

Study Guide: Lamb Skill-a-thon (Int)

Lamb is a prime source of high-quality protein, vitamins, and minerals. Lamb is high in B vitamins, zinc, and iron. Red meats, especially lamb and beef, are amongst the best sources of absorbable iron. For those watching their carbohydrate intake, lamb has zero Carbs. Compared to other meats, lamb contains very little marbling (fat in the meat). Since lamb fat is on the edges of the meat, it is easily trimmed off, which means fewer calories. The meat from an older sheep (over one year of age) is called mutton. It has a more intense flavor than lamb, but is preferred to lamb in some cultures. Yearling mutton is the meat from a sheep that is between one and two years of age. It is intermediate in flavor intensity between lamb and mutton. In terminology when we are discussing this species do we refer to them as Sheep or Lambs? In general, Sheep are over one year of age. They have usually produced offspring. Lambs are less than one year of age. They have usually not produced offspring. A female sheep is called a ewe. A young female is called a ewe lamb. A male sheep is called a ram. Buck is the slang term for ram. A young male is called a ram lamb, However, a castrated male sheep is called a Wether. Wethers are generally less aggressive than rams. A group of sheep is called a flock. But some Farmers that raise large groups of sheep will sometimes refer to these larger groups as bands or mobs. Some breeds of Sheep are often mistaken as Goats. The scientific difference between the two are that Sheep (*Ovis Aries*) have 54 chromosomes, while goats (*Capra Hircus*) have 60. The easiest way to tell the difference between a sheep and goat is to look at their tails. A goat's tail goes up (unless it is sick, frightened, or in distress). Sheep tails will hang down and are often docked (shortened) for health and sanitary reasons. Another difference is in the way that they forage and their diet selection. Goats are natural browsers, preferring to eat leaves, twigs, vines, and shrubs. They are very agile and will stand on their hind legs to reach vegetation. Sheep are grazers, preferring to eat short, tender grasses and clover. Their dietary preference is forbs (broadleaf weeds) and they like to graze close to the soil surface. Goats like to eat the tops of plants. Tails are a natural part of a sheep's body. Lambs are born with tails. The length of a lamb's tail is usually half-way between the length of its mother's tail and its father's tail. In fact, tail length is a highly heritable trait. Up to 84 percent of the differences in sheep tail length is due to genetics. There are more breeds of sheep than breeds of any other livestock species. Worldwide, there are more than one thousand distinct sheep breeds. There are more than 40 breeds in the United States. Sheep come in all different sizes, shapes, and colors. Breeds are classified according to their primary purpose (meat, milk, or wool), the type of fibers they grow (fine, medium, long or carpet wool or hair), the color of their faces (black, white, red, or moddled), and/or by specific physical or production characteristics. Wool is the product for which sheep are best known. Wool is widely used in clothing from knitwear such as socks and jumpers to cloth used for suits and costumes. It is used in the furniture trade both for making chair covers and for upholstery. Many of the better carpets produced traditionally and today are made from wool. Wool is used to fill mattresses. It is used in diverse products, such as tennis ball covers, pool table baize, and hanging basket liners. Alternative uses of wool are increasing. Wool is a very useful product when oil spills occur. Pads made from wool can be used to soak up the oil. In 1999 when an oil spill occurred near Phillip Island, Australia, the Phillip Island penguins were fitted with wool sweaters. The sweaters

helped maintain the tiny penguin's body heat and prevented them from being poisoned by the oil. Years ago it was rumored that hair sheep came about as a result of crossing a Goat and a Sheep. This is not true. Hair sheep are not a cross between sheep and goats. They have the same number of chromosomes as wooled sheep. The primary difference between hair sheep and wooled sheep is the ratio of hair to wool fibers. All sheep have both types of fibers. Hair sheep have more hair fibers and wool sheep have more wool fibers. Wooled sheep need sheared. Hair sheep do not. Hair sheep also do not usually need their tails docked. Most wooled sheep will have docked tails. Hair sheep do not require shearing because they lack sufficient wool fibers or because their coats naturally shed. However, crosses between hair sheep and wooled breeds need to be sheared. It can take anywhere from 1 to 3 generations of crossing to eliminate the need for shearing. Wool is a freely-traded international commodity, subject to global supply and demand. While wool represents only 3% of world fiber production, it is important to the economy and way of life in many countries. Australia dominates the world wool market while China is the largest wool buyer. The United States accounts for less than 1 percent of the world's wool production and is a net importer of wool. In the U.S., the top states for wool production are Texas, California, and Wyoming. When most people think of sheep they think of Wool and Lamb chops being the number one products that sheep produce, however some other sheep products that are valuable to us are; Lanolin, Milk, and Sheep Skin. Lanolin is an oily substance found in sheep's sebaceous glands. Sometimes this material is called wool wax, wool fat or wool grease. Lanolin is water repellent and helps sheep to shed water that builds up in their thick coats. The Food and Drug Administration has granted permits for lanolin to be available as an over-the-counter treatment for protecting the skin. Lanolin has also been approved for use as a softener in chewing gum and as an indirect food additive.

