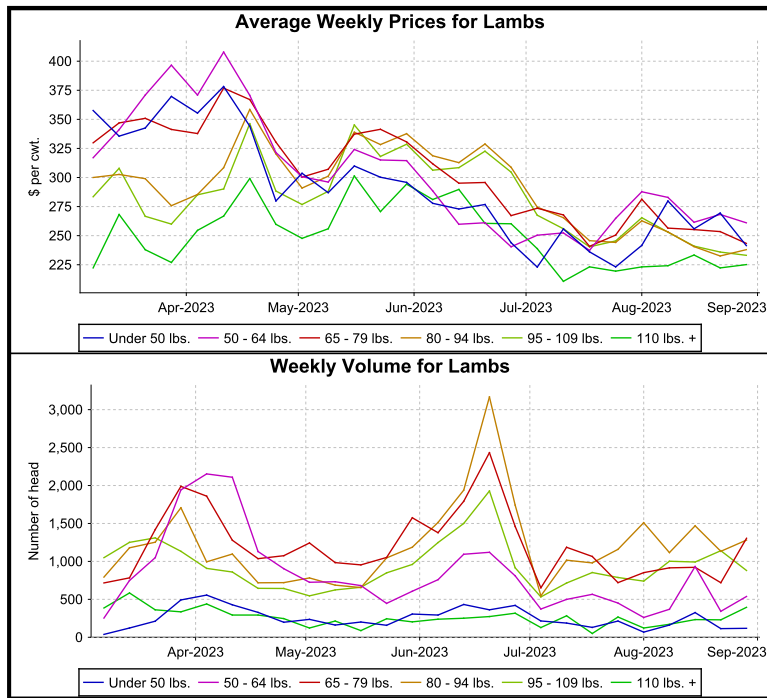
The OSN welcomes letters to the editor.

Please email: [tlewis@ontariosheep.org](mailto:tlewis@ontariosheep.org) or mail to:

Ontario Sheep News, 130 Malcolm Road, Guelph ON N1K 1B1.

# The Ontario Market Report

Full market information can be found every week in the Ontario Farmer and online at [www.OntarioSheep.org](http://www.OntarioSheep.org) under "Market Information" The graphs here show the trends in pricing and volume of the last six months in Ontario. **OSN**



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# Motivating Change on the Farm

## Livestock Industry Tackles How to Get Research Into Practice

By Lilian Schaer for Livestock Research Innovation Corporation

For the past almost two years, Livestock Research Innovation Corporation (LRIC) has been involved in an initiative to improve how the livestock sector can get research into practice. There is agreement across industry, academia and government that more needs to be done to help research outcomes make the jump from the lab to the farm – it's the who, what, how and why that are now being worked on.

Decades ago, it was the Ontario government that took charge of extension – also known as technology transfer, getting research into practice (GRIP), knowledge mobilization or knowledge translation and transfer (KTT). That all changed in the 1990s when provincial governments dramatically reduced funding for these types of activities.

In the livestock industry, the gaps were filled by a variety of businesses and organizations, including veterinarians, nutrition companies and commodity groups, leading to discrepancy of service levels between sectors.

“We have a tremendous opportunity in the livestock sector however, because we have the University of Guelph, which is dedicated to agriculture and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs that has invested \$100 million and counting into new livestock research facilities in our province over the last decade,” said LRIC CEO Mike McMorris during a GRIP-focused industry meeting this spring.

Effective outreach and research knowledge transfer must consider what will motivate change on the farm and how researchers can do a better job at making research outcomes applicable on farms.

Overall, although a lot of people are involved in GRIP, there is a lack of coordinated planning and execution, and there is consensus that industry, government and academia need to collaborate on both research priorities and sharing research outcomes.

“We are positioned well where research is concerned,” he added. “Effective GRIP must consider differences in sectors and geography. It's not a simple thing.”

Effective outreach and knowledge transfer also must take into consideration what will motivate change and how researchers can do a better job at engaging with farmers and making research outcomes applicable on farms.

That's been the subject of considerable research by Dr. Steven Roche of Acer Consulting, who believes it ultimately comes down to people, relationships, and understanding the needs and mindsets of livestock farmers and their supply chains.

“Farmers are people at the end of the day so we can leverage existing research to try and understand behaviour, and how we can make things applicable to what is happening on-farm,” he said during a presentation at the recent GRIP roundtable.

People respond differently to different situations, so the same tactics and tools won't be successful at reaching all farmers. Roche identified four types of farmers: the proactivists, the wait and seers, the reclusive traditionalists and the do-it-yourselfers and noted that each group is driven by different motivators and spheres of influence.



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His advice for the research community and those funding research:

- Think bigger about adoption and influence
- Gain a better understanding of your audience and their spheres of influence
- Mindset will drive individual behaviour
- Relationships are key

Tara Terpstra brought the farm perspective to the discussion, sharing her approach to finding and implementing research outcomes on her family's hog farm in Huron County. Terpstra is also a director on the boards of LRIC, Swine Innovation Porc and the Prairie Swine Centre, as well as Vice Chair of Ontario Pork and Chair of the Ontario Pork Research Committee.

According to Terpstra, clear, easy to understand communication is key, and she focuses on implementing research results one change at a time as it is important to evaluate the impact of that change on the overall business and whether the benefits outweigh any increased costs.

Her family's 400 sow farrow to finish loose housing herd is on a Raised Without Antibiotics program, putting her firmly in the "proactivist" camp, she noted.

"I want to solve problems proactively instead of having policy brought down on me, and I adopt research more quickly when I'm struggling with a problem," she said. "What is happening internationally (in the livestock industry) shows



the need for scientific data to push back on false narratives and negative agricultural policies."

She accesses research information through a variety of ways, from swine industry magazines and general internet reading and her veterinarian's monthly newsletter to attending industry meetings and listening to podcasts.

"Commercial barns are not research barns, so we have to try a change for a longer time because of the many variables – and I need to see results before I adopt further changes," she adds. "I have to evaluate if the increased costs make the benefits worthwhile; to adopt an entire practice at once presents challenges."

A library of podcasts, videos and webinars designed to help the livestock industry get research and innovation information directly to the farm is available on the LRIC website at [livestockresearch.ca](http://livestockresearch.ca), along with LRIC's Horizon Series webinars and white papers focused on the big issues affecting livestock agriculture. **OSN**

This article is provided by Livestock Research Innovation Corporation as part of its ongoing efforts to report on research, innovation and issues affecting the Canadian livestock industry.

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# Do You Have Freeloading or Non-productive Ewes?

By Delma Kennedy, OMAFRA

In sheep farming, feed is usually the single greatest expense for the operation. As a result, it is important to optimize factors that influence the amount of feed it takes to produce a kilogram of lamb in your operation. It can be difficult to reduce this cost as nutrition is vitally important to successful production. The first place to look for feed savings is feed going to ewes that are not productive.

## What is a nonproductive ewe?

The most obvious example of a nonproductive ewe is one that does not conceive. Flock conception rates are important. A good conception rate is 95%. Usually, this definition of conception rate refers to the number of ewes that become pregnant in one breeding period. That period varies from farm to farm and may range from 20-45 days or more. A conception rate of 95% is very good for a breeding cycle of 45 days and might be difficult to attain for a 20-day cycle.

The second example of a nonproductive ewe is one that conveys but her lambs do not make it to market. This takes more work to track but can be a silent drain on the profitability of the operation.

## How much does it matter if you keep nonproductive ewes in your flock?

The answer to this is complex and is different from farm to farm due to differences in costs, production, and other details. In this section, a sample scenario is outlined to provide an idea of how keeping open ewes in the flock might compare to culling those ewes and possibly keeping replacements. Table 1 shows the feed cost of keeping open ewes in a 200 ewe mature flock with good conception rates.

# Mature ewes	200
Ewe feed cost	\$110.00
% Conception	0.95
# Lambings	190
# Open ewes	10
Total ewe feed cost	\$22,000.00
Open ewe feed cost	\$1,100.00

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### Important Update

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With good conception rates, there are 10 open ewes. Their feed cost for the year totals \$1100 which isn't that big of a number but is 5% of the total ewe feed cost. Just something to note, percent of open ewes equals the percent of feed spent on ewes not producing lambs. In this case, by culling these 10 ewes there is a feed savings of \$1100, along with savings on costs of other variable expenses that might be incurred if the ewes are kept through the management cycle like vaccination, shearing etc. Pregnancy scanning is a cost and at \$3 per ewe would reduce this advantage to \$500. But there is also the market price received for those cull ewes. In this case, if the ewes were 140lbs and received an average per hundred weight price of \$140, an additional \$1960 in revenue would be received bringing the advantage to around \$2400.

