2025-2026 4-H Sheep Rules, Requirements, & Guidelines



Enrollment:

- November 30 is the deadline to reenroll as a 4-H member in a Ravalli County 4-H Club.
- December 31 is the deadline to enroll as a new 4-H member in a Ravalli County 4-H Club.
- March 1 is the deadline to enroll in projects.
  - To enroll in a Sheep Project, you must sign up on ZSuite (4H.zsuite.org) for Sheep Level 1, 2, 3, or Sheep Independent Study. If you plan to do Market Lamb or a Breeding Project, you must also sign up for those projects in ZSuite.

Animal Quality Assurance Training

- Quality Assurance Training is **mandatory** for 4-H members who have a Sheep Project in Market and/or Breeding. It must be completed once as a Junior and once as a Senior (1st year).
- If you are not Quality Assurance certified, you will not be allowed to sell or show your animal at the county fair or Livestock Sale in Ravalli or Missoula County.
- Scheduling and questions concerning Quality Assurance are handled by our County Extension Agent(s) and Livestock Committee.

Animal Ownership:

- All breeding project animals must be owned or leased by May 1 of the current year. Documentation of ownership or lease will be required if asked.
- All Market Lambs must be owned by the Spring Weigh-In date. Spring Weigh-In info will be communicated by email, newsletter, and in ZSuite. You must bring a Bill of Sale or Proof of Ownership to Spring Weigh-In.

Market Lambs:

- Market lambs must be born on or after January 1 of the current year to be sold at Fair.
- **Spring Weigh-In is mandatory for all Market Lambs**. If a lamb is not weighed in at Spring Weigh-In, it cannot be shown as a Market Lamb at Ravalli County Fair or sold in the Fair Livestock Sale.
  - Weigh-In paperwork will ask you to provide the breeder's name, phone number and address as well as the lamb's breed, date of birth, and Scrapie identification number.
  - You will be required to show a Bill of Sale or Proof of Ownership at Spring Weigh-In.
  - Scrapie tags must be in the lamb's ear at weigh-in. Scrapie identification should have been put in your lamb's ear by the breeder (the person that you purchased your lamb(s) from). Scrapie identification is governed by State law and each lamb for sale must have one.
  - Lambs will be tagged with required Ravalli County Fair ear tags at weigh-in.
  - If your animal should lose their Fair ear tag or Scrapie identification, notify your Sheep Superintendent(s) or Livestock Sale Administrator. Without these tags, you will not be able to bring your lamb(s) to fair.
  - **All 4-H and FFA male market lambs must be castrated or banded by the day of Spring Weigh-In.** Lambs will be checked during Spring Weigh-In to make sure that this has been done and will be free of infection from the alteration at Fair time. If a cryptorchid or unbanded lamb is found during Spring Weigh-In, a follow up inspection of those animals will take place by July 1. If it has not been fully castrated by July 1, the animal will not be able to show at Fair.

- Sickness: If a lamb appears sick at weigh-in or has other concerning issues, the Sheep Superintendents have the right to ask members for a follow-up with a veterinarian to clear animals of sickness, etc. Documentation from the vet will need to be provided to the Sheep Superintendents.

- You can weigh multiple lambs at Spring Weigh-In, but can only show 2 Market Lambs at Fair and can only sell 1 Lamb in the Livestock Sale.
- Families of 2 or more children can share 1 family market lamb. Only one child can show this animal at the fair. All children must keep complete records on this animal.

