

# NAHMS Sheep 2024 Study

## Study Launch

In January 2024, the USDA's National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS), in collaboration with the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), will conduct its fourth national study of the U.S. sheep industry. Sheep 2024 will take an in-depth look at U.S. sheep operations and provide the industry with new and valuable information regarding priority health and management issues facing the U.S. sheep industry.

### Background

Priority health and management issues facing the sheep industry were identified from over 1,000 responses to a needs assessment survey and through communications with sheep producer associations, veterinarians, and university and extension experts. Approximately 4,900 sheep producers with 1 or more ewes from 30 of the Nation's major sheep-producing States (see dark shaded States in the map) will have the opportunity to participate in the study.



### Study Objectives

The NAHMS Sheep 2024 study is designed to provide stakeholders with valuable information about the U.S. sheep industry. This study will:

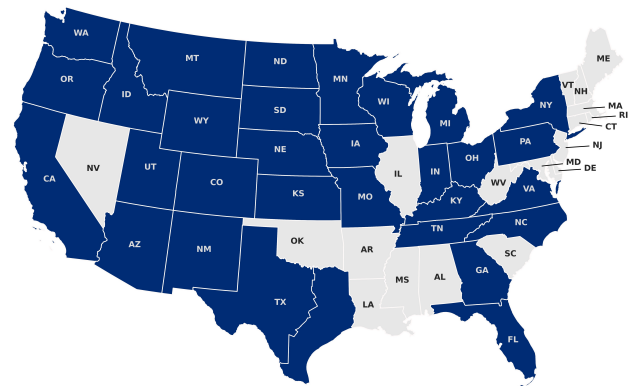
- ◆ Describe occurrence of common, economically important diseases of sheep as well as management and biosecurity practices associated with those diseases.
- ◆ Describe antimicrobial stewardship on sheep operations and estimate the prevalence of enteric microbes and antimicrobial resistance patterns;
- ◆ Describe management practices producers use to control internal parasites and reduce resistance to dewormers;
- ◆ Describe changes in animal health, nutrition, and management practices in the U.S. sheep industry from 1996–2024; and
- ◆ Provide serum to include in the serologic bank for future research.

### Study Activities

Participation in any NAHMS study is voluntary. If an operation is selected to participate in the Sheep 2024 study, and decides to do so, their answers will represent many other producers in their State.

In January 2024, representatives from NASS will contact selected producers to complete a questionnaire. For operations that are eligible to continue in the study, representatives from USDA's Veterinary Services will schedule a visit from April to June 2024 to administer a second questionnaire, perform a free lameness evaluation, and collect interdigital swabs and blood and fecal samples. NAHMS will return results to the producers.

States/regions participating in the NAHMS Sheep 2024 study



*"The NAHMS Sheep 2024 study is the fourth comprehensive survey of flock health, management practices, and other important factors in the U.S. sheep industry. This study will provide the American Sheep Industry and other organizations, sheep researchers, and policymakers with valuable information on the priority issues facing our business. I fully support this effort and strongly encourage all selected producers to participate fully."*

Susan Shultz, Immediate Past President  
American Sheep Industry

# Opportunities for Free Biological Sampling

Producers who fully participate in the study will have the option to complete biological sampling of their sheep. Fecal samples will be tested for gastrointestinal parasites and enteric microbes, including *Salmonella*, *E. Coli*, and *Campylobacter*. Interdigital swabs will be tested for foot rot pathogens. Respondents will receive their test results, and results are confidential. Interested producers can participate in any or all of the sampling opportunities.



## Scientific Approach

NAHMS was established to collect accurate and valuable information on animal health and management in the United States. Since 1990, NAHMS has developed national estimates on disease prevalence and other factors related to the health of U.S. sheep, bison, beef cattle, dairy cattle, swine, goat, equine, poultry, and catfish populations.

NAHMS studies are national in scope, science-based, statistically valid, collaborative, voluntary, and anonymous.

## Benefits of the Sheep 2024 Study

Participating producers will receive:

- ◆ Results of gastrointestinal parasite and enteric microbe testing
- ◆ Information about lameness and results from lameness pathogen testing

The sheep industry will benefit from:

- ◆ Benchmark data on important sheep health management practices and the health of sheep in the United States
- ◆ Improved understanding of disease preparedness on sheep operations
- ◆ Information important for policy makers and industry stakeholders
- ◆ Identification of educational needs and opportunities related to sheep health

*“By participating in the Sheep 2024 Study, you help guide efforts that advance the American sheep industry. This survey helps researchers, industry organizations, and veterinarians understand what U.S. sheep producers are facing in order to promote applied research and extension efforts to help develop solutions to health and management issues. The more input we receive from the survey, the better we can respond to the needs of the industry.”*

**Jaelyn Whaley, Sheep Extension Field Specialist,  
South Dakota State University**

## Confidentiality

Because NAHMS relies on voluntary participation, the privacy of every participant is protected. No name or contact information will be associated with individual data, and no data will be reported in a way that could reveal the identity of a participant. Data are presented only in an aggregate manner.

NAHMS is recognized as a statistical unit by the Office of Management and Budget. All information acquired for the NAHMS Sheep 2024 study will be used for statistical purposes only and treated as confidential in accordance with the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA). Data collected under CIPSEA are protected from Freedom of Information requests.

- Please visit [www.agcounts.usda.gov/static/get-counted.html](http://www.agcounts.usda.gov/static/get-counted.html) and sign up to be counted in future surveys. This ensures that we report the best information to support U.S. agriculture.



## For More Information

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