What if you don't want your flock numbers to decrease? Table 2 shows the summary of a scenario where 10 ewe lambs are kept in place of the 10 mature culled ewes.

<b>Table 2. Estimate of cost to keep 10 replacement ewes instead of 10 mature ewes that did not conceive.</b>	
# Replacements	10
Feed cost mature + 20%	\$132.00
% Conception	0.6
# Weaned/ewe	1.6
# Lambings	6
Lambs weaned	9.6
Post weaning mortality 2%	0.192
# Marketable lambs	9.408
Lamb revenue @\$250/lamb	\$2,352.00
10 mature ewes to market (140lbsx140/cwt=\$196)	\$1,960.00
Replacement feed cost * 10	-\$1,320.00
Lamb feed cost @\$64/lamb	-\$602.11
Replacement ewe cost @\$250 didn't go to market	-\$2,500.00
Revenue – Costs (R-C)	-\$110.11
R-C if open replacements culled and marketed	\$1,417.89

This scenario accounts for the extra feed for ewe lambs to grow and gestate as well as a reduced conception rate and number of lambs weaned. It also includes the market price that would have been received for the ewe lambs if they were marketed as a cost. So, for a cost of \$110, open

*Continued on page 12.*



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Continued from page 11 ~ **DO YOU HAVE FREELOADING OR NON-PRODUCTIVE EWES?**

mature ewes can be sold and replaced with replacement ewe lambs. If the 4 ewe lambs that did not conceive were culled and sold as market lambs, the scenario would change to an advantage of \$1,418. Pregnancy scanning was not included in the costs for this scenario but some method of identifying open ewe lambs would be needed to market the open lambs. In this scenario, it is possible to increase income by culling mature ewes that do not breed, replacing them with ewe lambs and culling and selling those replacements that do not breed.

Although this scenario tries to put values on these decisions, you must use your own numbers to find out if this kind of strategy will be advantageous on your farm. Changes to production numbers, cost of feed as well as lamb and ewe market values can change the outcome.

### Using culling to reduce the number of nonproductive ewes.

There are four times in the management cycle to consider culling nonproductive ewes: at pregnancy scanning, lambing, weaning, and breeding.

At pregnancy scanning:

- Cull ewe lambs that are not pregnant. If you breed to lamb for the first time at a young age, this is an opportunity to potentially obtain lamb market price for these young ewes.
- Cull mature ewes that are not pregnant or not pregnant for the second time in an accelerated system.

At lambing:

- Cull ewes with poor temperament.
- Cull ewes who have problems lambing or lactating that might lead to increased lamb mortality.
- Cull ewes that do not lamb and are not pregnant.

At weaning:

- Consider culling ewes who do not raise enough lambs.

At Breeding:

- Consider culling thin ewes. If they haven't been able to recover their body condition since lambing, they may not do well in the next pregnancy. Your decision may depend on the age of the ewe and what she produced last lambing.
- Consider culling fat ewes. A ewe that is able to maintain condition through lactation is a good thing but only if she was raising lambs. If she is fat because she didn't raise lambs, that is a concern.

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Information on the details of numbers of lambs born, weaned, and marketed for individual ewes in your flock is important for making good culling decisions. Simple techniques using coloured tags can be used to keep track of age and/or if ewes do not conceive. More sophisticated systems that keep track of ewe production from year to year will improve your ability to identify ewes that are lambing but producing below average.

## Monitoring Success

Producers will often talk about number of lambs born or weaned per ewe as an indication of ewe productivity, but this number is generally calculated based on the number of lambs from ewes who lamb. In the example in table 3, you can see that based on the number of ewes lambing, the number of lambs weaned is 1.80 lambs per ewe. But if you include the number of ewes actually on the farm being fed and bred, the number of lambs weaned per ewe can change

dramatically. In this example, if conception rates were 95%, 200 ewes would have been bred to have 190 ewes lambing and the number of lambs weaned per ewe bred would be 1.71. If there was only 85% conception, 224 ewe would have been bred to have 190 ewes lambing with 1.53 lambs weaned per ewe bred.

As a result, although you may want to know the number of lambs born and weaned per ewe lambing to monitor the success of your protocols at lambing time, it is also important to know the number of lambs weaned and ultimately lambs marketable per ewe bred to understand the effect of nonproductive ewes and monitor for changes that will affect profitability.

## Conclusions

Nonproductive ewes are a drain on the profitability of your sheep operation. Only calculating number of lambs weaned per ewe lambing will not alert you to the number of nonproductive ewes being fed on farm. Adding simple calculations of total number of lambs weaned divided by total number of ewes bred will provide a measure of whether the number of nonproductive ewes is increasing or decreasing in your flock. Culling strategies can be developed to reduce the amount of time that nonproductive ewes stay in your operation. **OSN**

**Table 3. Effect of conception rates on number weaned per ewe bred.**

Assumptions		Conception rate	# Weaned/ewe bred
# Ewes lambing	190	Bred 200 (95%)*	1.71
Lambs weaned	342	Bred 211 (90%)*	1.62
# Weaned/ewe	1.80	Bred 224 (85%)*	1.53

Note: \* = Conception rates

## Improve Rumen Health and Palatability Simultaneously

Enhancing intake during the dry period helps ewes transition more smoothly into lactation. Minimize pregnancy toxemia by providing the necessary energy density during transition.

- > Supply energy safely
- > Reduce sorting, increase intakes
- > Minimize pregnancy toxemia
- > Increase milk for lambs and production



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# What is Maedi Visna – The Disease?

**M**aedi Visna is a debilitating viral disease that can undermine the economic viability of a sheep flock.

The virus targets specific tissues in the sheep and the more damaged these tissues become, the worse the disease. It usually takes several months to years after infection for the disease to become apparent and not all sheep show equal amounts of disease.

Maedi = chronic pneumonia. The sheep are bright and do not have a fever. They will eat and chew their cuds but their breathing becomes more labored and they lose weight. Eventually, the pneumonia kills them. It is very different from the “regular” bacterial pneumonia. It will not improve with the use of antibiotics.

Visna = neurological disease. Sheep with visna may have difficulty walking as their hind legs are partially paralyzed. They may also have a head tremor and may be blind and eventually cannot stand. It is very difficult to tell this condition from other neurological diseases such as scrapie, listeriosis, poliоencephalomalacia or spinal abscesses, without an examination by a veterinarian.

Economically, we know that if a sheep is infected with MV virus, its level of productivity is much less than an uninfected ewe in the same flock. It produces less milk, is less likely

to become pregnant, and will become most affected at the age at which productivity should be at its peak – 3 years of age. So, eliminating this virus from your flock is of great economic benefit. Any control program will pay back in improved productivity.

## How is MV infection transmitted?

MV is caused by a virus of the retrovirus family. This virus infects for life and the animal is unable to eliminate it from its body. The damage caused by the virus increases with the length of time the animal is infected.

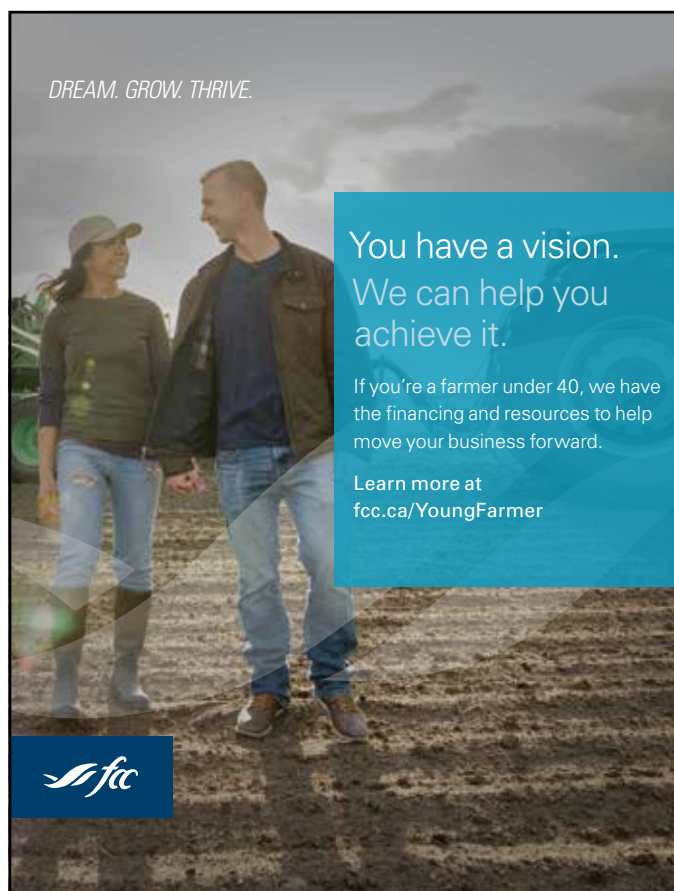
Lambs and sheep are most at risk of being infected in the following ways:

- From milk and colostrum. The virus is present inside white blood cells which are shed into the colostrum and milk. Lambs nursing infected ewes are about 30% more likely to be infected than lambs nursing healthy ewes.
- From respiratory droplets. The fluids that are naturally expelled or coughed from the lungs contain MV infected white blood cells. Close contact (e.g. nose-to-nose and virus in the aerosolized droplets from breathing), can transmit the virus very effectively. These droplets are inhaled – the deeper they are inhaled, and the more of them inhaled, the more likely the sheep is to become infected. The droplets can also infect through the conjunctiva of the eyes. Newborns to adult sheep can be infected this way. The longer a sheep remains in an infected flock, the more likely they are to become infected. Sheep housed in close confinement are more likely to be infected.

