Why raise and show sheep?

The 4-H Katahdin Lamb Project is designed for youth ages 5-18 years old who are interested in showing sheep. Youth don’t have to have prior experience, just the willingness to learn more. To sign up for the project visit the Clemson Extension Office in Laurens County (219 W. Laurens Stree, Laurens, SC 29360), contact us at 864-984-2514, or visit the Laurens County 4-H website (www.clemson.edu/extension/laurens/4h).

Important Project Dates

Registration Deadline: June 1, 2017

Kick-off Clinic & Animal Lottery: June 27, 2017 6:00 pm

Laurens Katahdin Lamb Show: Saturday, August 26, 2017

Record Book Deadline: January 16, 2018

Katahdin:

Katahdin sheep are one of the best hair sheep developed in the United States. Hair sheep are bred for meat production rather than wool. They are growing in popularity due to the low maintenance required by the animal.
Project Basics:
Laurens County 4-H uses many kinds of projects to accomplish our main objective—positive youth development! Animal projects are special because young people learn what it truly means to care for and be responsible for another living being. Youth learn time management, budgeting, record keeping skills and many animal husbandry skills. Youth also learn about the animal industry and its role in the larger agricultural economy.

The Laurens County 4-H Katahdin Lamb Project is designed so that the project registration fee covers the cost of the animal. Youth are not responsible for finding their own project lamb. Youth will receive their project lamb at the project kick-off. The youth and their family must be ready to haul home, house and care for the lamb at that time.

To Be Eligible To Participate
For youth to register for the project they must:

• Be, and remain, a current dues paying member in good standing of 4-H
• Be able to complete the project registration form and pay the project fee in full by June 1, 2017 to the Clemson Extension Office in Laurens County (219 W. Laurens Street, Laurens, SC 29360)
• Be able to properly house and care for your lamb for approximately 4-5 months (the duration of the project). Project participants are responsible for all expenses (feed bills, veterinarian bills, etc.) Be aware that often project participants only break even and most of the time lose money. It is a time consuming and sometimes costly project. The goal of a youth livestock project is learning and experiencing animal agriculture while developing life skills!
• Properly care for their lamb! Any participant that is suspected of or determined to be abusing or neglecting animals or acting in an unsportsmanlike manner can be dismissed from a show, removed from the project, have their lamb removed from their care, and/or banned from future animal projects as deemed necessary by the Extension Agent.
• Be able to attend (with a parent or legal guardian) the project Kick-Off, unless other arrangements have been approved by the Extension Agent prior to the event.

Kick-Off
The Laurens County 4-H Katahdin Sheep Project Kick-Off will be held on June 27, 2017 at 6:00 pm at the Willis Family Farm. The kick-off will begin with a health and handling clinic that all project members must attend with a parent or legal guardian. After the clinic a lottery will be held for youth to draw for their project lamb.

Project Refund
Laurens County 4-H is not responsible for replacing sick or injured lamb nor is the project responsible for expenses incurred as a result of sickness or death of a lamb.

Showmanship Clinic
Laurens County 4-H will be having a Summer Clinic on July 11, 2017 at 6 pm. Be prepared to bring you lamb and learn some valuable information on how to prepare and show your lamb.
**Additional Information:**

**Estimating the Cost:**

- **Initial investment of the project registration:** $125 per lamb
- **Feed Cost:** $120 per lamb

(Most projects will have an average duration of 4 months. During these months, project animals should average feed intake of 3.0-3.5% of bodyweight. If we use an average of three pounds of feed per day with an average daily cost of $0.75-$1 cost per day, that would be approximately $90-$120 basic feed costs per animal without any supplements.)

- **Equipment Cost:** $100 per lamb

(Laurens County has clippers that can be borrowed if needed. In addition, youth participants will be responsible for halters, hoof trimmers, feeding tough, and water buckets.)

**TOTAL COST:** $345 per lamb

**Facilities:**

A pasture is not necessary to raise a market lamb. Sheep should be contained in fencing or paneling that is appropriate for the size of the animal. Fencing should be at least 42 inches high to discourage lambs from jumping. The pen should have at least 20 square feet of space for each lamb. Most importantly, this containment facility MUST BE DOG PROOF. The area should be well drained and adequately ventilated to maximize health of the animal. Shelter is important to keep animals dry and reduce exposure to the element.

Self-feeders can be used during the early stages of feeding lambs. They should be raised at least 8 inches off the ground. If lambs are hand-fed, use a movable trough or bucket that can be hung at an appropriate height. A trough or bucket should be hung at the same height as the top of the lamb’s shoulder. All types of feeders, troughs, and buckets need to be cleaned regularly. Hay and mineral feeders also need to be elevated.

Fresh clean water is the most important part of caring for lambs. Water troughs or buckets should be clean and filled regularly. They should be located in the shade to keep water cool.

**Feeding:**

You don’t have to feed the most expensive feed to get the most out of your lamb. Textured or pellet feed are both acceptable. 16%-18% protein is ideal for feeding your lamb. The percent of protein can be adjusted as you gain more experience in the project. Purchase a commercial feed from a reputable show feed company or dealer. Your choice of lamb show feed may solely depend on what is available in your area. A market lamb should gain between .5-.8 pounds per day using an average of 6-8 pounds of feed.

Lambs are also ruminants and require some sort of roughage such as hay. Give each lamb a hand-full size amount of hay daily.

