



# SHEEP

## WELCOME

Welcome to the 4-H Sheep Project! Please read through this guide carefully, as it contains information and suggestions that are important for your project. **4-H leaders can obtain a Leader Project Guide and other resources from the PEI 4-H Office.** Hopefully you, as a member, will “Learn to do by Doing” through hands-on activities that will encourage learning and enjoyment. If you have any questions, contact your District 4-H Officer or your 4-H project leader.

## 4-H YEAR COMPLETION

You complete a project by:

- completing the project Achievement Day requirements
- completing a communication project
- completing a community project
- completing an agriculture awareness project
- taking part in Achievement Day

You must complete all of the listed aspects in order to show at Fairs and Exhibitions.



## ACHIEVEMENT DAY REQUIREMENTS

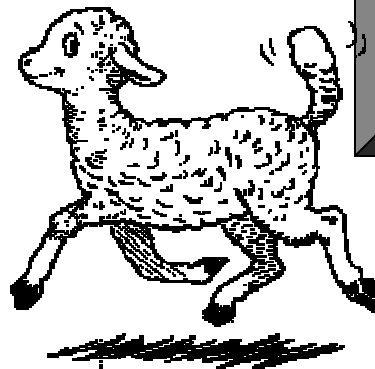
Conformation	40
Showmanship	40
Two inspections or judging	<u>20</u>
	<b>100 Marks</b>

## EXHIBITION REQUIREMENT

Members show their project animal.

## BE A GOOD SPORT!

In the spirit of “learn to do by doing”, all those involved in 4-H are encouraged to practice good sportsmanship, use common sense at all 4-H activities, and the work in any 4-H project should be the member’s own work.



Members must show all of their project animals at their Achievement Day in order to show in 4-H Classes at the Island Fairs and Exhibitions.

If an animal is not shown at Achievement Day it cannot show in 4-H Classes at the Fairs and Exhibitions.

## Ages for 4-H members as of January 1st of the 4-H year:

- Junior: 9-11 years
- Intermediate: 12-14 years
- Senior: 15-21 years

Check out the PEI 4-H Web Site

[www.pei4h.pe.ca](http://www.pei4h.pe.ca)

## HELPFUL RESOURCES!

www.sheepbreeders.ca  
www.mylamb.com  
www.fortnerclublambs.com  
www.sheepandgoat.com  
www.sheepnet.iofm.net  
www.wool.ca

Some books and videos are also available at the PEI 4-H Office which can be borrowed for a two week loan period. To book these, call 368-4833 or drop by the PEI 4-H Office at 40 Enman Crescent, Charlottetown.

## GROOMING

It has been said that first impressions are lasting. This is especially true in showing livestock. A clean, well-groomed lamb will stand out in any class and is more apt to draw and hold the judge's attention than a lamb that is dirty and groomed only in a mediocre manner. Proper grooming can hide some weak points an animal may have allowing it to place above a more structurally correct animal whose owner has neglected to groom it in such a way to emphasize its good points. Proper grooming of your lamb will certainly help you in competition with other lambs.

## JUDGING

There are five main points to consider in judging market lambs...

**Conformation** refers to the shape and type of the lamb. The ideal market lamb has a straight, smooth topline with a well-muscled leg. As well, the animal should have a rectangular appearance with overall balance.

**Muscling** refers to the meatiness of the lamb. Thickness through the centre of the leg, a bulging stifle and natural thickness over the top line are all indications of muscling.

**Finish** refers to the fat covering of the lamb and is detected by handling the lamb. A hard, bare touch over the ribs and edge of the backbone indicates lack of finish while a soft, mellow touch indicates too much finish. On a properly finished lamb, one should be able to feel the backbone and ribs just a little.

**Quality** helps determine market value. The highest-priced meat cuts come from the leg, loin and back areas of the lamb. A high quality, heavily muscled lamb will yield a high percentage of these retail cuts.

**Carcass yield**, the amount of meat a carcass produces is closely dependent upon muscling and finish. Correctly finished, heavily-muscled lambs produce a more desirable amount of the more preferred retail cuts of meat

## SHOWMANSHIP

It is a pleasure to take a well trained lamb into the show ring. On the other hand, it is very discouraging to try to show a lamb that will not do what you want it to do. However, there is no excuse for showing an untrained lamb. Lambs are easy to train if they are handled properly during the project. Members whose lambs are not trained by Achievement Day either started the training too late or did not train them at all.