Less important but potential ways to become infected:

- In the uterus. About 6% of lambs born to infected ewes will be born already infected (range 0 to 10%).
- During milking. Since the virus is present in the milk, there is a risk that milking equipment or back-jetting of milk from vacuum fluctuations could transmit the virus.
- From contaminated feeders and waterers. Although the virus is very fragile in the environment, within a short period of time it could be transmitted through respiratory secretions contaminating feeders and waterers (e.g. in the milking parlour).
- Multi-use needles are not likely to be responsible for much transmission as the virus is not present in great amounts in the circulation.
- MV virus can be isolated from ram semen and could transmit the virus. But the rams are more likely to transmit the virus through respiratory droplets.

Sheep can be infected with MV virus more than once. The immune response put out by the animal will not stop the virus from infecting, and each time the animal gets infected – the damage to the tissues becomes worse. **OSN**




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- ✓ Reduce algae



# Ontario Sheep Farmers Annual Review 2022/23



OSF moved forward with several industry-leading initiatives including:

- Advocated for the Risk Management Program with our partners in OASC – discussion about Treasury board limits, alternatives to funding model to share with other groups if money increased to \$250 million
- Worked with Foodland Ontario to start ongoing market research study
- Commitment of funds to update the 4H Sheep manual – work to begin in fall 2023
- Engagement with the membership through three member surveys – the Veterinary Act, the Wool Plan and Research Priorities (132 total responses)
- Continuing to implement the Building Strength for a Better Future, OSF Strategic Plan
- Ongoing partnership with Scotiabank Yield More Financing TM Program for sheep, which offers approved OSF producer members access to a \$50,000 line of credit to expand their flock by purchasing ewes

OSF also moved forward this past year with several industry-leading initiatives further supporting the OSF Strategic Plan including:

## Community

- Ongoing engagement with the Ontario Minister of Agriculture – D2 Lamb Banquet, D11 Earlton Farm Show, LRIC dinner, Grow Ontario Food Summit, Provincial Policy Statement meeting etc. Events/Shows OSF participated in – Ottawa Valley Farm Show, Midwest Co-op Sheep & Goat Day, Grey/Bruce Farmers' Week
- Used member surveys to set research priorities, respond to the provincial veterinarian act consultation and create a plan for wool, then apply for a grant to accomplish the plan
- Worked with other commodity groups to provide comments on Bill 97 and proposed provincial planning statement
- Participated in consultations regarding amendments to the PAWS Act
- Actively involved on Bill 97/Provincial policy Statement advocacy with OFA/CFFO/NFU
- Provided comments on provincial Bill 102 Strengthening Safety and Modernizing Justice Act
- Participated in the public consultations and provided comments on the proposed amendments to Part XV of the *Health of Animals Regulations* (Identification and Traceability)
- Lobbied for provincial budget to commit to increase the number of veterinarians in Ontario Supported new research project with Emma Borkowski University of Guelph to gain a clearer understanding of the CarLA antibody response to adapt the CarLA Saliva Test<sup>®</sup> for use in genetic selection of Ontario sheep with superior gastrointestinal nematode (GIN) immunity
- Handed out Guardian Dog Information at the 2023 Ontario Association of Municipalities Conference
- Continued ongoing support of OSF District Executives by improving the OSF Director and OSF District Executive Portal to further support OSF Districts with resources
- District Chairs Committee met consistently all year, every 6 weeks on the Monday after the board meeting, to provide input into the issues of the board and engage with their district committees and members on the ongoing work of the OSF
- Tribunal – ongoing process – participated in 2 pre-hearings, hearing dates set for early October and November
- Ongoing work with Sheep and Goat committees
- The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association is leading a Living Lab project to accelerate the adoption of BMPS that sequester carbon, mitigate GHG emissions and support environmental co-benefits such as water, soil, air, and biodiversity, though the process of co-development and testing on real farms. Ontario Sheep Farmers is a partner in the project and an active participant in the grazing aspects of the program to 1. determine the effect of grazing intensity on total pasture yield, forage quality and carbon sequestered, and 2. evaluate the impact of cover crop grazing after winter wheat and before corn.



## Attention

### Ontario Sheep Farmers!

**Ontario Sheep Producers without email now have more options to know what's happening in Ontario's Sheep industry:**

**OSF phone line now offers 2 NEW options to choose from:**

**NEW - Upcoming Events**

*(updated every Monday listing events for the week)*

**NEW - Industry News**

*(updated as required)*

**Market Reports**

*(updated every Wednesday)*

**Call OSF at 519-836-0043**

**press 5 for Upcoming Events  
press 6 for Industry News  
press 4 for Market Reports**



- Successful grant application to the Soil Health fund – grazing for hire project
- Lifecycle Analysis project completed. The project i) Reviewed the state-of-the-art life cycle modelling of sheep farming, ii) Created a ‘cradle-to-farmgate’ parametric lifecycle analysis (LCA) model for sheep production, iii) estimated the range of life cycle impacts through the LCA model using the collected data, and iv) created a framework for making environmental claims on sheep products through LCA.
- New district meeting/communication template designed by a producer going into effect in September 2023
- Continued with the ongoing updates to the OSF membership database
- OSF has been and continues to be actively engaged in a range of issues and supports its membership in the following ways: Advocating on federal and provincial sheep related issues and initiatives, Policy planning, Development of industry programs and services, Industry and environmental sustainability, Market information and analysis, Production and marketing research, Promotion of lamb, Industry communication through various mediums, working to start new marketing plans including both a lamb and wool plan, Ongoing development of educational resources and programs within the Sheep Institute, Research and Innovation, Increased collaboration provincially/nationally and internationally, Addressing our data needs, Investing in our people

## Prosperity

- Ongoing improvements and updates to the price & profit predictability tools for Ontario sheep producers. This includes continuing to work with OMAFRA on updates to the Ontario Sheep Farmers Profit Predictability Tool with the aim to make it easier and more accurate for producers
- Made revisions and improvements to the Maedi Visna program
- After 13 years with no change to license fees, the Ontario Sheep Farmers has increased the license fee amount by \$0.40

from \$1.80 to \$2.20, plus applicable taxes, per live animal sale, effective October 1st, 2023. Most of OSF's strategic goals require collaboration within the agricultural sector and throughout the value chain. All organizations that OSF financially supports are looking for increased sponsorship due to rising costs. The increase in license fees will allow us to continue working with our valued partners and further support the growing Ontario sheep sector.

- Successful Dairy Sheep Symposium. There were 48 participants and 18 tradeshow exhibitors (15 paid). Overall, the event will return a few hundred dollars back to the Dairy Sheep Committee (final numbers TBD) and they will use the money to plan a future event, hopefully a farm tour this summer. There were presentations from Rex Crawford, Cathy Bauman and Marlene Paibomesai as well as a panel of experts for a Q&A. Ruth Klahsen from

*Continued on page 18.*



## NOTICE OF LICENSE FEE INCREASE

Under Regulation 429 of the Farm Products Marketing Act, a compulsory license fee on all lambs marketed is payable to the Ontario Sheep Farmers (OSF) to fund the organization. Packing plant operators, auction market operators and livestock dealers are required to deduct the license fee from the proceeds payable to the seller and remit license fees along with the names and addresses of the farmer sellers to OSF.

