Your 4-H Club Sheep Project

Purpose
Your 4-H sheep project will provide an opportunity for you:
- To learn how to select and raise good sheep.
- To learn to accept responsibility by having a live animal of your own to care for regularly.
- To develop business ability by having a business of your own.
- To learn how to keep and use records.
- To learn how animals live and produce their young.
- To learn proper feeding, insect and parasite control, and proper management of sheep.

Advantages
Sheep make a desirable project for many boys and girls because:
- Pacific Northwest climate and soil produce lots of good pasture for sheep.
- You can make a good profit on sheep if you raise and market them right.
- Sheep can be handled by boys and girls too small to handle larger animals.

Requirements
To be a 4-H Sheep Club member in Oregon you must:
- Be 9 years old and under 21 years before January 1 of the club year.
- Own and care for one or more ewes, ewe lambs, or market lambs. You may start your project with a bred ewe purchased in the fall, a ewe and her lambs purchased in the spring, with a bummer or orphan lamb, or with a feeder lamb or lambs.
- Get your sheep and start your 4-H sheep project by June 1. Weaner lambs may be purchased up to June 15. After the first year your sheep project should continue the year round.
- Fill out the Project Enrollment Card and give it to your Club Leader or send it to your County Extension Agent when you get your sheep and start your project.
- Keep a record of your sheep project in a 4-H "livestock" record. Start your record when you get your first sheep. Check your completed record with your club leader at the close of your project or by the end of the club year.
- Fill out a Project Completion Card and give it to your club leader or send it to your County Extension agent by the end of the club year or as instructed in your county.

Before you start a sheep project you should make certain: that you will have plenty of feed and suitable shelter for your sheep; that your daily schedule will allow you ample time to care for sheep; and that you have good pasture and suitable fences for sheep.

Suggestions
- Be thrifty. Do not pay too much for your sheep. Do not pay high prices for prepared feeds when you buy home-grown feeds that are just as good when properly mixed. Learn how to mix a balanced ration and save feed for rapid, economical gain.
- Be kind to your sheep. Teach them to trust and respect you.
- Livestock insurance is available for valuable breeding animals.
- Manage wisely. Make your animals comfortable. Be sure they have shade, fresh water, salt, and freedom from insects and other pests.
- Enroll for a 4-H Crops project to grow pasture and other feed for your sheep.

Selecting the Breed

When you select your sheep, one of the first decisions to make is the breed you want to raise. There is no best breed. In choosing, you must consider the breed you prefer, how the sheep fit your community, and your facilities for raising sheep.

Sheep are divided into two main classifications—mutton and wool breeds.

Hampshire
Hampshire are one of the outstanding mutton breeds and one of the largest. They have black noses and black ears, are large bodied, and need lots of feed. Hampshire lambs grow fast from birth to weaning time. Lambs that do not get fat on ewes and are to be finished on dry feed require large amounts of feed for finishing.

Suffolk
Suffolks are another good mutton breed. They are very large and are recognized easily by their black heads and legs. They have no wool over their heads or legs. Many Suffolk rams are used for crossbreeding to range ewes for production of market lambs.

The ewes shear a fleece weighing between 6 and 7 pounds. Rams, of course, are sheared too, but in this bulletin shearing weights are given for ewes to allow comparison between breeds. Rams usually shear from 2 to 3 pounds more wool than the ewes.
large amounts of feed and are adapted
to farm flock areas where pasture is
abundant and the lambs can be sold
fat from the ewes. They will shear ap-
proximately 6 to 7 pounds of wool per
ewe.

Shropshire
Shropshires are a medium wool
breed of sheep, somewhat smaller than
Hampshires and Suffolks. They are
noted for raising large numbers of
lambs. Generally speaking, this breed
will have more twins than either
Hampshires or Suffolks.
Shropshires are excellent for small
farms with little pasture. Lambs fatten
readily on ewes; if they do not finish
completely, they can be fed out on
limited amounts of feed. They are
good wool producers, shearing from
7 to 8 pounds, but may have to be
checked for wool blindness—a condi-
tion where wool grows over the sheep’s
eyes.

