

Emerald Star Project

4-H Members Guide To Raising Lambs

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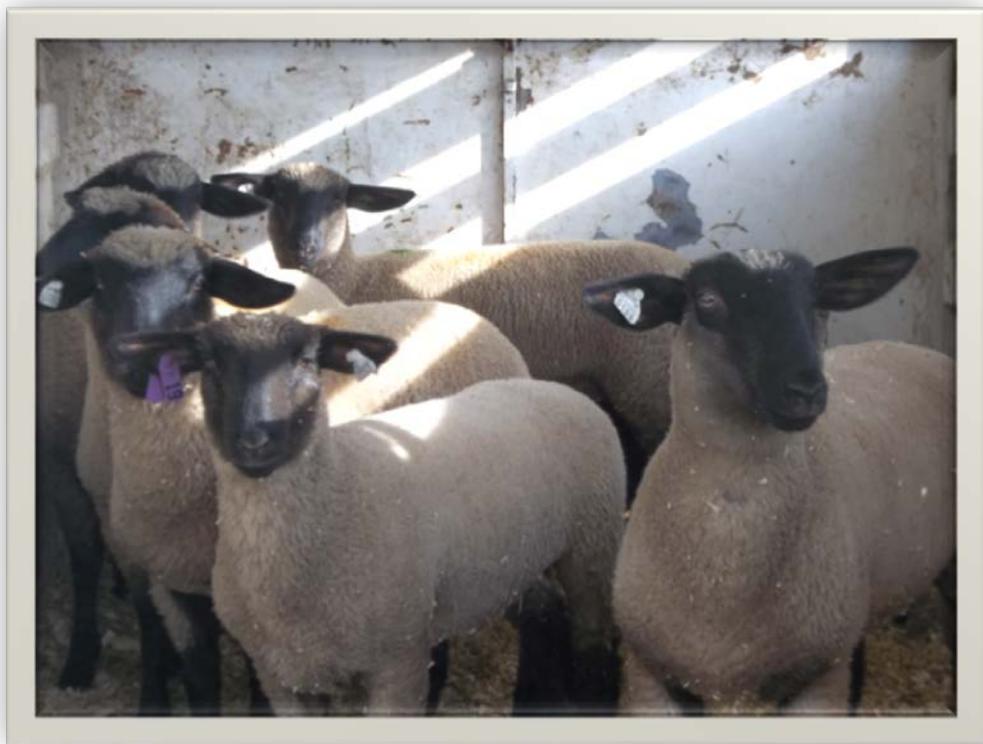
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A 4-H member's guide to raising lambs

Selection:

The two most common lamb breeds are suffix and Hampshire, but there are also others such as Southdown. While looking for a lamb you want to check how long it is; measuring from the point of neck to the end of the tail, the longer the better. You also want to check the size of the back legs. Check to make sure the tail is docked (cut to a small stub, but you can still feel movement). Measurements: length of neck, overall length, fore saddle or rack length, loin length, hip length, depth of twist, length of leg, width of leg, width of stance, width of stifle, width of rump, stifle area, Crotch or twist, inside leg muscle, width of pin bones, outside leg muscle and hock.



Market Lambs On their Way To Their New Show Homes



Suffolk



hire

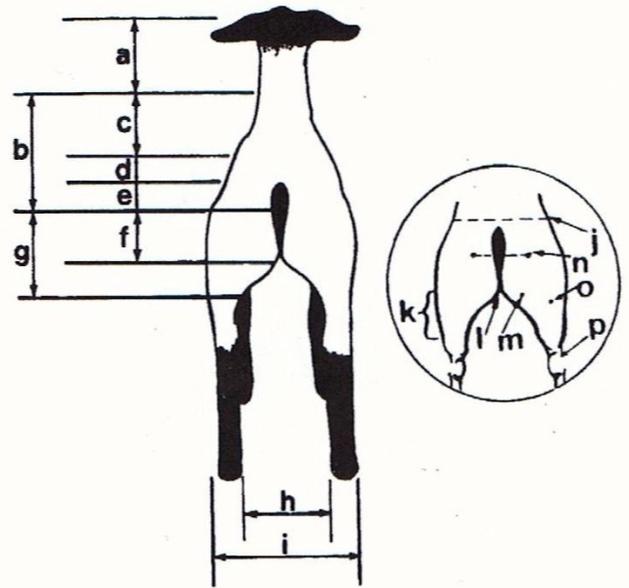
Hamps

One last thing to remember when selecting your market lamb is age. As a feeder and exhibitor, your responsibility is to have lambs less than one year of age at showtime. However, going to a reputable