As an organization, OSF has witnessed many changes over the years. Despite all these changes, the principles of the organization have remained the same: a tough and credible advocate and unified voice for the province's sheep farmers, representing all sectors of the industry. OSF has done well to represent its members with the resources available, but costs continue to rise.

The last increase to license fees was \$0.50 from a \$1.50 to \$1.80 in 2010.

### How much is the increase?


The license fee increase will be \$0.40 from \$1.80 to \$2.20 plus applicable taxes per live animal sale.


### When will it take effect?


License fee increase that will take effect on October 1, 2023.

### Where do I go for more information?

Please visit [www.ontariosheep.org](http://www.ontariosheep.org).

 519 836 0043

 [admin@ontariosheep.org](mailto:admin@ontariosheep.org)

 130 Malcolm Road Guelph, ON N1K 1B1

Monforte Dairy showed the producers how to make sheep cheese and Amelie St-Pierre demonstrated the GenOvis program. Feedback from the exhibitors was positive and the participants were very engaged throughout the day. If you would like any of the presentations, let me know and I will email them to you. The GenOvis presentation was recorded and posted to the OSF YouTube

## Mastery

- OSF presentation to researchers from around the world about parasites in sheep
- Master Shepherd's Course was offered again in 2022-23. Fourteen farmers enrolled in the full while an additional twelve participated through single module registrations. Sixteen farmers who enrolled in the previous offering, participated in the necessary modules to complete the course in the current offering
- Provided updates to the Introduction to Small Ruminant Production course
- Continued to host the Fall Speakers Series webinars which covered Direct-to-Consumer Marketing, Improving Conception Rates to Lower Cost of Production, Ontario Market Outlook, and Cost Share Funding
- Hosted and facilitated webinars for producers on topics such as: CFIA Export Requirements to USA and Mexico, Future of Parasites Control in Canada, Canadian Genetic Evaluation Program for Dairy Sheep and promoted other webinars or interest to producers

- Supported the Grazing Cover Crops webinars with OMAFRA and Beef Farmers of Ontario
- Continued with ongoing updates to the online producer education courses namely Parasite Management and Introduction to Small Ruminant Production Course as well as other Producer Education Courses offered by OSF
- 7 producers attended the online Parasite Management Course
- 57 participants completed the online Introduction to Small Ruminant Production
- Hosted Dairy Sheep Symposium in early spring of 2023 to support Ontario Dairy producers
- Invested over \$16,000 memberships with industry organizations
- Invested over \$48,000 in industry focused research projects
- Continued to sponsor the Ontario Forage Council and other grazing and pasture management initiatives such as OMAFRA Grazing Cover Crops webinars
- Continued to provide staff support for the Ontario Soil Network #letstalksoil and timing matters campaign to further promote best practices for manure management

## National Level

- NSN – observed and monitored the sale of SunGold (information sharing about aspects of the sale that impacted Canadian producers)
- LEOQ is working on a marketing information website that will combine all the known data sources for pricing

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data from across Canada. The website will provide producers and processors with market information and commentaries when it is complete on a subscription basis

## By the Numbers

- Issued more than 50 market reports which are available on website and tapeline recordings
- Improved the market reports provided in The Messenger with more details
- Ontario Sheep News (OSN) circulated to over 2,800 individuals four times per year
- The Messenger circulated to over 1,529 subscribers
- @OntarioSheep has over 2,659 followers
- @OntarioLamb has over 1,135 followers
- Directly processed over \$549,000 in Yield More Financing payments since the program launched assisting producers in expanding operations
- Offered webinars reaching over 450 people across Ontario, Canada and internationally

As we begin the 2023-2024 year the Board of Directors will focus on:

- Continuing implementation of the new OSF Strategic Plan

## Communications

On the communications front, Ontario Sheep Farmers is working hard to find and develop new ways to stay in touch including Ontario Sheep News and @OntarioSheep

- Ongoing updates to the OSF consumer website [www.lambrecipaes.ca](http://www.lambrecipaes.ca)
- Continued to provide weekly (since Covid-19 Pandemic) digital circulation of The Messenger (OSF's digital newsletter)
- Provided updates to the OSF info phone line where producers may call the OSF office and hear a recording of industry news and upcoming events
- Continued updates to the new producer and mental health pages on the OSF website resource pages including updates to the new producer page on the OSF website and new producer package
- Continued to support and update online professional development programs offered by OSF
- Added a Producer testimonial page to the OSF Leadership page on the OSF site to assist in producer requirement
- Created and posted additional content for OSF YouTube channel for producers
- options for other communications activities such as pod cast to better support producers **OSN**

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# 2023 OSF Convention & Annual General Meeting

Towards a Stronger Future - Forward Together!



**D**on't miss the Ontario Sheep Convention and AGM, where sheep enthusiasts gather for an exciting program and network opportunities.

**Date:** October 26th and 27th

**Location:** Nottawasaga Inn Resort 6015 Highway 89,  
Alliston Ontario

**Attend in-person or virtually.**

Highlights of this year's program include:

- An overview of lamb competition both live and carcass data
- Presentation from the Centre for Meat Innovation and Technology Lab with several processors evaluating live lambs and their carcasses

- Lamb carcass competition. For more information see the link below
- Butcher demo focuses on maximizing retail cuts and optimizing consumer cuts.
- Market panel discussion with buyers, processors, retailers, and direct-to-consumer producers discussing what their clients want in a lamb
- Concurrent sessions on the following: Can we increase demand for wool? Tips to lower cost of production, Economy of scale strategies for smaller flocks and What is Maedi Visna (MV) costing you?
- Ontario Lamb banquet Thursday 26th evening & OSF Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Friday 27th

For more details visit [www.ontarioshee.org/2023AGM](http://www.ontarioshee.org/2023AGM).


How to Register and participate in this year's Convention and Annual General Meeting?

There are three ways to register

1. Online Eventbrite registration or
2. Manual Registration forms both of which can be found on the OSF website.
3. If you do not have any internet contact the OSF office at 519 836 0043

Questions call the OSF Office at 519 836 0043 or email [admin@ontariosheep.org](mailto:admin@ontariosheep.org). **OSN**

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- Visit Ontario Sheep Farmers to provide 1 piece of government-issued photo ID
- Credit decisions typically within 2 business days

- Credits are at a maximum of \$50,000, and no security is required<sup>2</sup>

#### REPAYMENT

- No payments are required on your line of credit between March 1 and January 31
- Payment is required February 28 for your August 31 outstanding balance plus accrued interest

#### ACCESSING YOUR CREDIT LINE

- Your Yield More Financing Line is available to use any time at Ontario Sheep Farmers

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# Raven Predation on Sheep and Beef Farms in Ontario

Jillian Craig, Small Ruminant Specialist, OMAFRA

## Introduction

Predation by ravens on lambs, sheep and calves is something sheep and beef producers should be aware of and monitoring for. Ravens are extremely smart birds and can learn that lambs, sheep and calves are an easy food source. The majority of raven predation occurs during pasture lambing and calving. However, ravens will come into barnyards or barns and predate livestock in a confinement situation as well.

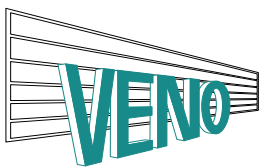
Injury or killing methods observed include:

- pecking eyeballs
- pecking skulls
- pecking tongues
- pecking rectums
- pecking noses
- pecking navels
- peck or pull at the hide
- puncture wounds throughout the body
- picking at abdomen
- tearing udders on ewes or cows



Figure 1. Lamb predated by a raven which had pecked out the eyes, tongue, nose, navel and rectum. The lamb was still alive and had to be euthanized by the producer.

It should be noted that when bird predation occurs on live animals, blood will be present where the bird attacked the animal. For example, blood around the eyeballs, tongue, rectum, nose and navel (Figure 1). In the case of a stillborn



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animal, a scavenger such as a turkey vulture may come along and peck out the eyeballs, but no blood will be present since the animal was already dead. There may be exceptions to this based on weather conditions or carcass decomposition which the producer should discuss with the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program Investigator.

## Data from the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program

Data from the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program (OWDCP) was compiled to observe trends in avian or bird predation for 2017–2022. Table 1 shows the number of approved OWDCP avian predation claims by county and by year for both lambs and sheep. Table 2 shows the number of approved OWDCP avian predation claims by county and by year for both calves and cows.

Both tables include injuries and kills. The data for all avian predators was combined as often avian kills are hard

to distinguish between species. The majority of reported kills or injuries were caused by ravens. There were a few claims reported as crows, eagles or vultures.