Southdown
Southdowns produce a small but ex-
cellent fleece and are recognized as the
easiest-to-keep breed of medium wool
sheep. Their fleece is the finest of the
medium wool breeds. Ewes will stay
fat with small amounts of feed, and
lambs will fatten out on the ewes and
produce top market lambs on the least
amount of feed.
Southdown rams are used extensive-
ly for mating to larger breeds of sheep
for improving mutton qualities of
lambs. The breed is light shearing,
producing only 5 to 6 pounds of wool
per ewe.

Dorset
Dorsets are one of the very few
breeds that will produce more than
one lamb crop per year. The Dorsets,
both ewes and rams, have horns. They
are excellent for crossing with other
breeds for improving quality of
market lambs.
The ewes are excellent milk pro-
ducers but need lots of feed to do
well. They are comparatively few in
number in comparison with other
breeds, and breeding stock replace-
ment is sometimes hard to find.

Columbia
Columbias are a medium wool
breed. They are heavier shearing, how-
ever, than most of the medium wool
breeds. Columbia ewes are exception-
ally good mothers and give plenty of
milk for the lambs. They are an ex-
cellent breed of sheep for crossing
with some of the black face breeds
for production of market lambs.

Romney
Romneys have long wool and are
particularly noted for their wool pro-
duction, and ability of the ewes to pro-
duce lots of milk and raise their lambs
to finished grade without additional
feedlot feeding.
Romney ewes are often crossed with
Southdown rams for raising market
lambs, thus getting the fat-lamb qual-
ity of Southdown and the milk-produc-
tion quality of Romneys.

Crossbreed
Crossbreed sheep are a mixture of
two or more breeds and (if not crossed
with too many breeds) can be excel-
cellent producing ewes. If you choose
a crossbreed, be sure to get good stock
that has not been crossed too many
times with too many breeds.
Eastern Oregon and Washington
produce many crossbred ewes from
Rambouillet ewes and Lincoln rams.
When bred to Hampshire or Shrop-
shire rams, they produce excellent
market lambs. Ewes from this second
cross make good farm-flock ewes but
are not used in range bands.
Usually second-cross ewes are not
kept for breeding purposes. An exam-
ple of another good cross is South-
down rams on Romney ewes.
Selecting for Individual Characteristics

Size
Select a ewe that has a lot of size for the breed. Experiments show that the larger ewes within a breed will produce more twins and better lambs, and will shear a heavier fleece than the small ewes.

Fleece
Pay attention to the fleece on the sheep you are going to keep for breeding. Look for black fibers in the fleece—especially in Hampshires, Suffolks, and blackface breeds. Since black fiber cannot be dyed, it will generally result in a lower price for the wool.

Breed conformation
Be sure your sheep conforms to the proper breed characteristics. The head should be of good conformation, being wide and characteristic of the breed of sheep. Look at the length of the neck and general blending of the body in determining breed characteristics of the animals. Every breed of sheep has its certain color and markings. Be sure your sheep have the proper color and breed markings.

Body conformation
Length of body is important in selecting sheep. Ewes should have a comparatively long body, so they will have ample room for development of lambs when they are carrying them. A ewe should have a deep body, a lot of depth from top of back to underline. This shows the constitution and good feeding capacity of the ewe.

To go with length and depth of body, the ewe should be wide and should carry this width as nearly as possible from shoulder to hind-quarters. Width back of the shoulder in the heart girth region shows a strong constitution and plenty of room for heart and lungs. You should pay particular attention to see that the ewe does not cut in too sharply back of the shoulders. Also see that the width is carried well over the rear and hind-quarters and extends back over the rump region.

You may think a ewe is large when it really just has long legs; therefore, legginess should be considered as a point of body conformation. An animal that is exceedingly leggy or high off the ground often will be shallow bodied. Remember—choose long, deep, wide ewes that carry their width the entire length of the body, and that stand on comparatively short, strong legs and close to the ground.