You must work with your lamb until it is gentle before you can start training it. No lamb will respond to your training until it has accepted you as a friend. Do not be in a hurry. In fact, take about a month. Start by visiting your lamb two or three times a day for a week, but do not handle it. Sit and watch it as it eats or moves about. During the second week, pet the lamb while it eats. During the third week, pat the lamb now and then and handle it as you would in a judging class. By the end of a month, the lamb will be ready to train.

### Sheep Showmanship Score Card

- **Fitting** **30**
  - Condition
  - Cleanliness
  - Trimming and/or grooming
  - Condition of hooves
- **Training and Showing of Animal** **50**
  - Evidence of previous training
  - Handling of the project animal
  - Posing of the project animal
  - Animal's response to the exhibitor's movements
- **Ring Manners and Appearance of Show person** **20**
  - Clothes neat, clean and suitable to occasion
  - Full attention given to the job at hand
  - Is on time, alert and aware of the judge, responds to the judge's requests
  - Courteous, and polite to other exhibitors and judge
  - Knowledge of project animal's pedigree, care and management program.

**100 Marks**



# Grooming

It has been said that first impressions are lasting. This is especially true in showing livestock. A clean, well-groomed lamb will stand out in any class and is more apt to draw and hold the judge's attention than a lamb that is dirty and groomed only in a mediocre manner. Proper grooming can hide some weak points an animal may have, allowing it to place above a more structurally correct animal whose owner has neglected to groom it in such a way to emphasize its good points. Proper grooming of your lamb will certainly help you in competition.

## Trimming The Feet

It is important that you keep the feet of your lamb trimmed during the summer. Properly trimmed hoofs enable a lamb to walk correctly. Trim the feet every 3 weeks from the beginning of the project until about 2 weeks before the fair.

Feet that are not trimmed all summer may become so ill-shaped that they cannot be trimmed back to normal for show. In such case, the lamb will not be able to stand or walk correctly. It may also appear to have crooked legs.

## Trimming The Fleece

Very little work is required to trim a lamb for show if it was sheared early in the project. However, at least five hours of carding and trimming is necessary to get a lamb with a full fleece ready.

The purpose of trimming a lamb is to remove fleece over the entire body to a desired length. Trim the fleece to a length of 1/2 inch three weeks before the fair and wash the lamb. Wait until a few days before the fair and trim the fleece again. This time trim to a length of 3/4 inch. This last trimming should be done carefully so the fleece is smooth and ready for show. By doing this, you will need only to dampen, card and trim off the rough edges at the fair.

## Shearing Your Lamb

The most important thing you can do in grooming lambs for show is to have them sheared. Do this about 3 months before fair time. A lamb should have fleece about 3/8 inch in length when shown. Shearing will eliminate most of the work of cutting the fleece down to the proper length with trimming shears at show time.

## Washing A Lamb

It is a common practice for 4-H members to wash lambs when getting them ready for show. They do it for one reason... to make the lambs look more attractive. Washing does improve the appearance of a lamb.

A lamb should be washed two or three weeks before the fair. Washing cleans a lamb but it also removes lanolin (natural oil) from the fleece. Lanolin is necessary to give body to the fleece. Washing too near the date of the fair will not allow enough time for lanolin to be replaced by the lamb's body. A lamb that was not sheared earlier in the project should be trimmed before it is washed. Trim the fleece to a length of no more than 1/2 inch.

## Follow this procedure when you trim your lamb:

1. Dip a clean rag in water, wring out the excess water and dampen the fleece by rubbing briskly. This will make trimming easier. Do not soak the fleece.
2. Card the damp fleece to straighten out the ends for trimming.
3. Starting on the top, trim off the tips of all carded wool, using the shears in such a manner that a uniform, even cut is made.
4. Begin trimming by holding the shears in the palm of the hand and thumb.
5. Place the shears flat on the surface to be trimmed and tilt slightly up.
6. Move the shears forward so the bottom blade glides slowly and smoothly.
7. As the bottom blades move forward, clip the fleece by repeatedly pulling the top blade back to the bottom blade and releasing it.
8. As you trim, stop often and dip the shears in water to clean

# Showmanship

It is a pleasure to take a well-trained lamb into the show ring. On the other hand, it is very discouraging to try to show a lamb that will not do what you want it to do. However, there is no excuse for showing an untrained lamb. Lambs are easy to train if they are handled properly during the project. Members whose lambs are not trained by Achievement Day either started the training too late or did not train them at all.