Animal Care Tips:

- **Facilities:** All barns and sheds should have adequate ventilation and clean, dry surroundings. Smooth, solid facility sides are helpful to reduce injury or bruising. Additionally, all confined spaces should be regularly cleared of manure to maintain a clean and healthy environment.
- **Nutrition:** To promote overall animal wellbeing general nutrition guidelines include gradual diet changes to allow rumen adaptation, feeding and watering equipment designs to limit injury and contamination, available and clean water, and feed to meet the animals energy requirements.
- **Biosecurity**: Biosecurity includes three primary components: isolation, movement, and sanitation. Most introductions of new diseases are from new animals. Through isolation, movement control, and proper sanitation of animals and their environment will help reduce potential contaminations from being introduced into a flock.
- **Resources:** Superintendents, local breeders, veterinarians, and the Extension Office are all resources to learn more about caring and keeping of livestock. You are highly encouraged to reach out with questions!
- Information adapted from: https://www.sheepusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Sheep-Care-Guide-2021-web.pdf

Record Book Requirements:

- **My 4-H Year:** As a 4-H member, you are required to complete "My 4-H Year" form each year. This form is meant to be worked on during the year. You are required to have this form up-to-date if you are submitting entries for the Ravalli County Fair. This form is to be completed and signed by your club leader by September 30th (end of the 4-H year).
- **Animal Journal:** As a Sheep Project Member, the Animal Journal form is required for breeding and market projects. Records must be kept on each animal. This form is used to keep track of feed costs, weight, veterinary costs, supplies, etc.
- **Sheep Project Books**: As a sheep project member, you must complete a minimum of 7 activities and three to five learning experiences from your sheep books (based on level) each year to complete the project for the year. Please refer to the Clover, Montana 4-H Projects.
- **Completed records and books will need to be kept and turned into your Organization Leader to have fair entries signed.**
- Project and record books must be brought to interviews, as leaders may complete spot checks to see if projects requirements are met.
- Interviews are **required** for both Market and Breeding projects.

Fair

- **Fair entries must be submitted by the Ravalli County Fair deadline.**
- **Pens and Barn Area:**
  - Prior to the fair, the 4-H Sheep Barn Superintendents will make pen assignments. No changing of pens is allowed once you are at the fair, unless approved by the 4-H Sheep Superintendents.
  - No significant modifications of pens will be allowed without permission from the Sheep

Superintendents. This includes, but is not limited to tarps, banners, dressing areas, etc.

- You are encouraged to decorate your barn area. Keep decorations high enough that your lamb(s) can't reach them and eat them. No Balloons. Contact the 4-H Sheep Superintendents if you need your pen assignment prior to Fair Weigh-In for decorating purposes.
- **It is Mandatory to have a Stall Card hung above the pen for each animal at Fair by Wednesday morning.** Stall cards will be available at weigh-in. Help is available if you don't know how to fill it out.