Thriftiness
Thriftiness can be determined easily by the general condition or fatness of the ewe. A ewe that is thrifty generally will not be too thin and will be capable of raising her lambs and providing ample milk. The ewe that is unthrifty may have an overshot or undershot jaw. This characteristic should be checked very closely when selecting a ewe for breeding purposes. A normal jaw on a sheep will have teeth meeting the pad close to the front of the jaw. A ewe with an overshot jaw will have teeth protruding out over the pad, while one with an undershot jaw does not have the teeth coming to the edge of the pad. These characteristics can be inherited, and lambs from ewes of this type often have the same condition.

Increasing the flock
Use extreme care in deciding which ewes to keep for increasing your breeding flock once you have started your project. Two major considerations should be made. First, ewe lambs generally should be kept from ewes that produce twin lambs. This characteristic seems to be passed on from mothers to their ewe lambs. Secondly, consult your records of shearing weights on all fleeces shorn from ewes. Keep replacement ewe lambs from those ewes that produce the heaviest fleece. This information can be kept on permanent record cards. Of course, the points mentioned in body conformation should be given much consideration in any ewe lambs kept for replacement stock.

Culling
All dry and nonproducing ewes should be taken from the flock, as should any narrow, shallow-bodied, unthrifty ewes; ewes or ewe lambs with overshot or undershot jaws, and of course any animal that is diseased. Do your culling prior to the fall breeding season so that only those ewes that are kept for the breeding flock are maintained over the winter.
Raising "Bummer" Lambs

Raising "bummer" or orphan lambs offers an opportunity to join a sheep project without much cash outlay. The cost of milk and labor, however, may be the biggest factor in the success of raising the lamb.

There are a number of things that you must consider before you start raising a bummer lamb:

- A young lamb must eat often. You must be able to feed it often.
- The lamb should receive some of the first milk from a ewe since it contains colostrum. This milk starts the lamb's digestive tract to work properly. If a lamb has not received any of the colostrum milk from its own mother, milk from another ewe that has just lambed can be used.

Care for first 3 weeks

A ewe feeds her lamb often. The first day, feed the lamb 4 tablespoonsful of milk every 3 hours during the day, and two or three times during the night.

For the first week or two, feed the lamb whole milk. If you have a dairy cow, use milk from the same cow each time. If whole milk is not available, evaporated milk may be used. Mix ½ evaporated milk and ½ water and heat until milk dropped on the wrist feels warm. After about 5 or 6 days, the milk can be mixed with canned milk and ½ water. Increase the amount gradually until the lamb is eating about 1 quart daily by the time it is 2 weeks old. This should be divided into three or four equal feedings.

Lambs must be watched closely for constipation. If the lamb does not have a bowel movement within 24 hours, give him a teaspoonful of castor oil.

You must be careful not to overload the young lamb's stomach or it will get indigestion and bloat. More bummer lambs die from overfeeding than any other cause.

Care after 3 weeks

When the lamb is 3 weeks old, skim milk can be used instead of whole milk or canned milk; however, the change to skim milk should be gradual. Continue to feed milk until your lamb is about 3 months old. Wash bottles and nipples thoroughly after each feeding.

At the age of 3 weeks, the lamb will begin nibbling on hay and can have hay before it at all times. It will also take grain at this time. The grain can be whole, ground, or rolled oats or barley with a little wheat bran added. A mixture of about ½ each is very good. This grain mixture can be placed where a lamb can eat whenever it wants to. Good leafy alfalfa hay is best. Lambs will also nibble on grass; therefore, pasture should be available.

Bummer or orphan lambs become pets and should not be handled too much. Excessive handling will not only cause the lamb to be unthrifty but may cause its death.
Flushing
Both ewes and rams must be gaining weight at breeding time. This means that they should be on very good pasture. Providing lush feed prior to breeding is known as flushing. In order for ewes to be ready for breeding, flushing should be started 2 weeks before the rams are put with the ewes. If lush, green pasture is not available, feed the ewes ¾ to ½ pound of grain per day.