Dairy Sheep:

Sheep have been raised for milk for thousands of years and were milked before cows. The world's commercial dairy sheep industry is concentrated in Europe and the Countries on or near the Mediterranean Sea. The dairy sheep industry is in its infancy in the United States and there are only about 100 dairy sheep farms in the U.S. They are found mostly in New England and the Upper Midwest. Also there are several large commercial sheep dairies in New York and California. Sheep milk is highly nutritious, richer in vitamins A, B, and E, calcium, phosphorus, potassium, and magnesium than cow's milk. It contains a higher proportion of short- and medium-chain fatty acids, which have recognized health benefits. For example, short-chain fatty acids have little effect on cholesterol levels in people. They make milk easier to digest. Sheep milk can be frozen and stored until a sufficient quantity of milk is available to sell or make cheese. Freezing does not affect the cheese-making qualities of the milk. Sheep milk has a higher solids content than goat or cow milk. As a result, more cheese can be produced from a gallon of sheep milk than a gallon of goat or cow milk. Sheep milk yields 18 to 25 percent cheese, whereas goat and cow milk only yield 9 to 10 percent. Most of the sheep milk produced in the world is made into cheese. Some of the most famous cheeses are made from sheep milk: Feta (Greece, Italy, and France), Ricotta and Pecorino Romano (Italy) and Roquefort (France). The U.S. is a large importer of sheep milk cheeses. Sheep milk is also made into yogurt and ice cream.

Sheep Skin:

Sheep skins are removed from the carcasses after slaughter. They are treated in a process called tanning and made into soft leather. Sheep skin is commonly used for making the chamois cloth that you wash your car with. A small number of skins are preserved and sold as sheepskins, with the wool still attached. Persian lambskin; One of the main reasons for keeping Karakul sheep commercially is for the production of Karakul lambskin, the skin of a newborn lamb, 1 to 3 days old. Newly born lambs have tightly-curved, shiny, black fur. Karakul lambskin is also known as Persian lambskin or Astrakhan. It is typically used in full-fur garments, such as coats and skirts, and as trimming, edging, lining, and for accessories. Karakul lamb fur accounts for almost 12 percent of the world's fur trade, second only to mink. Karakul sheep are raised mostly in Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Namibia, where they are the only animals that can survive the harsh environmental conditions, while providing both a food source and income to local people. As with any livestock. Management is key in raising and producing quality and healthy animals. Housing needs for sheep vary by climate, lambing season, and management preferences of the shepherd. If lambing will occur during periods of inclement weather, more elaborate housing is usually required. If lambing will occur on pasture during periods of mild weather, simple shelters may be all that is needed. Lambing percentages are usually higher when shed lambing is practiced. Housed sheep have lower nutritional requirements, whereas sheep kept outside have fewer respiratory problems. There is some disagreement as to whether sheep require shelter while they are on summer pasture. However, sheep will usually choose shelter if it is available to them. Protection from heat is probably more important than protection from rain, though hair sheep are more likely to seek shelter from rain than woolled sheep and less likely to seek shade during the heat of the day. In many cases, trees or a windbreak is all the shelter that sheep need. In open fields without sufficient tree coverage, simple run-in sheds or shade structures can be constructed or purchased. Port-a-huts, calf hutches, polydomes, and carports are useful for small flocks. Whatever your choice for shelter and or pasture. Keeping the area that your sheep will live in clean and free from potential hazards is a big part of quality management. Many sicknesses can be controlled by taking a few protective measures. Vaccinations are an important part of a flock health management program. They provide inexpensive "insurance" against diseases that can commonly affect sheep and lambs. In order for vaccination programs to be successful, label directions should be carefully followed. Vaccines should be stored, handled, and administered properly. Only healthy sheep and lambs should be vaccinated. It is also important to note that vaccines have limitations and that the immunity imparted by vaccines can sometimes be inadequate or overwhelmed by disease challenge. If you are not sure which vaccines your sheep may need your local extension agent or Vet can guide you in the right direction. Part of knowing your sheep and maintaining your flock is to know the terms used to identify the parts of the sheep you may be working with and to also know the symptoms and signs of the most common disease and illnesses found in sheep.