You must work with your lamb until it is gently before you can start training it. No lamb will respond to your training until it has accepted you as a friend. Do not be in a hurry. In fact, take about a month. Start by visiting your lamb two or three times a day for a week but do not handle it. Sit and watch it as it eats or moves about. During the second week, pet the lamb while it eats. During the third week, pat the lamb now and then and handle it as you would in a judging class. By the end of a month, the lamb will be ready to train.

## **Moving A Lamb In The Show Ring**

The first step is to train the lamb so you can control it and move it about in the show ring. To move a lamb, stand on its left side, grasp under its chin with your right hand on its dock. Guide the lamb with your left hand and move it by pressing on its dock with your right hand. Work your lamb a little each day until you can move it about with ease. Never work with a lamb for long periods of time or it will become restless and stubborn.

## **Setting The Lamb Up**

The next step is to train the lamb so that you can set him up. In the show ring the lamb should stand patiently with the front and hind legs wide apart. The head should be held erect and slightly raised. Always work on the left side of the lamb. Set the lamb up by moving its feet into proper position with your hands. Never grasp the legs as you would a baseball bat. Move the leg by gently applying pressure to the inside of the outside of the leg with an open hand. Again, do not expect the lamb to learn too quickly. You will accomplish more by working it for short periods of time.

## **Bracing A Lamb**

The final training phase will be “bracing” the lamb. Bracing means that the lamb holds its back rigid when you press on it. Brace a lamb by getting in front of it and grasping under the chin with both hands. Pull downward with your hands and apply enough backward pressure to cause the lamb to bow its back. Do not choke the lamb or grasp so hard that you hurt him. Have someone act as a judge and handle the lamb’s back as you practice bracing it.

## **Positioning The Lamb**

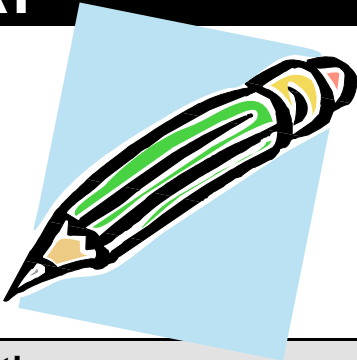
Of paramount importance, the art of exhibiting a sheep should be based on the factor that the animal should be under perfect control of the exhibitor. With this as a basis, control under different situations should be as follows:

- Sheep being posed with the judge at its rear and viewing from a distance. You should be facing your sheep with a hand grasping each cheek. You should be standing, not kneeling, and the lamb should be posed with feet moderately spread, but tucked under enough so the back does not sag. The lamb should be on the level or the front feet on slightly rising ground (not with forefeet in a hole). You may bend your knees to brace yourself against a sudden movement of the sheep, but may not kneel on one or both knees. Do not place your hands at any other place on the sheep (such as over the shoulders or neck or back of the head).
- Sheep being posed but legs out of position. Front feet may be best placed and spread by quick lift and drop while you maintain the same grasp as in above. Lift strongly enough to clear the ground with both feet.



# PROJECT MEETINGS DIARY

*Most projects will require at least six to eight project meetings to complete the project.*



Meeting Date	Location	Time	At this meeting, we...

# Community and Agriculture Awareness Projects

## COMMUNITY PROJECT

Each year you are encouraged to provide a service to your community as a 4-H member. This introduces you to the responsibilities of citizenship. You must participate in your club's plan for a community project and you should have a role to play. Describe your involvement with your club's community project this year.



*Our Community Project was* \_\_\_\_\_

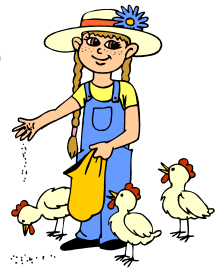
*I helped by* \_\_\_\_\_

*It was beneficial because* \_\_\_\_\_

*I learned* \_\_\_\_\_

## AGRICULTURE AWARENESS PROJECT

Agriculture is one of PEI's main industries. You are expected to participate with your club to complete a project (or provide a service) which helps your club or others become aware of the importance of agriculture in our lives. As in the community project, you should actively participate.



*Our Agricultural Awareness Project was* \_\_\_\_\_

*I helped by* \_\_\_\_\_

*It was beneficial because* \_\_\_\_\_

*I learned* \_\_\_\_\_