breeder should remedy this factor. Be sure to explain to the breeder your goals and show schedule. Most breeders will help guide you in the right direction.

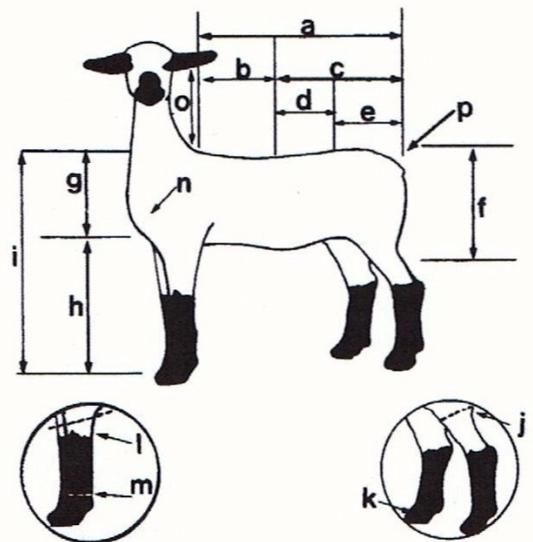
Rear view measurements

- a. Length of neck
- b. Overall length
- c. Foresaddle or rack length
- d. Loin length
- e. Rump or hip length
- f. Depth of twist
- g. Length of leg
- h. Width of stance
- i. Width of stifle
- j. Width of rump
- k. Stifle area
- l. Crotch or twist
- m. Inside leg muscle
- n. Width of pin bones
- o. Outside leg muscle
- p. Hock



Side view measurements

- a. Overall length of top
- b. Foresaddle or rack length
- c. Hindsaddle length
- d. Loin length
- e. Rump or hip length
- f. Length of leg
- g. Depth of chest
- h. Height from ground
- i. Overall or shoulder height
- j. Diameter of leg or length of stifle
- k. Pastern
- l. Diameter of forearm
- m. Diameter of cannon bone
- n. Point of shoulder
- o. Length of neck
- p. Dock



Feeding:

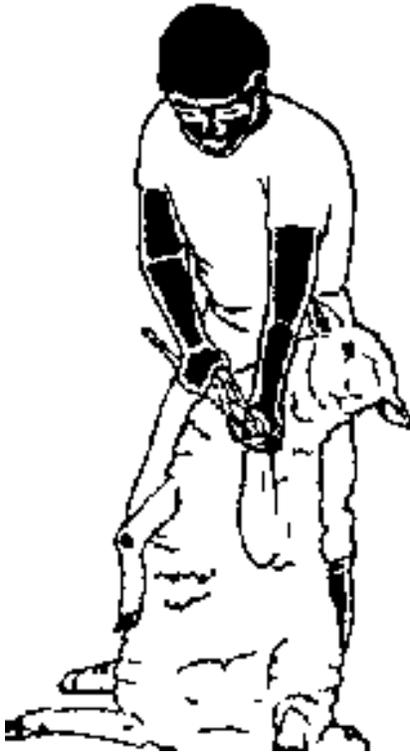
When feeding lambs it is important to keep in mind that lambs have very sensitive stomachs. Only increase a lambs grain by a $\frac{1}{4}$ of a pound. Keep it at that same increase for three days until it is safe to increase the grain again. Although it is dangerous to increase grain too rapidly you need to make sure you are feeding enough hay to keep the lamb full, so give each lamb two big handfuls at the beginning of the year. Slowly increase grain and decrease hay when you get closer to fair. In general it takes 5 pounds of grain for a lamb to gain one pound. The Food Conversion Ratio is 5:1.