Tagging
The ewes need to be tagged before breeding. This means removing all dirty and long wool from the hindquarters. You can tag ewes with either hand or electric shears. Trim the ewe’s feet if they are long, using a pair of pruning shears or a sharp pocket knife. Be careful not to trim the hoof so deep that it bleeds. See picture on page 11.

Breeding
The ram can be painted on the brisket with a paint made from paint powder and regular lubricating oil. When a ewe is bred, the ram will leave a paint mark on her rump. If ewes are checked daily for paint brands, you can tell when they have been bred and figure when they should lamb. It takes 147 to 150 days or about 5 months from breeding to lambing time. A ram will breed from 25 to 40 ewes during a breeding season. Ewes come in heat about every 17 days, starting about August 1 and running through October and into November.

Time of breeding
West of the Cascades, it is desirable to breed the ewe early in the fall. The ewes will lamb in January or February so the lambs can be sold “grass fat” off their mothers. East of the Cascades, because of a colder and later spring, most ewes are bred to lamb in February or early March.

Importance of pasture and grain
While ewes are carrying the lambs, they must have plenty of feed. Good pasture is the best and cheapest feed for sheep. Pregnant ewes can use pasture as the major portion of their required feed. They will be carrying the lambs from August through December. During this time there may not be enough pasture, so good quality hay or other forage must be provided. A pound of grain daily will help prevent paralysis in pregnant ewes and will help assure plenty of milk and stronger, healthier lambs.

The success of your sheep project depends on good forage.

Ewes draw very heavily on their own supply of body minerals, chiefly calcium and phosphorus, for the growing lambs. Be sure there is always an ample supply of salt, calcium, and phosphorus available. If legume hay (alfalfa, clover) is fed, the calcium needs will be supplied. Steamed bone meal can be mixed with the salt if there is need for additional minerals. Use ¾ iodized salt, ¼ ground limestone, and ¾ steamed bone meal for a good adequate, and cheap mineral mixture.

Lambing preparations
Ewes should be tagged again at least a month before lambing, this time removing the wool from around the rear quarters, udder, and face if they are wool blind. This also is a
good time to trim the feet. Ewes should be watched very closely as lambing time approaches.

The lambing pen should be made ready. You can make a simple lambing pen by setting up four 6-foot panels. The pen pictured on page 6 provides heat and protection for the newborn lambs. Have bedding placed in the pen and make sure a small bottle of iodine is handy to disinfect the navel of the newborn lamb. If the weather is fair, the ewe is better off to lamb outside where she has plenty of room. After lambing, she should be put in the lambing pen.

Lambing

As the ewe lambs, the water sac will come first. This may break early and might not be visible. The lamb normally will be born with its front feet appearing first, and the nose down against the knee joints. If the lamb is coming otherwise, the ewe may need help. If so, call a veterinarian or someone who is experienced in helping a ewe to lamb. A ewe will lamb in from 4 to 11 hours. If she labors over 3 hours, she should be given help.

When the lamb is dropped, the sac that covers the lamb sometimes fails to break. When this happens, be sure to free the lamb immediately or it will smother. The navel of the newborn lamb should be iodized as soon after birth as possible. A small amount of iodine poured around the navel is satisfactory. If the navel cord is long cut to 1 or 2 inches with disinfected scissors. The ewe should then be checked to see if she has cleaned (the afterbirth tissues have left the ewe).