- **Pick up your fair entry tags and exhibitor number at the Fairgrounds' Premium Office.** It is located south of the Ravalli County Fair Office. Your exhibitor number will be on an index card. Please be certain to have this number with you during the fair. **This card must be displayed on your upper arm during all 4H & FFA Sheep shows.**
- **<u>Mandatory Fair Weigh-in:</u>**
  - **All Market Lambs must be weighed in on Monday of fair week from 4:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.**
  - Market lambs will be weighed in for the Ravalli County Fair right off the truck/trailer. Animals must be uncovered. Members and parents can watch the weigh-in and are allowed to challenge the weight only once. Market animals are not allowed to leave the scale area and will be immediately reweighed. The second weight will be the final weight. Any concerns need to be discussed with the Extension Agent and Barn Superintendent(s).
  - Market lambs must be rough shorn (wool no longer than ½ inch) and uncovered before entering the scale area.
  - If you are not going to be in line by 7:30 p.m. to have your animals weighed, you must call the Sheep Superintendents before 7:00 p.m. to notify them, so arrangements can be made, if possible.
  - The weight range for market lambs is 100-160 pounds. Lambs over 160 pounds can be sold at the 4-H & FFA Livestock Sale, but the 4-H member will be paid for no more than 160 pounds.
  - If your lamb weighs less than 100 pounds, you may reenter in the feeder lamb class. You must let the Barn Superintendent(s) know when at the scales during Fair Weigh-In if you want to reenter in the feeder lamb class. Feeder lambs will not be sold at the Livestock Sale.
  - Members are allowed to show 2 market lambs in the market class but can only sell 1 market lamb in the 4-H & FFA Livestock Sale. All animals not entered in a class must be removed from the Fairgrounds immediately after the weigh-in.
- **There is a Mandatory Barn Meeting on Monday of Fair Week at 8:30 p.m. in Hornung Arena**. If you cannot make the meeting, someone such as a parent or sibling must be your representative. Every member or their representative must sign in on the sign-in sheet.
- **<u>Caring for Your Animals/Herdsmanship:</u>**
  - You are responsible for the care of your animal during the fair. This includes, but is not limited to, feeding, watering, cleaning pens and walkways in your club area.
  - All grain must be kept in a sealed container (for example: a garbage can with a lid) or at your camp area (if you camp at Fair). All hay must be covered. Please do not help yourself to someone else's animal feed. You are responsible for your own feed supply.
  - All pens should be cleaned daily by the exhibitor or club members. Parents should not be cleaning pens, watering animals, shearing, etc. We understand that members have other projects, sports and other commitments. Please talk with the Sheep Superintendent(s) about your situation if you as a member are unable to do these tasks. Determination of accommodations will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Superintendents and will need to be discussed ahead of time.
  - There is a limited supply of animal bedding available during the fair. You should change the bedding in your animal's pen daily as it becomes wet or dirty. Please make a note of the "Clean Bedding" and the "Dirty Bedding" locations. Dispose of the used bedding in the proper location.
  - The barn has limited supplies available for cleaning pens, including shovels, rakes, brooms, and wheelbarrows, but you are encouraged to coordinate with your club to bring additional supplies to make cleaning go smoothly. Space is available to store supplies, but is limited.

- There is a **Herdsmanship Contest** for clubs and individuals based on cleanliness of pens, aisles, and care for animals. Judging will happen each day at undisclosed times (always have your area clean and ready). More information is under the 4-H/ FFA Livestock and Small Animal General Rules and Regulations.

- **Grooming Your Animal:**
  - Shearing: Your market lamb(s) must be slick shorn within ten days of the Market Lamb Show. If you are shearing at the Fair, please coordinate your shearing time and location with the 4-H Sheep Superintendent(s). Your market lamb's wool must be no longer than ½ inch when it goes across the scale at Fair Weigh-In.
  - If you are planning to use blowers and shears on the fairgrounds, it is highly recommended that you bring alternative power, such as a generator, because of power limitations within the Sheep Barn.
- **Check the Sheep Barn Announcement Area and Ravalli County Sheep Facebook Page regularly** for listings of weight classes for market lambs, show times, interview schedules, rules and regulations, and any changes or announcements.
- **Breeding Projects:**
  - Breeding Sheep can be brought into Fair during Market Lamb weigh-in or on Tuesday of fair week. Breeding Sheep must be in the barn by 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday of fair week. **Superintendents must be notified when these sheep come to the barn so that they can be checked in.** Scrapie identification will be checked.
  - Mandatory Breeding Project Interviews will take place before the week of Fair Week.
  - Mandatory Breeding Posters must be hung over your sheep pens by Wednesday at 10:00 p.m. You are encouraged to take your poster to your interview.
  - A ewe lamb tagged as market lamb cannot be shown as a breeding project.
- Educational posters are to be turned in to the Superintendents after weigh-in and before Tuesday at 6 PM.
- Fair Management, including Superintendents, Judges and Extension Agents, have the right to call a veterinarian should a situation arise concerning the health of any animal. The exhibitor will be responsible for vet fees.
- Please take the time to visit with fair attendees about your animals and projects. This is part of the reason people attend the fair. Many people who walk through the animal barns would love to know specific facts about your animal and what is involved in its care. They especially like to hear information from youth about raising livestock.
- There may be an area within the Sheep barn in which Clubs will take shifts to talk with the public. The Superintendents will have a signup sheet at the start of Fair.
- Review the Fair Book regarding Sheep and the General Requirements within the Fair Book for all 4-H and FFA animals.