Equipment:

You will need shampoo, clippers, lamb stand, brush, scissors, wool card, and a halter. You will need a feed pan and water bucket as well.

Grooming / Shearing:

The night before you show you want to make sure that your lambs feet have a fresh trim. A pair of pruners works great, then sand the hoof till smooth.



Bad



Good



Bad



Good

When fair time comes around lambs need to be fitted for the show arena. Be sure to wash your lamb before you clip so dirt, oils and other debris don't clog the clippers. The secret to washing lambs is to make sure they are really wet and use a lot of soap. Wash the pockets of your lamb. The pockets are located on the underside of the lamb and are like the armpits of the back leg. Shear the lamb while they are still damp, damp not wet. Shear the lambs from the tail towards the neck to elongate the body. It is also important to clip the neck, ears, and face. You do not want to clip the lamb more than three days before your class. Right before you go into the show arena make sure your lambs hooves are clean and card up the lambs leg wool.

Showing:

Showing your lamb is easy if you work with it before the actual show.

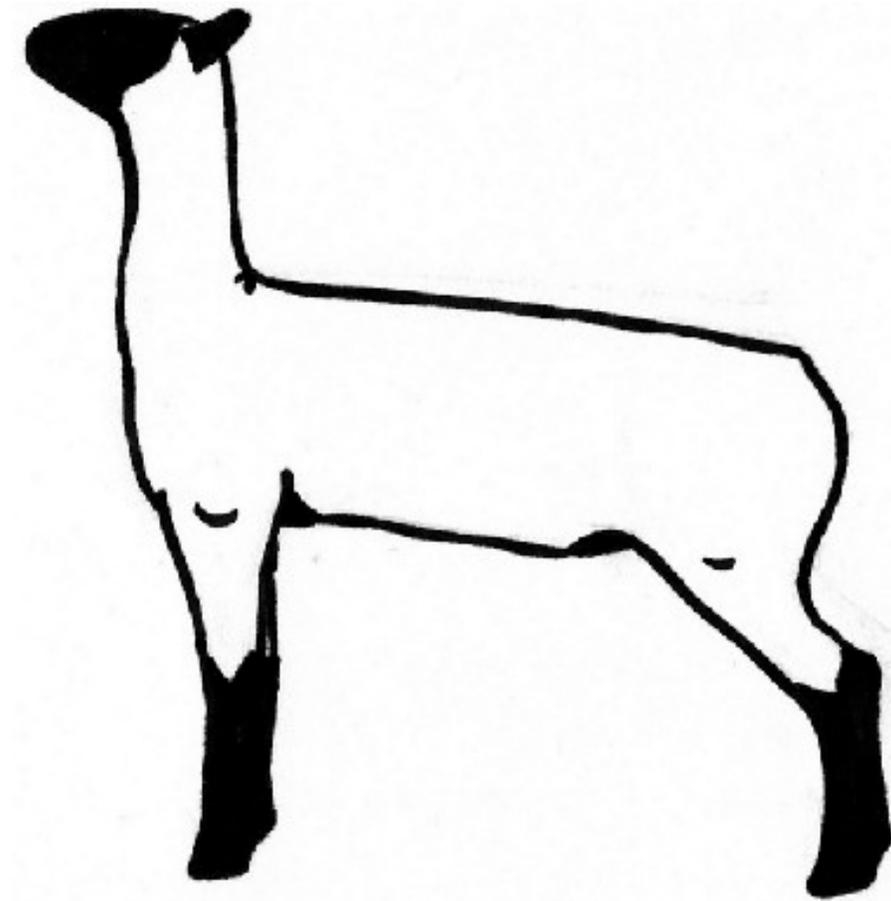
First, you lead your lamb by the head, so you have to teach it to lead.

Second, and probably the most important rule for all showing is to never get in between your animal and the judge.