Open both of the ewe’s teats by milking a little from each. There is a wax in the end of each teat that may plug the end and prevent the lamb from getting its first milk. Check again after about three-quarters of an hour to see if the lamb has nursed. If not, it may be necessary to hold him up to the ewe and help him nurse for the first time. A newborn lamb must have the colostrum or first milk from the ewe to get his digestive tract working properly. The colostrum milk contains the necessary food and vitamins to get the lamb off to a good start. When the lamb is dropped, the sac that covers the lamb sometimes fails to break. When this happens, be sure to free the lamb immediately or it will smother. The navel of the newborn lamb should be iodized as soon after birth as possible. A small amount of iodine poured around the navel is satisfactory. If the navel cord is long cut to 1 or 2 inches with disinfected scissors. The ewe should then be checked to see if she has cleaned (the afterbirth tissues have left the ewe).

Use of elastator for docking and castrating is effective. Rubber band cuts off circulation and tail will eventually drop off. Docking and castrating should be done by the time the lamb is a week old. Most methods are satisfactory, but lambs must be checked regularly for any infection or fly blow if the weather is hot. Use a disinfectant such as lysol at time of docking and castrating to help prevent infection. If lambs are purebred and are to be registered, they should be eartagged before they are put with other ewes and lambs.

Spring and summer feed

During the spring and summer, pasture will provide the major portion of the ewe’s feed. Good pasture includes a legume such as alfalfa or clover. If the pasture is to be seeded, your County Extension Agent can advise as to the recommended pasture mixtures for your area.
You should have enough pasture area so the sheep can be rotated, or moved from one pasture to another to allow the pasture time to grow before it is repastured. By moving sheep from one pasture to another you will have less worm control problems, and will also provide fresh pasture more often.

**Lamb creep**

When the lambs are 10 to 14 days old, they will begin nibbling on grass. A lamb creep can be built where the lambs can go in and eat grain without being bothered by the ewes. Whole oats are recommended. The lamb creep is a small pen made from panels with a small opening through which the lambs can go to get grain. By becoming used to eating grain early, the lambs will get fat sooner and can be fed whole.

Two methods can be followed in fattening lambs. In the dry lot or feed lot method, the lambs are confined and allowed no pasture. In this method of feeding, the lambs receive hay and grain as the main feeds. The other method is a grain and grass feeding program where lambs are allowed to run on pasture and are fed grain.

**Pasture and grain method**

When fattening lambs on pasture and grain, it will be necessary for you to provide good pasture containing a legume and grasses. The lambs will generally be allowed to run on pasture during the day. They are brought in and fed grain at night and in the morning. Lambs fed on pasture usually are not as firm in finish as lambs fed on dry lot. Show lambs, therefore, should be finished on hay and grain.

In selecting a lamb for fattening for a fair, be sure that it is healthy and free from internal parasites. Once the lamb is put on feed, continue a regular feeding schedule until it is sold at the fair. When feeding a group of lambs, be sure you have enough of the same kind of feed on hand for the fattening period. Once the lambs are used to a certain type of feed, it is hard to change them over to another. When feed is changed, lambs often lose weight until they get used to the different feed.

**Dry feed method**

Grain fed to lambs should be whole. Barley, oats, and wheat are all good grains for fattening lambs. Lambs need some roughage and may get sick and go off feed if given wheat without barley or oats. Alfalfa hay is best for fattening lambs in dry lots. If alfalfa is not available, a leafy, green clover hay is satisfactory. Lambs started on feed should not be fed more than ¼ pound of grain daily. This can be increased gradually until the lamb is eating 1 ½ pounds per day, depending on size and weight of the lamb.

**Fattening Lambs**

Lambs will start eating grain as soon as they get their teeth. Locate the creep in a sunny, warm, dry place where the ewes gather. Note the entrance panel.

Fattening feeder lambs is encouraged only when the lambs are not fat enough to sell from the ewes.

**Expected gains**

Normally, lambs fed in dry lot will gain about ¼ pound per day and those on pasture about ½ pound. If you buy a 65-pound feeder lamb or fatten a lamb of this weight, it will take about 2 or 3 months to feed the lamb to desirable market weight. Most lambs sell best at 85 to 100 pounds, depending on breed.