**Table 2. Number of approved calves and cows OWDCP bird predation claims by county and year.**

County	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	6 Year Total
Brant County	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Bruce County	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Cochrane District	1	-	-	-	2	-	3
Durham Region	1	-	1	-	-	2	4
Frontenac County	-	-	1	-	3	-	4
Grey County	2	2	4	1	-	1	10
Haldimand County	-	-	3	-	-	2	5
Huron County	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Kawartha Lakes	1	3	2	2	-	-	8
Lanark County	1	-	2	-	-	-	3
Leeds & Grenville County	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Manitoulin District	1	4	1	-	-	-	6
Northumberland County	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Nipissing District	-	4	2	5	1	2	14
Ottawa Region	1	-	-	-	-	1	2
Parry Sound District	-	-	1	1	1	-	3
Peterborough County	-	-	-	2	1	-	3
Rainy River District	3	4	1	5	1	4	18
Renfrew County	4	1	2	3	1	-	11
Simcoe County	3	2	1	1	1	-	8
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry County	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Sudbury Region	1	3	1	5	3	4	17
Thunder Bay District	-	1	1	-	1	-	3
Timiskaming District	1	-	-	2	-	4	7
York Region	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>138</b>

**Table 1. Number of approved lamb and sheep OWDCP bird predation claims by county and year.**

County	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	6 Year Total
Bruce County	2	1	-	-	-	-	3
Dufferin County	-	2	1	-	-	-	3
Durham Region	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Grey County	3	6	-	-	3	-	12
Huron County	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Kawartha Lakes	-	1	-	-	1	-	2
Leeds and Grenville County	2	2	3	1	-	1	9
Lennox and Addington County	1	-	1	1	2	5	10
Manitoulin District	-	3	1	-	-	-	4
Nipissing District	-	-	-	1	-	1	2
Northumberland County	-	-	-	-	1	8	9
Ottawa Region	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Parry Sound District	13	4	15	17	3	52	104
Peterborough County	-	26	1	5	-	-	32
Simcoe County	1	-	-	-	-	5	6
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry County	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Thunder Bay District	-	5	-	-	-	-	5
Timiskaming District	4	-	-	-	1	1	6
Wellington County	-	-	-	6	-	-	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>218</b>

In Table 1, the highest avian predation claims on lambs and sheep occurred in 2022 followed by 2018. The year with the least number of bird claims was 2021. There are many different reasons why the numbers increase and decrease dramatically per year. For instance, some producers with raven predation problems had a livestock guardian dog

*Continued on page 24.*

which chased ravens away from the lambs and sheep or out of the pasture. In some cases, these dogs were older dogs which had to be replaced by younger dogs which did not chase birds. In other cases, the offending bird may have been lethally removed. Ravens are protected under *Ontario's Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1990 (FWCA)*, however there are certain exemptions. Please consult the Act for current regulations.

In another example, one farm experienced a high number of losses from ravens killing lambs on pasture. The following year, the farm lambled ewes in barns resulting in a lower rate of predation. This practice is not practical for most large pasture flocks and has other implications to consider. There are also some confinement sheep operations which have experienced problems with ravens coming into the barns and killing 41–50 kg (90–110 lb) lambs. Therefore, confinement is not a total solution as the ravens continue to learn and adapt.

When looking at Table 2, the number of bird predation claims on calves and cows remained fairly consistent year over year.

In Figure 2, the number of approved lamb and sheep OWDCP kills or injuries from birds can be seen by month over a six-year period. The graph visually shows that most of the kills or injuries occurred in the month of May followed by June. This corresponds to pasture lambing.

In 2017, the spike in predation happened in July. The reason for this could be as simple as the ravens had not developed kill behaviour on lambs or sheep yet in the area and may have learned the killing behaviour later in the season.

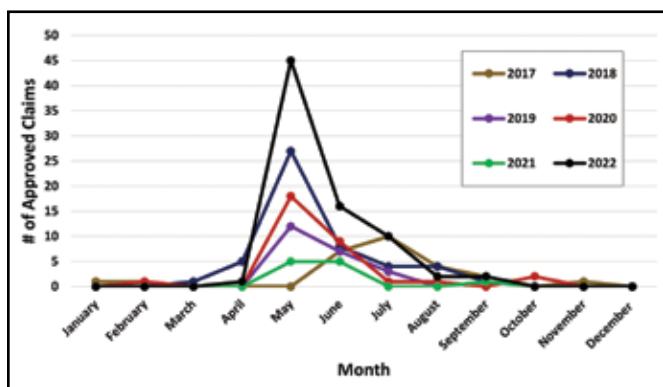


Figure 2. Number of approved lamb and sheep OWDCP bird predation claims by month and year.

In Figure 3, the number of approved calf and cow OWDCP kills or injuries from birds can be seen by month over a six-year period. The graph visually shows there are no evident trends in a certain month when predation occurs on beef. The spikes in bird predation are likely due to when

farms were calving. From March to May claims tend to be higher which would correspond to spring calving. Other spikes in the fall could correspond to producers who had fall calving groups.

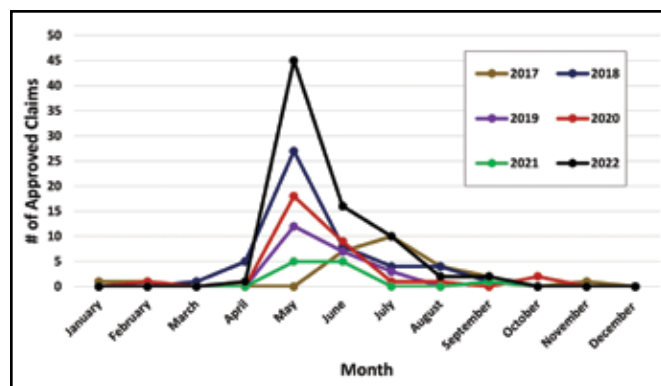


Figure 3. Number of approved OWDCP bird predation claims by month and year for calves and cows.

## Summary

If a farm has not experienced raven predation and observes ravens frequently around the farm, trying to prevent the learned kill behaviour is ideal. Best management practices include cutting down dead trees in or around the pasture or removing unused silo platforms to eliminate easy roosting spots, picking up afterbirths and disposing of deadstock in a timely manner.

If the farm has experienced raven predation, there are limited reasonable care measures that can be used. Some options include livestock guardian dogs (although many will not chase ravens), non-lethal deterrents, lethal removal of the offending bird or applying for a nest removal permit from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF). Additional information can be obtained from the local MNRF district office at [Ontario.ca/MNRF](http://Ontario.ca/MNRF), search for Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry regional and district offices or by consulting *Ontario's Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1990 (FWCA)*.

If non-lethal deterrents are used on-farm, they should be set-up only when the farm is experiencing active raven predation for short time periods. Ravens are very intelligent birds and will quickly become accustomed to the limited deterrents available (i.e., scare-eye balloons, raven decoys, bird kites).

If a farm is experiencing active raven predation during pasture lambing or calving, deterrents should be set up directly prior to lambing or calving and removed after the season is complete. **OSN**



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# THE 2024 ONTARIO LAMB MARKET CALENDAR