The Day of the 4-H/FFA Market Show, Breeding Show and Sheep Showmanship:

- Arrive early to make sure your animal is fed and clean.
- Animals presented in the show ring for any judging event, except the Costume Contest, or Livestock Sale, should not be decorated with artificial markings, ribbons, glitter or other foreign items.
- No glitter or paint can be used on lamb or sheep during the costume contest.
- **ALL ANIMAL EXHIBITOR'S DRESS CODE (applies to all species; all classes, except showmanship classes; and the livestock sale).**

- Dress code: Clean, collared, long sleeved, long tailed shirt with collar, buttoned up and tucked into dark pants or jeans, and dark boots or leather footwear (no tennis shoes, rubber boots or sandals, etc.) must be worn by livestock exhibitors during livestock events. Official dress is mandatory for FFA members.
- If a member does not comply with these rules they will not be allowed to show or sell their animal.
- **MANDATORY DRESS for all SHOWMANSHIP classes**: White long sleeved, long-tailed shirts with collar, buttoned up and tucked into black jeans or pants; dark boots or leather footwear (no tennis shoes, rubber boots or sandals, etc.). FFA official dress is mandatory. Hats are not allowed.
- If an exhibitor does not have the proper dress they will be asked to change. Check with Extension Office on if attire is available from the Black & White Closet. If not compliant with changing, the exhibitor will be asked to leave the show ring. If asked to leave the show ring, you will not be able to sell at the Livestock Sale.
- Please ask the Sheep Superintendents if you are unsure about proper attire.

Selling an Animal at the Livestock Sale:

- If a member is showing more than one market animal (same species or different), he or she must let the Sheep Superintendents know which animal they will be selling immediately after the last market show they are involved in. If they have 2 market lambs (and no other species), they must let the Superintendents know by 5:00 PM on Wednesday of fair week.
- The Grand and Reserve Market Lamb **must** sell in the Ravalli County 4-H & FFA Livestock Sale, unless the winning exhibitor already sold an animal in the Western Montana Fair in Missoula. In the event that an Exhibitor wins more than 1 Grand Champion or Reserve Grand Champion, they must choose which one to sell.
- With the exception of Grand and Reserve Champions and the final drive, the sale order will be determined by random draw. The sheep sale order will be champions, purple by placing in the final drive, blue, and red ribbon lambs.
- Arrive early on sale day to make sure your animal is fed and clean.
- It is **mandatory** to have a Thank You card for your buyer. You will need to show the Sheep Superintendents your card.
- There will be a photo certificate of you and your market lamb which needs to be delivered with your Thank You card to your buyer.

After the County Fair Shows and Livestock Sale:

- After the Livestock Sale, you must continue to feed and water your animal daily, and to keep pens clean and fresh until the buyer has removed the livestock from the barn.
- At the end of fair, you must clean the pens used to house your animals during the county fair. Pens must be cleaned by 1:00 p.m. on Sunday of fair week. Failure to check your pen out with the Sheep Superintendents will result in a fine of no more than $50 paid to the Sheep Barn held in the 4-H Advisory Council account. Time of clean out is subject to change and contingent on market animal removal.
- Animal Release Time: Sunday 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Breeding Stock can be released as *Walk Out Only* Saturday 8:30 – 10:00 p.m. Enter and exit through the North Gate only!

Amanda Schmitt	**Emily Wiren**	**Zach Backes**
Sheep Superintendent	**Sheep Superintendent**	**Sheep Superintendent**
406-544-3935	**406-239-1280**	**720-384-3305**

*As approved by Countywide Leaders and Project Members annually

4-H & FFA Sheep

Superintendents:
Amanda Schmitt • (406) 544-3935
Emily Wiren • (406) 239-1280
Zach Backes • (720) 384-3305

All market lambs must be weighed in on Monday of Fair week from 4:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Breeding sheep can also be brought in on Monday during this time. All breeding sheep must be in the barn by 6:00 p.m. Tuesday of Fair week. Superintendents must be notified when these sheep come to the barn so that they can be checked in. Scrapie identification will be checked.