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**Bloat control**

Whenever you feed legume hay and grain or grain to lambs on pasture, there is danger of bloat. If a lamb does bloat, the best treatment is a drench of approximately 2 ounces of mineral oil.
Disease and Insect Control

A healthy sheep is a profitable one. To maintain a healthy flock, you will need to know how to control some of the more common diseases and parasites of sheep. Most livestock pests can be controlled by proper treatment.

Pulpy kidney disease

Pulpy kidney disease, also known as overeating disease, affects young lambs. It is very easily controlled by vaccinating lambs at 2 to 3 weeks.

Pregnancy disease

Pregnancy disease occurs in the ewes from 2 to 4 weeks before lambing time. It is caused by lack of certain foods. This disease can be prevented by providing ewes with good quality legume roughage of alfalfa or clover hay, and by feeding 1 pound of grain daily for 4 to 6 weeks before lambing time. Feeding molasses on hay also will help.

Foot rot

Foot rot, a common ailment of the sheep's feet, is caused by an organism entering a break in the skin—usually between the hooves. It occurs most often in sheep whose feet have not been kept trimmed. The organism occurs most often in moist places; also, where the sheep have been in mud and it is allowed to dry and harden between the hooves. The common symptom is lameness in any or all feet. A deep covering of shavings or sawdust in the sheep lot will help prevent foot rot. Treatment consists of a footbath made by dissolving 3 pounds of powdered copper sulfate in 1 gallon of water. This mixture can be placed in an earthenware vessel and the sheep's feet soaked one at a time for 2 to 3 minutes in the solution. This treatment should be repeated every other day until lameness leaves.

Maggots

Ewes and lambs must be inspected daily during the summer for fly blow that may result in maggots. Maggots develop from eggs laid by blow flies in dirty or wet wool. First evidence of maggots will be the sheep's restlessness and desire to scratch. If maggots are unnoticed for a time, the wool on the area affected will turn a dark color and appear moist. When sheep with maggots are found, they should be caught and the wool sheared off close to the skin. Remove the maggots and treat the ewe with a pine tar compound that will not only kill any maggots left, but will also act as a fly repellent to prevent further fly blow. There are many kinds of fly repellent materials that can be purchased from drug stores or livestock supply houses.

Sheep ticks

Sheep ticks cause irritation and loss of blood. This will slow up growth and gain. Ticks can be seen easily with the naked eye by parting the wool; also a sheep that has ticks will scratch itself a lot on posts or other objects. Ticks can be controlled by the use of DDT, methoxychlor, or rotenone. A spray using 8 pounds of 50 per cent wettable DDT in 100 gallons of water is very effective. If you prefer to use dust, use 1 per cent dieldrin. Apply with a small hand duster over the entire body of the sheep. Dipping requires a large vat so the sheep can be completely covered, and is not practical for small flocks.

Internal parasites

Stomach worms and roundworms are generally a problem where the animals are closely confined or on irrigated pasture. Sheep can be kept relatively free of worms with 1 pound of phenothiazine added to 9 pounds of salt. This mixture should be protected from rain and moist conditions.

If sheep are infested with internal parasites to an extent that there is considerable coughing, it may be necessary to give worm capsules to the ewes. Worm capsules contain tetra-chlorethylene; 5 cc. (cubic centimeter) capsules are used for the ewes and 2 cc. capsules for lambs. Generally, one capsule will kill enough worms that the rest can be controlled with the phenothiazine in the salt. Where sheep are on pasture most of the year, they should be treated with worm capsules at least once a year, preferably in the spring. A second treatment in the fall may be needed, in addition to having salt with phenothiazine before sheep at all times.
Sheep are sheared to remove the wool for marketing. Shearing time depends on the climate. West of the Cascades, shearing is done from early February through March and April. East of the mountains where winters are colder, it is done generally from early March to April or May.

Generally, shearing is done with power shears, either small electric shears or larger machines driven by gas engines or electric motors.

**Care of the fleece**

The fleece should be removed from the sheep in one piece. Commercial shearers will always manage this, but it will require care and practice if you do your own shearing.