Year	Holiday	Consumption Preferences	Market Processor Needs	Public Auction Market Impact
January 6	Feast of the Epiphany (Christian)	Lamb is featured in many celebration meals.	Recently weaned and milk-fed lambs are preferred.	Lower market volumes generally.
January 7	Orthodox Christmas	Lamb is featured in many celebration meals.	Recently weaned and milk fed lambs are preferred.	
February 10	Chinese (Lunar) New Year	Both mutton and lamb are used in a variety of dishes and is a favorite ingredient in hot pots.		Lower market volumes.
March			Easter holiday inventory buildup.	Growth in supply following winter, with Easter demand increase.
March 10 to April 9	Ramadan (Islam) (daylight fasting)	Some celebrations will occur prior to start of Ramadan.	Weaned market lambs (60 – 90 lbs live weight)	A moderate market factor for week leading into Ramadan.
March 31	Western Easter	Roast lamb is a main dish in festival meals for Mediterranean (Italian, Portuguese, and Greek) heritages	Healthy young lambs. (under 60 pounds live weight; ideally milk-fed and fat). Number of lambs under 65 pounds begins to increase in the 3 weeks prior to Easter, and often peaks during the week before Easter. Number of 65-to-79-pound lambs will also increase during this time.	Higher market demand in the 2-to-3-week period preceding holiday. Check local auction schedules for “special” Easter sale dates. A peak sale period in the year.
April 9-10	Eid al-Fitr (Islam) Festival of Fast-breaking	Celebrations occur during the fast break period which will feature lamb products.	Weaned market lambs 60 – 90 lbs liveweight. Lower demand for heavy lambs.	A moderate market factor for the week leading into Ramadan.
April 22-30	Passover (Pesach) Jewish	Traditionally must be processed under Kosher laws.	Healthy finished lambs. (up to 64 lbs live weight; ideally milk-fed and fat)	Steady market. A limited influence.
May		Start of barbeque season which more frequently featuring Ontario lamb.	Moderate demand. Processors see an increase in BBQ lamb demand from May to August.	Commonly higher supply and slightly higher but still moderate demand.
May 5	Orthodox Easter	Roast lamb is a main dish in festival meals for Mediterranean (Italian, Portuguese, and Greek) heritages	Healthy young lambs. (under 60 pounds live weight; ideally milk-fed and fat). Number of lambs under 65 pounds begins to increase in the 3 weeks prior to Easter, and often peaks during the week before Easter. Volume of 65-to-79-pound lambs will also increase during this time.	Higher market demand in the 2-to-3-week period preceding holiday. Check local auction schedules for “special” Easter sale dates. A peak sale period in the year.
June 14-19	The Hajj (Islam)			
June 16-19	Eid al Adha (Festival of Sacrifice, Eid)	Eid, the festival of sacrifice, is one of the most important observances in the Islamic faith. (This may be referred to as Qurbani, though this refers to the actual act of animal processing.)	Lambs (70 – 110 lbs live weight) Desired weight differs across different communities. Lambs should be under a year of age and be unblemished. Some prefer lambs older than six months. Blemishes may include wounds, torn ears, or any physical unsoundness. Wethers and lambs with docked tails may not be acceptable to some buyers.	High market demand in period leading up to holiday. Peak demand is in week preceding holiday. Note: There is a high activity level of private holiday sales sought by families for this important celebration.
July 7	Muharram (Islamic New Year)	The Islamic New Year is the first day of the Muslim calendar. Mutton is often served as the main course for this holiday meal.	There is no preferred weight for this holiday, although animals should appear healthy.	Steady market. A limited influencer.
September 27	Mawlid al-Nabi (Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad)			
October 2-4	Rosh Hashanah Jewish New Year	Lamb is a tradition or symbol of a new beginning.	Forequarters from weaned market lambs (60 – 109 lbs live weight)	Steady market. A limited influencer.
October 14	Thanksgiving	Lamb is an alternative to turkey.	Steady demand with slow year over year consumer demand increase.	Steady market. A limited influencer.
November		Stew/casserole are growing in seasonal popularity	Lower but steady demand during transition from Thanksgiving into Christmas period.	Lower market volumes.
December 25, 2024 to January 2, 2025	Hanukkah (Festival of Rededication) Jewish	Traditionally meats must be processed according to Kosher law.	Healthy heavy lambs. (up to 100 lbs live weight)	Usually occurs close to Christian Christmas which leads to high demand.
December 25	Christmas Day to New Year (Christian)	Lamb is a feature at Christmas parties (lamb-pops, spiedini, roasts). Leg of lamb, stews and curries are food staples.	Lambs should be freshly weaned (milk fed), up to 80 lbs, and not older than 3 months of age. Out-of-season breeding is required to produce the favoured type of lamb for this market. Cull sheep are popular for stew and curry.	Higher market demand in 2 to 3-week period preceding holiday. A peak sale period of the year.

This calendar and the 5 year calendar is also available on the OSF website at [www.ontariosheep.org/religious-ethnic-market-calendar](http://www.ontariosheep.org/religious-ethnic-market-calendar).

# Master Shepherd's Course

**M**aster Shepherd's Course resumes September 26th with Module 9 Effective Flock Health Management.

Producers are welcome to register for single modules through the THINKIFIC platform (see link below).

## Module 9

### EFFECTIVE FLOCK HEALTH MANAGEMENT

- Production limiting diseases -strategies to manage and avoid introduction
- Vaccinations and immunity /Role of nutrition in flock health
- Flock health programs
- Effectively using vet diagnostic services
- Parasite Management
- Biosecurity
- On-Farm Euthanasia
- Starts September 26, 2023

## Module 10

### LAMB FEEDLOTS AND DAIRY SHEEP

- Lamb feeding rations, feed delivery systems
- Feedlot health, monitoring growth, carcass quality
- Dairy sheep industry outlook
- Dairy flock health, regulatory requirements
- Starts November 14, 2023

## Module 11

### MARKETING AND WOOL

- Marketing principles
- Marketing methods
- live auction, private sales, direct to consumer - farmers markets, online
- Product branding
- Marketing costs, product shrink, marketing risks
- Fit for transport
- Starts December 12, 2023

Register for any of these modules on THINKIFIC <https://learning-ontariosheep.thinkific.com/> **OSN**

## PRODUCER/SHEEP OWNER LICENCE FEE REMITTANCE FORM (PRIVATE TREATY SALES)

Ontario's 3,000 sheep producers are represented by the Ontario Sheep Farmers organization. With a focus on profitability and sustainability, the organization works in the areas of advocacy, industry capacity, research and market development. The organization is funded through a check off (or licence fee) on lamb and sheep marketed in Ontario. Representing the sheep, lamb and wool industries, it was established in 1985 under the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Act. A compulsory check off (licence fee) of \$2.20 per head sold or slaughtered in Ontario is payable to the Ontario Sheep Farmers to fund projects and operations supporting the Ontario sheep marketplace. Visit our website ([www.OntarioSheep.org](http://www.OntarioSheep.org)) to see your licence fees at work.

Auction markets, livestock agents, and processors are to deduct the check off fee from the proceeds payable to a seller, and processors must also assess the licence fee in addition to the slaughter fee. This fee is applicable to each sale or slaughter transaction.

Private sales (i.e. a sheep owner to sheep owner sale, sales not done at an auction market, nor to an agent or processor) require licence fee self-assessment and reporting through this remittance form.

**Ontario Sheep Farmers** 130 Malcolm Road, Guelph, Ontario N1K 1B1

**SHEEP/LAMB: FEE IS \$2.20 PER HEAD PLUS 13% HST**

Producer # \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov.: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Sale: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Remitted: \_\_\_\_\_

# of sheep/lamb sold: \_\_\_\_\_ Lic. Fees (x \$2.20=) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**PAY BY PHONE USING VISA OR MASTERCARD** Plus 13% HST \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**519-836-0043** **TOTAL REMITTED** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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# Genetic and Health Program Enrollment Listing

If you have questions, concerns, or would like more information about these programs please contact the Ontario Sheep office at (519) 836-0043 or email [admin@ontariosheep.org](mailto:admin@ontariosheep.org).

## CURRENT PRODUCERS ENROLLED IN THE GENOVIS PROGRAM (AS OF SEPTEMBER 2023)

4S Maple Lane Farm • Kimberly Schneider • (905) 404-7811  
5-Star Livestock and Farm Services • Jen & Chris Vervoort • (519) 993-6413  
Allinbrook Farms • Neil Allin • (905) 983-5791  
Asphodel Sheep Co • Todd Payne • (705) 875-5904  
Bone Run Farm • Jana Vleuten • (519) 532-9901  
Bonfire Hill Farm • Lisa Schultes • (902) 326-1195  
Breezy Ridge Farm • Philip & Elizabeth Smith • (905) 478-4280  
Brubacher Ovine • Earl Brubacher • (519) 323-4152  
Burtwistle Sheep • Benjamin Burtwistle • (519) 280-0093  
Cedar Creek Charollais • Ted & Joanne Skinner • (905) 263-2102  
Cedar Grove Farm • Quintin Mc Ewen • (519) 949-4130  
Century Lane Farm • Robert & Shirley Graves • (613) 791-2656  
Circle R Livestock • Ryan & Romy Schill • (519) 669-4146  
Codan Suffolks • Bill & Lynne Duffield • (519) 899-2663  
Craigmore Farm • Wayne Kreklewich • (416) 892-0664  
Cursio Farms & Arkell Valley • Frank & Ned Cursio • (519) 766-3378  
Emke Livestock • Craig Emke • (519) 901-2519  
Emily McKague • (519) 599-2348  
Ewenique Farm • Nathalie Labelle • (613) 290-5405  
Fare Vewe Acres • Mark & Betty Beringer • (519) 323-1760  
Jim & Wendy Driscoll • (519) 638-5703  
G & L Brien • Gary & Luanne Brien • (519) 674-3846  
Gimlet Hill • Rob & Tracey Werry • (289) 385-6804  
Gopher Broke Dorsets • Tania Lise • (519) 440-1076  
Grant • Grant Cowan • (705) 796-2236  
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Halfway Farms • Hiske MacKay • (519) 281-3725  
H D Livestock • Heidi Kristufek • (519) 803-4194  
Howes Family Farm • Rob & Anita Howes • (519) 859-3700  
Injasuti • Yvonne Marot • (905) 569-9667  
J & J Farms • Ross & Clementine Savasi • (705) 652-7477