A good feeding routine would be feeding early in the morning and later at night to avoid as many problems with heat as possible. Sheep may choke while eating – do not feed unattended. Of course, you have to look at the lamb’s body condition of your lamb and determine if your lamb needs more or less feed to reach its ideal show weight.

DO NOT feed show lambs commercially available cattle feed or supplement that contain copper. Sheep have a high sensitivity to copper, with small amounts leading to toxicity and death.
Exercise:
Lambs need exercise. There are many different exercise programs that people use when working with sheep. To get started, a good rule of thumb is to walk your lamb at least 15 minutes during the coolest part of the day every day. A good exercise program can help build muscle and tone muscle that is already there. Also, a lamb that is exercised on a regular basis will hold up better in the show ring. Some other methods of exercise involve tracks with jumps set up and treadmills. For a beginner to the sheep industry, it is easier to just start out with regular walking. As you progress increase the distance and time of walking. Another important thing to remember is that with increased exercise feed and water intake will also increase.

Health:
It is important to develop a preventative health program. This includes vaccinations and/or treatment for a number of potential problems. Internal and external parasites, coccidiosis, and hoof related issues are the most common health related events encountered in sheep projects. Consult with your veterinarian on proper method to address these health related issues.

Sheep are also susceptible to kidney stones. They should be observed daily for urination. If you have concerns, call your veterinarian immediately.

Some plants and trees can be poisonous to sheep. It is important to scout pens and other areas where your lamb may spend time for plants and trees that could be poisonous. For more information about which plants and trees are poisonous, please contact your County Extension Agent or your veterinarian.

Training:
It is important to work with your lamb daily to train them for the show ring. The fist step is getting your lamb halter broken. This will allow your lamb to be tied for exercising, cleaning, examining, and will make it a lot easier to lead when not on a halter. There various techniques to showing a lamb and it is up to you to develop your own. The most common way is to practice backing your lamb up until it pushes back into you. A great video resource is “How to Train Show Lambs” by PurinaMillsTV, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7DpPSiAJSU. The most important part is to remember that the more time you spend with your lamb the more comfortable each of you will be with each other.

Show:
There are several shows available for the project participants. Only one show is required and that is the Laurens County 4-H Youth Lamb Show held in August. At this show youth can show in the following classes:

- **Showmanship Classes (divided by participant’s age):** Showmanship is defined as the ability to present your animal to the best of its genetic ability and involves knowing the basic skills of the show ring, while bringing attention to the animal’s strengths and minimizing the animal’s weaknesses. The judge may also test 4-H’ers on their knowledge of their animal, project experience and industry knowledge.

- **Market Classes (divided by lamb’s weight on day of show):** A good market lamb has a powerful look with a large volume of muscle. Look for muscle expression and thickness at and from shoulder to rump. Another important criteria is a correct degree of finish to indicate quality and cutability in the carcass they will yield. Structural correctness refers to the skeletal system or bone structure of an animal, which also is important. Finally, style and balance (the way all body parts blend together) can make play a major role.
• **Sales Talk Classes (divided by participant’s age):** The Sales Talk contest evaluates an individual’s ability to effectively present and market their animal to prospective buyers. This is done using a mock sales situation complete with a live animal and potential buyers. Contestants are judged on knowledge of their animal, ability to understand what the potential buyers are looking for, and overall effectiveness in convincing the judges to buy the animal.

1. Decisions of the Sales Talk Coordinator are final.
2. The sales talk shall not exceed 5 minutes.
3. Participants shall make their presentation to a panel of 2-3 judges who can ask questions at the end of the talk.
4. You must use your lamb – not a picture – during the talk. Another exhibitor must hold your lamb while the talk is being given.
5. Contestants will be graded on 4 categories –
   b. Presentation – originality, organization and ability to relate information about the animal to the judges.
   c. Poise & Delivery – articulation, composure, response to questions, gestures and eye contact.
   d. Overall Effectiveness – How convincing was the sales pitch? Were the judges actually sold on the animal?

• **Costume Class:** An optional costume class is also a fun way for participants to exhibit their project. Both the 4-H’er and lamb are dressed in a costume for this class. No costume should cause harm to the animal or restrict the animal’s nature of movement.

• **Laurens County Master Lamb Project Participant (combines scoring of showmanship class, market class, sale talk class and record book):** This class is for best overall participant at each show. The winner will be determined by combining the scoring/placing of each 4-H’er in their showmanship class, market class, sales talk contest and record book contest. The 4-H’er with the high overall score will be deemed the winner.

**Resources:**


4-H’ers Name: _____________________________________________________________

Parent/Guardian(s) Name: __________________________________________________

Address: ________________________________________________________________

City: ____________________________ State: _______________ Zip Code: ____________

Home Telephone Number: (_______) ___________ - ________________

Cell Telephone Number: (_______) ___________ - ________________

Email Address: ____________________________________________________________

Age as of Jan. 1 of current year: _____________

I wish to register for (check one) □ 1 or □ 2 lambs for the LC 4-H Katahdin Lamb Project.

By signing below, you agree the above participant is capable of providing the proper long-term care, nutrition and any medical attention necessary for the animal they will be receiving. You are also stating the participant is in good member standing with SC 4-H for the current year.

__________________________________________    ____________
Youth’s Signature  Date

__________________________________________    ____________
Parent/Guardian’s Signature Date

Send completed application and $125 registration fee to:
Laurens County 4-H
219 W. Laurens Street
Laurens, SC 29360

Make checks, cashier checks, or money orders payable to: Clemson University