Mandatory Sheep Barn Meeting Monday night at 8:30 p.m.

Removal of non-market animals is Saturday 8:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. (walk out only) or Sunday 9:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m. Time contingent upon market animal removal Enter and exit through the North Gate only.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. Refer to General, 4-H, FFA and Livestock Rules and Regulations for more information.
2. The Barn Superintendent(s), prior to the Fair, will make the sheep pen assignments. No modifications to pens unless approved by the Sheep Superintendent(s).
3. **Scrapie identification must be in the sheep's ear before sheep enter the North Gate of the Fairgrounds.**
4. Cryptorchid or buck lambs will be given white ribbons in the lamb lots and not sold in the Livestock Sale.
5. Market lambs must be rough shorn (wool no longer than ½ inch) and uncovered before entering the scale area.
6. Market lambs must be slick shorn within 10 days of the Market Lamb Show. Lambs not slick shorn within the indicated time will not be allowed to be shown or sold.
7. Market lambs must be born January 1st or later of current 4-H year and weighed in at the Spring Weigh-In to be entered in the Market Lamb Show and Livestock Sale.
8. The weight obtained at the Spring Weigh-In will establish the initial weight for Average Daily Gain. There is a special premium for Average Daily Gain. Criteria for this award: lamb must weigh between 100-160 pounds and have gained the most weight per day.
1. Market lambs will be weighed in for the Ravalli County Fair. Animals must be uncovered – refer to species specific rules for fitting requirements. Members and parents can watch the weigh-in and are allowed to challenge the weight only once. Market animals are not allowed to leave the scale area and will be immediately reweighed. The second weight will be the final weight. Any concerns need to be discussed with the Extension Agent and Barn Superintendent(s).
9. The weight range for market lambs is 100-160 pounds. Lambs over 160 pounds can be sold at the 4-H & FFA Sale, but owners will be paid for no more than 160 lbs.
10. **A ewe lamb, if tagged as market, cannot be shown as a breeding project.**
11. Exhibitors will be allowed to exhibit two market lambs in the Market Lamb Show, but only one will sell. The Exhibitor must let the Superintendents know which animal they plan to sell by Wednesday at 5:00 p.m.
12. The Grand and Reserve livestock market animals must sell in the Ravalli County 4-H & FFA Livestock Sale unless you sell in the Western Montana Fair in Missoula. In the event that an Exhibitor wins more than 1 Grand Champion or Reserve Grand Champion they must choose which one to sell.
13. At the discretion of the Judge, the top lambs in each market weight group will come back to compete for Grand and Reserve Champion.
14. With the exception of Grand and Reserve Champions and the final drive, the sale order will be determined by a random draw. The Sheep Sale Order will be champions, purple by placing in the final drive, blue, and red ribbon lambs. The sale order will be posted as soon as possible.
15. Lambs weighing less than 100 pounds can be entered in the feeder lamb class. Feeder lambs will not be sold at the Livestock Sale.
16. In order to exhibit breeding sheep, the Exhibitor must be enrolled in the 4-H/FFA sheep breeding project.
17. **Members who are entering breeding sheep in the Fair must enter Class #8 Mandatory Sheep Breeding Project interview and poster.**
18. A member in breeding classes can exhibit up to two sheep per class. See General Livestock rules.
18. All animals shown in classes of pairs must have been shown individually.
19. Sheep entered in breeding classes will be judged upon breed type and characteristics, quality, and development for age.
20. All animals must be entered and shown in the Ravalli County Fair. No companion animals.
21. Sheep members may show their sheep with a halter or head harness in any class except showmanship. Only first year members may show with a halter in showmanship.
22. Animals shown in showmanship must be shown in another class.
23. Pens must be cleaned by 1:00 p.m. on Sunday of fair week. Failure to check pen out with the Sheep Superintendent will result in a fine of no more than $50 paid to the Sheep Barn held in the 4-H Advisory Council account. Time of clean out is contingent on market animal removal.
24. All animals must be checked out by the Sheep Superintendent during the designated removal times.
25. Breeding sheep may be leased by Exhibitors. Any leased animal must be carried as a project animal and members must be involved with care. Proper leasing paperwork should be provided upon request to the Barn Superintendent(s).