John & Holly Wallace • (519) 368-6540  
Irwin and Spencer Jackson • (519) 856-4490  
Keiton Moffat • Keiton Moffat • (705) 295-4354  
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Kolgie Ltd • Maria Stock • (519) 275-4988  
Lamb Lady Farm • Shelagh Finn • (647) 932-7102  
Leahy Hill Farm • Clara Leahy • (705) 927-3545  
Linc Farm • Juliet Oraziotti • (905) 984-0987  
Lush Acres • Jenean & Jason Lush • (519) 538-2753  
Maderstone Farm • Courtney Mader • (705) 313-5882  
Maple Meadow Farms • Colleen Acres & Dwayne Bazinet • (613) 826-2330  
Meadow Brook Family Farm • Steven A. Ernewein • (519) 392-8624  
Parker Agriculture Ltd. • Jeanne Parker • (204) 730-0597  
Pasture Hill Farms • Wanda Cook • (705) 647-7160  
Q Farm • Vinod Gorantla • (416) 605-2469  
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Sheep View Farms • Enos Martin • (226) 751-6990  
Shepherd's Grove • Harv & Christine Breman • (519) 879-6579  
Shillalah Farm • Florence Pullen • (519) 233-7896  
Southgate Sheep Inc. • Jesse Bauman • (226) 752-7170  
Spring Hill • Cameron Murphy • (705) 313-0631  
Stonehill Sheep • Paul Dick • (519) 794-3732  
Todd Sheep Company Inc. • Keith Todd • (519) 528-2650  
Tome Charollais • Nelson Tome • (416) 677-1862  
Tulach Ard Farm • Sean McKenzie • (905) 786-2476  
Twin Shores Farm • Brian Voith • (343) 364-4095  
Wigmana Farms Ltd. • Dorothy Frankland • (519) 923-5974  
Wooldrift Farm • Chris Buschbeck & Axel Meister • (519) 538-2844

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4S Maple Lane Farm • Kimberly Schneider • (905) 404-7811  
Allinbrook Farms • Neil Allin • (905) 983-5791  
Anchor A Farms • Tim Thomsen & Allison Lange • (506) 538-2835  
Blackie's Suffolks • James & Cecile Blackie • (506) 392-6263  
Bonfire Hill Farm • Lisa Schultes • (902) 326-1195  
Brian Atkinson • (705) 924-3043  
Cedar Creek Charollais • Ted & Joanne Skinner • (905) 263-2102  
Century Lane Farm • Robert & Shirley Graves • (613) 831-2656  
Cleon M. Martin • (519) 323-3519  
Cursio Farms and Arkell Valley  
Frank & Caitlin Cursio, Ned Curiso • (519) 766-3012

Howard & Denise Wideman • (519) 335-6124  
Kettle Crest Farm • Art & Sandra Alblas • (519) 637-0050  
Mark Martin Dairy Sheep • Mark & Rosena Martin • 519 638 3644  
Orchardview Farm • Gordon Walker • (519) 287-5085  
Rider Ridge Ranch • Jill & Tim DeClark • (519) 644-0766  
Robert Pennie • (705) 859-2671  
Salt Breeze Farms • Jeff & Alana Campbell • (902) 956-4397  
Shepherd's Flock • John Stoltzfus • (519) 773-9569  
Stonehill Sheep • Paul Dick • (519) 794-3732  
Tania & Peter Lise • (519) 440-1076  
Trailblaze Farm • Perry, Sharon & Valerie Robinson • (519) 794-4837

## FLOCKS WHO HAVE ACHIEVED "B" STATUS ON THE MAEDI VISNA PROGRAM (AS OF SEPTEMBER 2023)

Knollbrook Farms • James Masters • (519) 362-6444  
Rocky Lane Farm • Allison & Luke de Vos • (705) 308-3284

Shadow Ridge Acres • Zabrina Bielaskie • (613) 433-6199

## FLOCKS WHO HAVE ACHIEVED "ENROLLED NEG" STATUS ON THE MAEDI VISNA PROGRAM (AS OF SEPTEMBER 2023)

Forest Creek Farmhouse • Angela McClary • [forestcreekfarmhouse@gmail.com](mailto:forestcreekfarmhouse@gmail.com)  
Highway Seven Farms • John Davis • (705) 930-1720

Huron Grove Farms • Michael & Fraser Hodgson • (519) 918-4159  
Stitch and Steel Homestead • Sam Sheehan • (647) 546-8906

## CURRENT PRODUCERS ENROLLED IN ONTARIO SHEEP HEALTH PROGRAM (AS OF SEPTEMBER 2023)

Asphodel Sheep Company • Todd & Jennifer Payne • (705) 875-5904

Kettle Crest Farm • Art & Sandra Alblas • (519) 637-0050

## SHEEP PRODUCERS ON THE SCRAPIE PROGRAM (AS OF SEPTEMBER 2023)

Century Lane Farm • Robert & Shirley Graves • 1 Certified  
Codan Suffolks • Lynne & Bill Duffield • 1 Certified  
DP Farms • Lorraine & Neil Post • 1 Certified  
Lamb Lady Farm • Shelagh Finn • 1 Certified

Oak Glen Farm • Bridget & Peter Misener • 1 Certified  
Our Little Flock • Jaime Neeb • 1 Certified  
WoolDrift Farm • Axel Meister • 1 Certified

# Auction Markets and Abattoirs

ABATTOIRS		
NAME	CITY	PHONE NO
Abattoir LeFavre Inc.	Lefavre	(613) 679-4698
Afghan Halal Meat Suppliers	Schomberg	(416) 894-1802
Agram 2005 Meats Inc.	Georgetown	(905) 877-6082
Al Madina Halal Meat Packers	Brinston	(613) 652-1301
Aman's Abattoir	Wellington	(613) 399-2173
Bachert Meats	Walton	(519) 887-9328
Belle Vallee Meats & Abattoir	Belle Vallee	(705) 647-7419
Bentlnck Packers Ltd.	Hanover	(519) 364-3538
Beverly Creek Farm	Hamilton	(905) 690-8111
*Bilal Farms Inc.	Clarence Creek	(613) 488-2268
Birch Lake Abattoir	Massey	(705) 865-3395
Brian Quinn's Meats Ltd.	Yarker	(613) 377-6430
Burt Farm Country Meats	Gore Bay	(705) 282-0328
Caledon Halal Meat Packers	Bolton	(416) 999-9999
Charles Quality Meats Ltd.	St. Agatha	(519) 886-7931
Cloverbelt Country Meats Co-operative	Oxdrift	(807) 937-6716
Cole Bros. Meat Processing	Pictou	(613) 476-6955
Country Fresh Packers	Tilbury	(519) 682-2222
Creative Meats	Warren	(705) 967-2006
Desormeaux Slaughter-house & Meats Inc.	Crysler	(613) 987-2148
Dresden Meat Packers Ltd.	Dresden	(519) 683-2585
Dufferin County Meats	Amaranth	(519) 939-8068
Elora Road Meats	Mildmay	(519) 367-2261
Ewe Dell Family Farm	Woodslee	(519) 723-4456
Farmersville Community Abattoir	Athens	(613) 924-0400
Gord's Abattoir Ltd.	Leamington	(519) 326-2503
Green's Meat Market & Abattoir Ltd.	Wingham	(519) 357-2912
Grey County Meats	Maxwell	(519) 922-2400
Hank De Koning Ltd.	Port Dover	(519) 583-0115
Harriston Packing Company Ltd.	Harriston	(519) 338-3330
Hastings Meat Market	Stirling	(613) 395-0505
Hay's Custom Cutting Ltd.	Campbellford	(705) 653-3388
Henderson Meats	Chesterville	(613) 448-3471
Highgate Tender Meats Ltd.	Highgate	(519) 678-3383
Highland Packers Ltd.	Stoney Creek	(905) 662-8396
Hilts Butcher Shop Ltd.	Norwood	(705) 696-2172
Hunter's Dressed Meats	Dunnville	(905) 774-5900
J.J. Meat Distributing Inc.	Schomberg	(905) 859-1540
Joe Savage & Fils Abattoir Inc.	St. Albert	(613) 987-2070
Johnson Meats	Aylmer	(519) 773-9208
L & M Meat Distributing Inc.	Beeton	(905) 729-2771
L & M Meat Distributing Inc.	Gilford	(905) 775-6775
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Newmarket Meat Packers Ltd.	Newmarket	(416) 364-2671