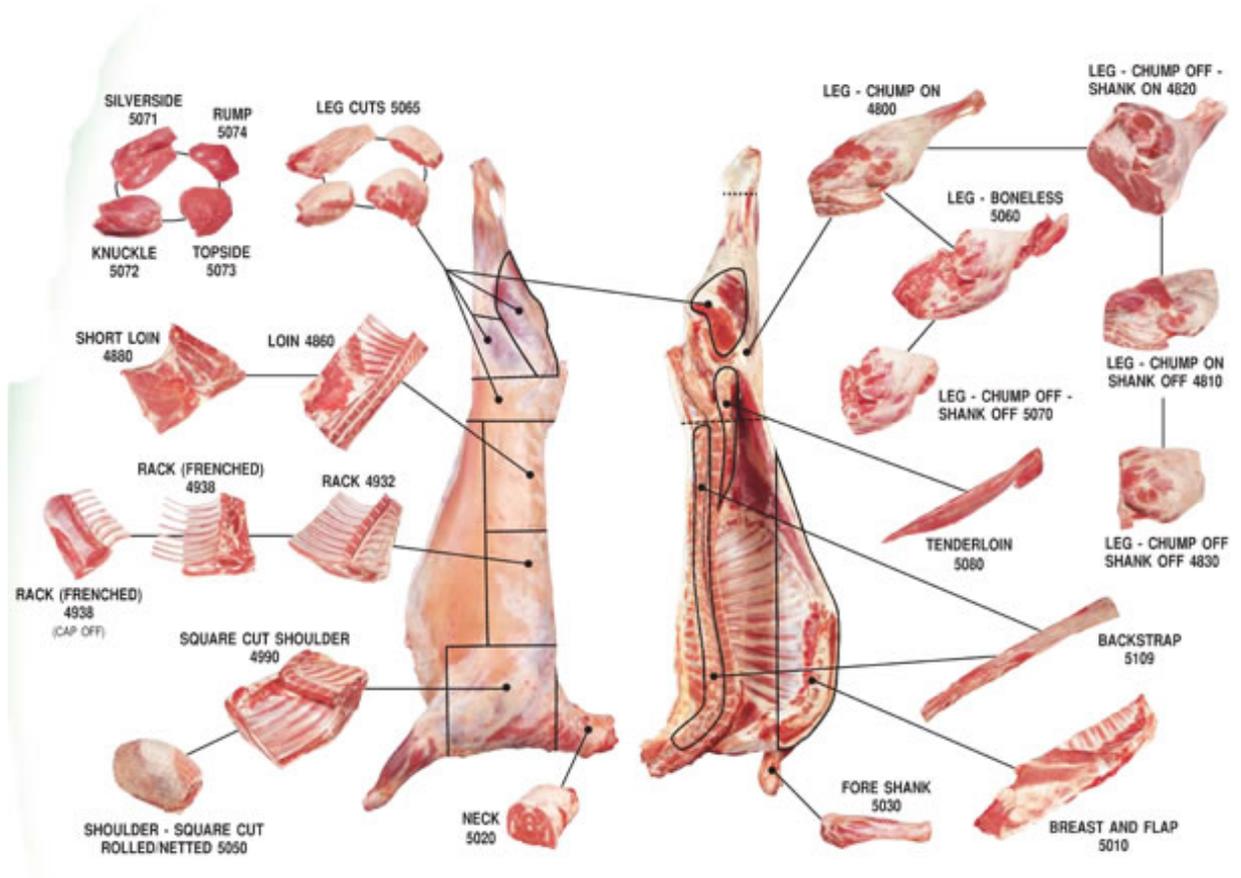
Third, it is important to set up the lamb. Line up the back legs and try to make them square, also line up the front legs. When the judge comes to touch your lambs, brace it by pushing your leg into the front of your lamb to make its muscles tense.

Fourth, clear the front view of the lamb when the judge comes to the front of your lamb.

Fifth, if the competition between first and second is close the judge might ask you a few questions, such as, what breed is your lamb? Can you name three different lamb breeds? Or, can you name a lamb disease?



LAMB CUTS



During showmanship it is important to know the cuts of meat. Many times the judge has asked: what are the three most expensive cuts of meat on a lamb. The answer would be, leg of lamb, rack of lamb or ribs, and lamb chops which come from the loin area.