

**Date: February 25, 2025**

**To: 4-H Sheep Project Members and Leaders**

**From: Kayla Mitchell, Program Coordinator – 4-H Youth Development**

**Re: 2025 4-H Sheep Updates**

This is a quick update on the events that will take place for the 2025 fair season within the sheep department. Should you have questions, please feel free to contact the MSU Extension office at 269-467-5511. **Please note that the information contained in this letter is subject to change.**

**NEW for 2025:**

- Anyone is allowed to prepare animals for show. However, it is expected that the youth exhibitor **will actively participate** in the grooming of their project animal.
- All breeding stock animals must be registered at the MSU Extension office by August 1, 2025.
- There will be NO take-home lambs loaded out Saturday, September 20.

**Reminders:**

- Tagging/Weigh-in Dates: Countywide tagging and weigh-in dates will be **Tuesday, June 3 or Thursday, June 5**, at the St. Joseph County Fairgrounds, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. Market lambs MUST attend one of these to be eligible for exhibition.
- **DNA:** Hair samples will be pulled from all market lambs at the time of weigh-in/tagging in June. Hair samples will also be pulled from the Grand and Reserve Grand Wethers and Ewes immediately following the Grand Champion Drives.
- **Possession:** Each 4-H member must remain in possession of their animals after initial tagging/weigh-in. If animal is determined to be in violation by the species Superintendent, that animal will be disqualified unless special permission is granted by the Superintendent and/or MSU Extension prior to moving animal to another location.
- All sheep exhibitors are subject to receiving **random farm visits** conducted by the species Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent.
- Market lambs **must be rough shorn** before they arrive to the fairgrounds for check-in.
- All market lambs (including Carcass Contest) must be 100 lbs. or more at check-in on **Friday, September 12, or Saturday, September 13**. All Sheep will be weighed at the time of unloading. There will be no reweighing of animals. Underweight animals will be sent home at check-in.
  - *Exception:* If a ewe lamb is underweight, it may cross over to the breeding stock class if the exhibitor is dually registered for both breeding stock and market class prior to fair.
  - **Underweight carcass lambs** will still be processed, but will not be eligible for placing. Carcass exhibitors will still be required to attend hanging evaluation for educational purposes.
- **All animals must be checked in by the exhibitor** or an immediate family member unless prior arrangements are made in writing and filed at the MSU Extension office 24 hours in advance of check-in times at the fair.
- All 4-H Livestock MUST have their **pen stall label cards** above their pen by Sunday, September 14, 2025, at 12:00 noon. Failure to do so may result in a yellow tag.



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- **All 4-H livestock members/clubs** will be held responsible for setting up their project pen/stall and decorations before fair, as well as cleaning and tearing down their project pen/stall at the end of fair. Individuals or clubs may be assessed a \$50.00 fine for failure to do so.
- All livestock must be **off the grounds by 11:00 a.m.** September 21 per the St. Joseph Co. Grange Fair Board.
- Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) is requiring all lambs that are moved off the farm for sale or exhibition to be ear tagged with a **USDA Scrapies ID tag**. Anyone purchasing lambs should make sure the seller has tagged them prior to sale. If you raise lambs from your own herd you should contact the MDA at 1-800-292-3939 to get a premises identification number. Once you have the premises number call the USDA at 517-324-5290 to order your free tags and applicator so that you can tag your lambs prior to the initial weigh-in on June 4 or 6. Do not delay in ordering your tags from MDA; it will take some time to receive them.
- Check the 2025 4-H, FFA, and Other Youth Fair Book (Department 6) for additional information and rules.

### Important Dates, Deadlines & Events

Event or Deadline	Date(s)	Comments
Initial Weigh-in, Tagging and Registration	June 3, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. or June 5, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. (in conjunction with Dairy Feeder Steer and Goat Weigh-in)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the fairgrounds</li> <li>• Animals must have their USDA scrapies ID tag</li> <li>• Only the scrapies ID tag and the 4-H ear ID tag are allowed on the animal</li> <li>• All rams <u>MUST</u> be castrated or banded by weigh-in</li> </ul>
Carcass Contest and Home Born & Raised Forms Due	June 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due at June 4 or 6 weigh-in</li> </ul>
Carcass Contest Live Weigh-In	September 6, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More information to come</li> </ul>
Carcass Contest: Carcass Evaluation	Week of September 8, time and place TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance of the member at hanging evaluation is required to compete</li> </ul>
Fair Weigh-in	September 12, 3:30 - 7:30 p.m. or September 13, 8:00 - 11:00 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100 lbs. minimum weight requirement for all market lambs</li> </ul>
Evaluations	September 14, 8:00 - 11:00 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is <b>required</b> for all livestock exhibitors</li> </ul>
4-H Market and Breeding Stock Sheep Show	September 16, 4:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show order: Showmanship, Breeding Stock, Market Ewes, Market Wethers, Home Born &amp; Raised, Champion Drive, Adult Showmanship</li> </ul>
4-H Market Livestock Sale (Large)	September 18, 10:30 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sale Order: Beef Cattle, Dairy Market Steers, Gallon of Milk, Dairy Feeder Steers, Hogs, Lambs</li> </ul>
Animal Loading & Barn Clean out	September 21, 5:30 a.m. until done.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All members <b>must</b> clean and help put away the pens</li> </ul>