Proper handling of the wool is very important after the fleece is removed. Spread out the fleece with the skin side down on a clean surface and remove the tags, discolored wool, or dirty particles. Fold the sides toward the middle from each side. Then roll from both ends to form a neat bundle, with the shoulder and side wool on the outer edges.

Tie the fleece with paper twine made especially for tying wool. Never use baling wire, binder twine, or other materials since rust and twine fibers will not come out of the wool when it is scoured and processed. When cloth is made, remaining portions of the binder twine have to be picked out by hand. Fleeces tied with improper material sell for less; some buyers may refuse to buy these fleeces.

**Value of fleece**

The wool from your sheep will provide 10 to 20 per cent of the income from your sheep project. Take proper care of the wool, and market it in the best manner. Never put tags or dirty wool in the fleece, since it will be docked in price. Buyers will not want to buy wool from you if they know from previous experience that you have included tags with the fleece.

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**Fitting and Showing**

When you take your sheep to the fair you will want it to look its very best, and you will want to look your best, too. Fitting and training should begin at least 6 weeks before the fair. You must do all training and fitting, including blocking. This is your 4-H sheep project.

**Training**

Work with your sheep until it is gentle and will lead or stand as you desire. A few minutes a day for several weeks is much better than several hours a day just before the fair.

Teach your sheep to lead. With your left hand under its chin press on its dock with your right hand to get it to move forward. After your sheep learns to move forward you may be able to lead it with your right hand on the back of its head or by a gentle tug with your left hand.

Teach your sheep to stand quietly when someone comes up and handles it. Always hold it so it cannot get away.

Do not make sudden moves. Never, never pull its wool.

**Condition or fleshing**

Market lambs should be well finished, ready for market.

Breeding animals should be in good condition for breeding, not too fat.

**Cleanliness**

Remove burrs, straw, dung locks, and dirt by brushing, carding, and trimming and by keeping your sheep blanketed during the fitting period. Do not pasture your sheep where there are briars or cockleburs, and do not use an overhead feeder during the fitting period.

**Washing**

Washing is not desirable unless the sheep is very dirty, because it removes the yolk (yellow grease) from the wool. If your sheep must be washed, do it at least 4 weeks before the fair. Washing should be done on a warm, sunny day. Use warm water and cas-
tile or pine tar soap. Rinse with warm water. Remove all soap. Allow the wool to dry thoroughly; then blanket your sheep to keep it clean. Clean quarters help keep your sheep clean.

**Blanketing**

Blanketing for 4 to 6 weeks before the fair will improve the appearance of your sheep. Blanketing helps distribute the natural oils evenly throughout the fleece and helps keep your sheep clean.

A sheep blanket can be made from a burlap sack. Open a sack down one side almost to the corner leaving 6 to 10 inches fastened together at the corner to fit over the sheep’s brisket; then open just enough of the end for the sheep’s head and neck. Put the sack over the sheep with its head sticking out of the hole in the bottom. Twine loops around the rear legs will hold the blanket in place.

**Trimming the feet**

Trim feet when necessary. Remove dirt from between the toes so the sheep will stand squarely on all four feet. The feet should be trimmed before the final fitting since wool is often dirtied during trimming.

**Trimming or blocking**

Blocking is to shape by trimming the fleece to make the sheep appear smoother and broader. Only medium wool (mutton type) breeds of sheep are blocked. Trim just enough to present a neat appearance and bring out good conformation (shape). Ewes for breeding should not be trimmed as closely or as square as market lambs. Do not trim too deeply.

The first trimming should be at least 3 weeks before the show.

**Suggestions for blocking**

1. Dampen the fleece slightly by brushing with a damp brush.
2. Trim lightly with hand shears (blades).
3. Card the fleece so the fibers stand up straight. Trim, then card and trim again, several times.

Long and fine wool breeds are not blocked. Stained wool may be trimmed out.