To prepare for the Lamb show at the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion it is necessary to review all of the Market and Breed show rules and procedures so that you know what is expected of you and your Lamb. If you have fed and watered your sheep properly, given the proper vaccinations and medicine as required and exercised your sheep daily then you

should be ready for the show. Ideally all market lambs should weigh between 90 -115 lbs. However the minimum weight for the Market Lambs to enter the Southeastern Livestock Lamb Show is 80 lbs for the Black face Lambs and 70 lbs for the Hair Lambs. If you are raising a ewe for the Market Lamb Show and will also be showing that ewe in the Breeding Lamb Show, you may enter an optional Animal Record Book for the Breeding Show in addition to the mandatory market record book. Any ewe that has lambed will be ineligible to enter the Market Lamb Show. Any ewe that is pregnant at the show will not be eligible to be sold for slaughter. Lambs that turn out to be rams after selection must be castrated and healed to be eligible to show and sell. Lambs will be shown with or without

a halter, at the judge's discretion. No dog collars or similar will be allowed. In order to give the judge the best look at the balance of their individual lamb, the exhibitors should work hard to train their lambs to stand square and to maintain that position for up to ten minutes. Although it is not a requirement, many handlers become so attuned with their lambs that they are able to show with no halter whatsoever. Being prepared is the main key to having yourself and your Lamb ready for the show. If you are relaxed and calm and know that your Lamb has been properly prepared then you should have a fun experience and a successful show.

AGING



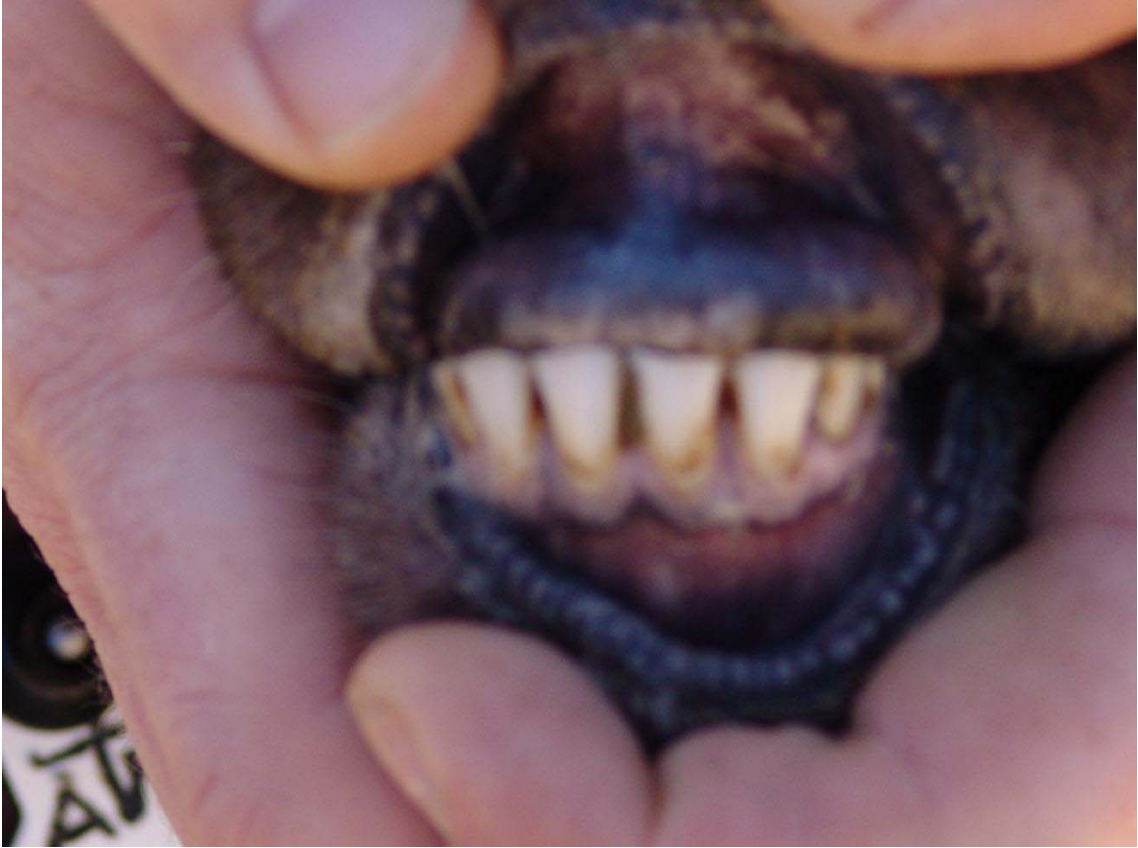
Lamb



Yearling



Two Year Old



Three Year Old

BREEDS

- Originated in Texas
- Males are horned females polled

Barbado



provided by Lynn Magedson

- Produces wool
- Cross between Lincoln and Rambouillet
- Developed in the United States