Division A – Showmanship

Class No.

01. Novice Showmanship - 1st year sheep member may enter, regardless of age
02. Junior Showmanship - Ages 8-11
03. Intermediate Showmanship - Ages 12-13
04. Senior Showmanship - Age 14 & over

Grand Champion – Rosette
Reserve Champion - Rosette

Division B – Market

Class No.

05. Market Lamb

Grand Champion Market Lamb – Rosette
Reserve Champion Market Lamb - Rosette

Division C – Feeder Lamb

Class No.

06. Feeder Lamb – under 100 pounds

Division D – Costume or Best Dressed

Class No.

07. Costume or Best Dressed – no glitter or paint on animal

Division E – Non-Animal

Class No.

08. **Mandatory Market Interview**
09. Mandatory Breeding Project Interviews and Display – make a wall display, usually one or two 14" x 22" posters depicting some part of the project, interview will take place on Thursday of Fair week at 5:00 p.m.
10. Educational Poster – must be made during the current 4-H year by the Exhibitor entering this class

Divisions F-L

F. Dorset
G. Hampshire
H. Suffolk
I. Crossbreed – black faced
J. Crossbreed – white faced
K. All Wool Breeds
L. All Hair Breeds
M. All Dairy Breeds

Class No.

11. Fall Ewe Lamb – born Oct. 1 through Dec. 31 of the previous year
12. Spring Ewe Lamb – born Jan. 1 through April 30 of the current year
13. Pair Ewe Lambs - must have been shown individually in Class 10 or 11
14. Yearling Ewe - 1 year and under 2 years
15. Pair Yearling Ewes - must have been shown individually in Class 13
16. Ewe - 2 years and over
17. Ewe with lamb(s) at side – lamb(s) must already be entered & at Fair but can be owned by other exhibitors

Champion Ewe - Rosette
Reserve Champion Ewe – Rosette
Grand Champion Overall Ewe – Rosette
Reserve Grand Champion Overall Ewe – Rosette
Grand Champion Overall Wool Breed Ewe – Rosette
Reserve Champion Overall Wool Breed Ewe – Rosette

18. Fall Ram Lamb - born Oct. 1 through Dec. 31 of the previous year
19. Spring Ram Lamb – born Jan. 1 through April 30 of the current year
20. Pair Ram Lambs - must have been shown individually in Classes 16 or 17
21. Yearling Ram - 1 year and under 2 years
22. Pair Yearling Rams - must have been shown individually in Class 19
23. Ram - 2 years old & over

Champion Ram – Rosette
Reserve Champion Ram – Rosette
Grand Champion Overall Ram – Rosette
Reserve Grand Champion Ram – Rosette
Grand Champion Overall Wool Breed Ram – Rosette
Reserve Grand Champion Overall Wool Breed Ram - Rosette

24. Young Flock - 1 ram lamb, and 2 ewe lambs, owned by the Exhibitor
25. Get-of-Sire - 4 animals under 2 yrs. of age, both sexes represented, all sired by the same ram, bred and owned by the Exhibitor
26. Flock - 1 ram, under 2 yrs. 2 yearling ewes, and 2 ewe lambs, owned by the Exhibitor
27. Best Pair - 1 ram, 1 ewe, bred and owned by the Exhibitor (One Entry Only)
28. Best Pair – 1 ram, 1 ewe owned by the Exhibitor