**Final preparation**

Before taking your sheep into the show ring, remove the blanket, card the fleece lightly, trim uneven spots, and compact the fleece by light padding with a slightly moistened wooden paddle or the back of your card. Do this long enough before showing so the sheep will be dry when you take it in the ring. Remove all straw and dirt from the fleece. Clean the ears, nostrils, and feet. Be ready when your class is called.

**Your appearance**

*Cleanliness.* Be sure your hands, face, fingernails, clothes, and shoes are clean.

*Neatness.* Have your clothes pressed, shirt tail in, and your hair combed.

*Clothing.* Jeans, slacks, or pedal pushers with a shirt, blouse or T-shirt, and a jacket if it is cool are all O.K. Colored clothes are satisfactory and often more practical than white.

Proper techniques in hoof trimming. Use pruning shears for trimming, and smooth and finish with a knife.
**Showing your sheep**

Lead your sheep into the show ring with your left hand under its jaw and your right hand on the dock or back of the sheep's head. When moving your animal, remain on left side and turn sheep by turning its head toward you. Line your sheep up with the others in the class. Leave 3 or 4 feet between sheep if there is room. Stay on the left side or in front of your sheep. Be sure your sheep is standing squarely with all four feet on level ground, or with the front feet on higher ground than the rear feet.

Always stand, kneel, or squat so you face the judge and so he has full view of your sheep. When the judge is looking at the left side of your sheep, move to the front so he can get a full side view. As the judge moves to the front you should move back to the sheep's left so the judge can get a good front view.

Be careful not to obstruct the judge's view of the other sheep in the class. This is good courtesy and is very important in sheep showmanship.

Do not step over the back of your sheep. This is distracting to the judge and to the audience. Do not overshown your sheep. That is, do not do things that will attract attention to yourself, rather than to the sheep. When the judge comes up to feel of your sheep you will usually want to move to the front of the sheep and grasp the fleece under the jaw with both hands. A little pressure downward will help stiffen the sheep's back.

Be alert. Always pay attention to the judge and to your sheep. Continue showing all of the time you are in the ring. Be courteous and pleasant regardless of where your sheep may place. Pay careful attention to the reasons the judge gives. Wait until your name is called or until the class is dismissed before leaving the show ring.

In 4-H club work we always do our best. We learn from experience so we can "make the best better."

Be a good sport. Keep your head when you win and your heart when you lose.

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**Suggestions to judges**

If there is opportunity, talk to the club members before the showmanship contest. Tell them what they are expected to do and how you want them to handle their animals.

As the sheep come into the ring have them line up side by side facing away from the main audience.

Club members may be asked to demonstrate carding and trimming in the show ring. Members with the medium wool sheep may be asked to bring shears, card, and other equipment into the ring. Another club member may hold the sheep. They may be asked to demonstrate use of card, shears, and paddle so you can observe their ability. Check with superintendent or ring master before asking members to use equipment.

You may have the club members lead their sheep in a clockwise circle.

In giving reasons be careful not to emphasize points or details not included in this showmanship guide unless they are carefully explained to all of the contestants prior to the contest.

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This bulletin was prepared by Kenneth C. Minnick, Benton County 4-H Extension Agent, in cooperation with the Animal Husbandry Department, the Extension animal husbandry specialists, and the 4-H Club Department of Oregon State College and the State 4-H Sheep Advisory Committee. Members of this committee who helped with this bulletin were: Mr. Joe B. Johnson, Associate Professor Animal Husbandry, Oregon State College; Mr. Kenneth McCrea, President, Oregon Purebred Sheep Breeders Association, Monmouth; Mr. Doug Chambers, livestock buyer, Valley Packing Company, Salem; Mr. Robert Barnes, former 4-H Club member, Mr. Frank von Borstel, Douglas County Extension Agent; Mr. Robert Carte, former Baker County Extension Agent; Mr. Harry Landgren and Mr. John Landers, Extension animal husbandry specialists; Mr. Ed Coles, former Extension livestock marketing specialist; and Mr. Cal G. Monroe, State Extension Agent, 4-H Club Work.

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