Columbia



- Wool Breed
 - Finest wool
- Most economically influential
- Produced in New Zealand

Merino



- Hair Breed
- Bred for meat production
- Originated in South Africa

Dorper



- Developed in England
- Meat Breed

Hampshire



- Originated in England
- Known for its large frame and meat production

Suffolk



HEALTH

- Infectious and contagious
- Caused by bacteria
- Treatable with Coppertox or Zinc Sulfate

Foot Rot



- Numerous reasons for scours,
Ex: Coccidiosis, over eating,
worms, etc.
- Can be cured with Spectam
Scour Halt

Scours



- Highly contagious
- Can be cured with many antibiotics either injected or placed directly onto the eye.

Pinkeye



- Caused by genetics, short tail docks coughing and stress
- Is a protrusion of the rectal tissue on the outside of the body
- Repaired by amputating the prolapsed part of the rectum

Prolapse



■ Used to rid a lamb of internal parasites

Dewormer



EQUIPMENT

■ Used to manually shear sheep that does not require electricity.

Hand Shears



■Used to determine length of remaining wool when mechanical shearing, depending on tooth count.

Comb



■Used to insert tags in lamb's ears.

Ear Tagger



■Used for tail docking and surgical castration.

Emasculator



■Used to trim feet.

Hoof Trimmer



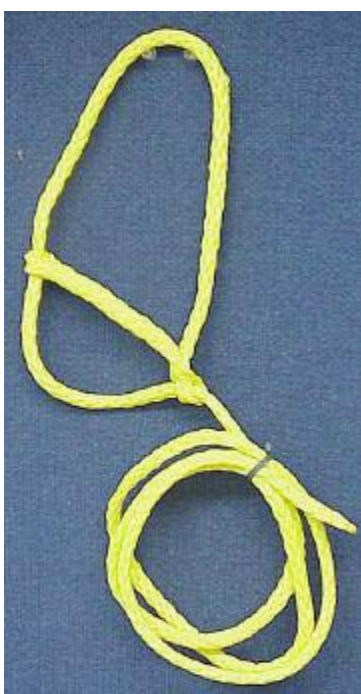
- Used to keep lambs warm during cold months.

Heat Lamps

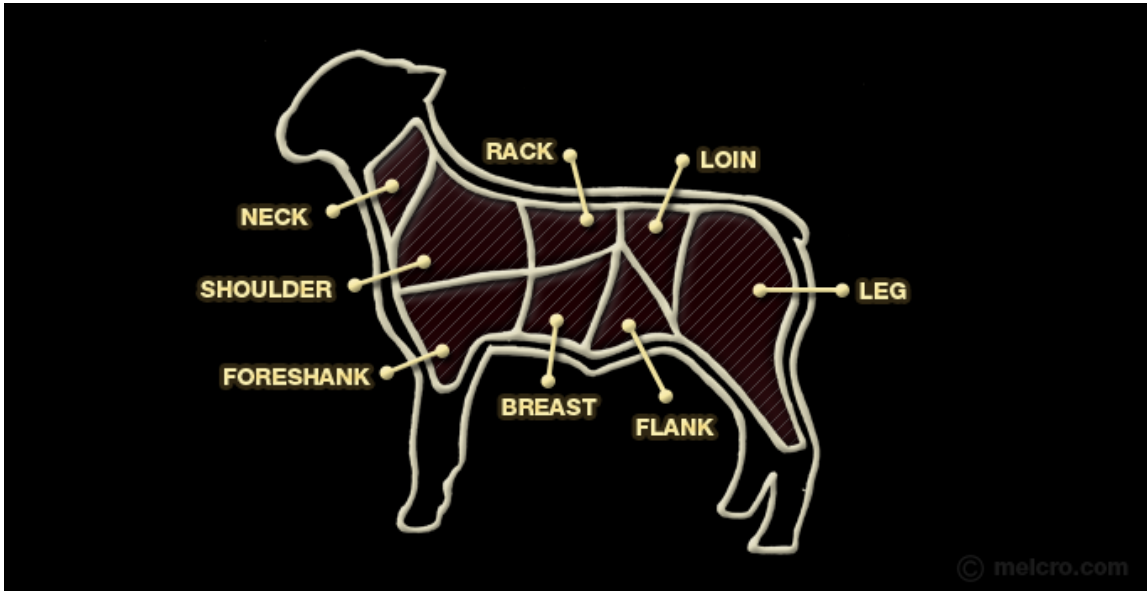


- Used to lead sheep

Halter



MEAT CUTS



Lamb Body Parts

(Although this section will not be part of the Skill-a-thon. You should know the Lamb Parts for part of your Showmanship)

