



**Livestock Ledger**  
By  
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**Selecting a lamb for the backyard**

Soon my telephone will be ringing with calls from several folks looking for a place to buy a lamb to raise during the summer. Most of these inquiries are from people with little or no experience in sheep raising, but their interest always seems to catch my attention. Many of these new-to-be shepherds are interested in raising one or two lambs in the backyard for a variety of reasons.

Some want them to help keep the grass clipped down in hard to mow areas, while others value them as weed control specialists. Some folks would like to have a couple of lambs around to watch them play and frolic in the backyard. The more enterprising individuals are interested in growing a nice fleece to spin and weave during the winter months or would like to put a few meat cuts in the freezer for a delicious lamb dinner in the fall.

Whatever the reason may be, it still seems like everyone wants to buy a baby lamb, as young as possible, so they can bottle feed it

and watch it grow! I urge most people to buy lambs that have been properly weaned and cared for by the seller. Usually, I suggest that a person obtain a pair of lambs, as opposed to one, as they will eat and grow better. Lambs should have shelter and a nutritious grass area properly fenced to keep predators out and the sheep in.

Fresh water and minerals are important to growing lambs and supplemental feed may be needed if pasture becomes short. A good way to manage the grass area is to divide it into lots and rotate the grazing activity, because sheep graze close to the ground. Because of the close grazing habits, sheep should be wormed to prevent unthriftiness.

Producers selling backyard lambs, should take time to explain simple sheep husbandry practices to new owners so that the experience will be an enjoyable one.

For those desiring general sheep information, keep in mind Monday, May 19, at 7:30 p.m. for a

meeting at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center on "Everything You Wanted To Know About Sheep...But Were Afraid To Ask!" This will be a question and answer session with a panel of four experienced, local sheep producers, on subjects pertaining to any phase of the sheep industry. Your attendance is very welcome. For more information on raising lambs, you may call the Penn State Extension Service.

MANHEIM - Buyers from several states and many Pennsylvania counties competed at the "Top of the Class" Club Lamb Sale held at the Manheim Community Fair Grounds, April 26. Sixty-six market lambs sold for an average of \$113 and six ewes averaged \$240 each. The top-selling lamb brought \$240 with several more ranging in price from \$130 to \$160.

Top of the Class Club Lambs went to New Jersey, Connecticut, Ohio, and Indiana as well as Beaver, Susquehanna, York, Berks, Lehigh, Montgomery,

Adams, Cumberland, Wayne and Lancaster counties. Interest was high and the lambs sold briskly. B & B Livestock of Danville, Ohio put together the consignment of Hampshire, Suffolk, and Hamp Suffolk cross lambs. Guest con-

signors included Turtle Mead and Nix Besser Farms' Dorset lamb offerings.

Christian Herr served as sale manager and the newest facility at the Manheim Community Fair Grounds provided an excellent location for the sale.

LANCASTER - Because of new outbreaks of swine pseudorabies in northern Lancaster County, the Pennsylvania PRV Task Force has called a meeting of all interested persons for 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 6, in the Ag classroom of the Ephrata Senior High School.

The meeting will focus on reviewing PRV programs and policies, clearing up confusions, and coordinating efforts in understanding and dealing with the current pseudorabies outbreak. Representatives from the local PRV Task Force, Penn State Extension, and the Pennsylvania Bureau of Animal Industry will be available to answer questions and hear concerns.

It is important that swine producers continue to practice strict sanitation on farms and to allow no visitors in swine facilities. Some hog farmers in the Ephrata area may be contacted by the state Bureau of Animal Industry for surveillance blood sampling as part of a perimeter testing program in the quarantined area. This testing is an effort to trace the origin of the infection and to contain the virus to prevent further spread.

Please make an effort to be present at this special PRV meeting. We need your input to strengthen the efforts of the Pennsylvania PRV Task Force.

**PRV Task Force sets meeting**

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