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NAME	CITY	PHONE NO
Northern Meat Packers and Abattoir Ltd.	Trout Creek	(705) 723-5573
Norwich Packers Ltd.	Norwich	(519) 468-3617
Ontario Halal Meat Packers Inc.	Milton	(905) 875-0270
Otonabee Meat Packers Ltd.	Peterborough	(705) 743-8547
Palmateer's Abattoir Ltd.	Tweed	(613) 478-3801
Parkhill Meats	Parkhill	(519) 293-3000
Peel Sausage Abattoir	Drayton	(519) 638-3446
Penokean Hills Farms	Bruce Mines	(705) 782-4224
Rainy River District Regional Abattoir Inc.	Emo	(807) 482-3028
Ralph Bos Meats Ltd.	Strathroy	(519) 245-1574
Reiche Meat Products Ltd.	Pembroke	(613) 732-3773
Rua Meats Ltd.	Foxboro	(613) 962-7915
Simcoe Street Meat Packers	Oakwood	(705) 821-3151
Smelser Meats	Cayuga	(905) 772-5053
St. Helen's Meat Packers Ltd.	Toronto	(416) 769-1788
Stayner Meat Packers Ltd.	Stayner	(705) 428-3006
Taylor's Custom Meats	Roseneath	(905) 352-2367
Teals Pure Pork Sausage	Waterford	(519) 443-8844
The Beefway	Kincardine	(519) 396-2257
Thunder Bay Meat Processing Co. (1986) Ltd.	Murillo	(807) 935-2911
Townsend Butchers	Simcoe	(519) 426-6750
Vanessa Meats & Deli	Vanessa	(519) 446-3897
VG Packers	Simcoe	(519) 426-2000
Wall's Pork Shop	Oxdrift	(807) 937-4357
Weiland Meats Ltd.	Petrolia	(519) 882-1215
Willie's Meats Ltd.	Troy	(519) 647-3160
Windcrest Meat Packers Ltd.	Port Perry	(800) 750-2542
Zehr's Country Market	Dashwood	(519) 237-3668

AUCTION MARKETS			
Aylmer Stockyards Inc.	8933 Walker Road, RR 1	Aylmer	(519) 765-2672
Brussels Livestock Exchange	42857 Newry Road, RR 3	Brussels	(519) 887-6461
D.H. Hickson Ltd.	2508 County Road 8, RR 5	Campbellford	(705) 653-3660
Denfield Livestock Exchange Inc.	12952 Sixteen Mile Road, RR 2	Denfield	(519) 666-1140
Embrun Livestock Exchange Ltd.	1643 Salebarn Road,	Greely	(613) 821-2634
Hagersville Auction Centre	97 First Line, RR 6	Hagersville	(905) 768-5601
Kawartha Lakes Community Sale Barn Inc.	580 Woodville Road, RR 3	Woodville	(705) 439-4444
Keady Livestock Market Ltd.	117012 Grey Road 3, RR 4	Tara	(519) 934-2339
Ontario Livestock Exchange Inc.	856 Weber Street N,	Waterloo	(519) 884-2082
Ontario Stockyards Inc.	3807 Highway 89,	Cookstown	(705) 458-4000
Renfrew-Pontiac Livestock Ltd.	18156 Highway 17, RR 3	Cobden	(613) 646-7335
Temiskaming Livestock Exchange	883006 Highway 65 E, RR 3	New Liskeard	(705) 647-5415
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# District Contacts

Look for your district news and events in the Messenger or on the website.

## District 1

*Counties of Essex, Kent, Lambton, Middlesex, and Elgin*

Director	Art Alblas	519.637.0050
Chair	Sandra Alblas	519.637.0050
Vice Chair	Ed Post	519.280.4638
Secretary	Kacey Wilson	519.521.6742
Treasurer	Lisa Burks	519.671.2635

## District 2

*Counties of Grey and Bruce*

Director	Jay Lennox	519.374.4055
Chair	Jason Emke	519.379.8778
Vice Chair	Olivier Garceau	519.477.1305
Secretary	Dennis Thompson	519.881.3174
Treasurer	Petra Aeberhard	519.665.2017

## District 3

*Counties of Huron, Perth, Waterloo and Oxford*

Director	Keith Todd	519.528.2650
Chair	Susan Martin	519.699.8066
Vice Chair	Ron Follings	519.625.8809
Secretary	Bonnie DeWeerd	519.502.1389
Treasurer	Rick Zimak	519.284.0533

## District 4

*County of Brant, Regional Municipalities of Hamilton-Wentworth, Haldimand-Norfolk and Niagara*

Director	Marusha Kostuk	519.865.6874
Chair	Jay Mycroft	905.957.1114
Secretary	Rachel Minton	905.746.2279
Treasurer	Monica Roberts	519.755.7487

## District 5

*Counties of Wellington and Dufferin and the Regional Municipalities of Halton and Peel*

Director	Ryan Schill	519.669.4146
Chair	Mike Swidersky	519.370.8586
Secretary	Romy Schill	519.699.4146
Treasurer	Bill McCutcheon	519.766.7905

## District 6

*County of Simcoe, District Municipality of Muskoka and the District of Parry Sound*

Director	John Hemsted	705.487.2466
Chair	Grant Cowan	705.436.2236
Vice Chair	Shelagh Finn	647.932.7102
Secretary	Rachel Brooks	705.828.0059

## District 7

*City of Toronto, Regional Municipalities of York and Durham, City of Kawartha Lakes, and Counties of Peterborough and Northumberland*

Director	Ken Lamb	905.985.4247
Chair	Todd Payne	705.875.5904
Vice Chair	Tracey Werry	289.385.6804
Secretary	Kim Schneider	905.404.7811
Treasurer	Rebecca Parker	905.259.1102

## District 8

*Counties of Lennox and Addington, Hastings, Prince Edward, Frontenac and Leeds*

Director	Karen Davis	613.659.3347
Chair	Phil Botden	613.358.2676
Vice Chair	Brad Davis	613.659.3347
Secretary/Treasurer	Jennifer Nash	613.477.1908

## District 9

*Counties of Renfrew and Lanark, and the Township of West Carleton and the City of Kanata in the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton*

Director	Reggie Campbell	613.257.7524
Chair	Simon Deschamps	simcor.contracting@gmail.com
Vice Chair	Trevor Hine	613.223.0266
Secretary	Lyndsey Smith	204.807.5897
Treasurer	Katie Ward Chiasson	613.797.0601

## District 10

*Counties of Russell, Prescott, Glengarry Stormont, Dundas and Grenville, and the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, except the Township of West Carleton and the City of Kanata*

Director	Lee Brien	519.809.5332
Chair	Devon Winsink	613.330.8014
Vice Chair	Ghislain Mayer	613.330.2856
Secretary	Colleen Acres	613.826.2330
Treasurer	Sarah Jean Campbell	613.330.8014

## District 11

*Districts of Kenora, Rainy River, Thunder Bay, Cochrane, Algoma, Sudbury, Temiskaming, Nipissing and Manitoulin*

Director	Jenna Wight	705.622.1774
Chair	Colleen Alloi	705.248.3287
Vice Chair	Mark Lenover	705.563.2966
Secretary	Trudy Reid	807.935.3224



*Save the date!*

Wednesday, November 8th and  
Thursday, November 9th

The Dairy Sheep Association of North America announces the upcoming Dairy Sheep Symposium 2023. DSANA's annual Symposium will be virtual again this year: two half-days, Wednesday, November 8th and Thursday, November 9th, from Noon to 4:30pm EST.

**PRESENTATIONS WILL INCLUDE:**

- Selecting for udder confirmation and milk production
- The economics of feeding high-producing dairy ewes
- Making yogurt with sheep milk
- Virtual dairy sheep farm tours from around the world

Information about additional presentations will be posted on the DSANA website:

[www.dsana.org/2023-symposium](http://www.dsana.org/2023-symposium)

The 2023 virtual Dairy Sheep Symposium is Free to DSANA members; \$75 to non-members. Registration will open on the DSANA website on October 1, 2023. Contact [hello@dsana.org](mailto:hello@dsana.org) with any questions.

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