



# Livestock Ledger

By  
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## Evaluating Your Ram

Was that new ram you bought last fall worth the money? Now is the time to find out. Let's look at that new lamb crop and decide whether you want to use him again next fall. I know, it's already June and you have a million other things to do, but if the ram is 50 percent of the flock, it's worth the time and trouble to decide now. If you decide not to use him, you have three to four months to find the ram you want at your price.

If you didn't buy your ram slick sheared, or if you didn't shear him for the breeding season, spring

shearing may be your first chance to assess him in the "flesh." Does he have the carcass conformation you are looking for? Is he proportional, - that is, does everything fit the total picture of a good ram? What about that fleece you just removed from him? Is it heavy, clean fibered, free of kempy fibers, and uniform? Is his mouth still good? Do his teeth meet the dental pad correctly? Did he come through the winter in good flesh on a maintenance diet, or did you have to feed him extra to keep him up? If the answers to all of

these questions are generally affirmative, let's take a look at his lambs.

Did he settle all of your ewes? Was your lambing percentage higher? Lower? The same as always? Was this attributable to something other than the ram? Did you have more lambing problems than usual, or was everything smooth as silk? Does your ram throw a high percentage of "big" lambs that must be pulled? Does he produce too many runts or "lazy" lambs that won't nurse? If you are a careful recordkeeper and really know your ewe flock, you may be able to spot a genetic leaning towards lambing problems that might be the ram's fault. Hopefully, the opposite is what you bought in your ram, and you had fewer difficulties than usual.

Now is the time to evaluate your ram if you truly believe that the ram is 50 percent of the flock. Evaluate your lamb crop and see if your ram needs to be replaced. Don't wait until September and then drive to the sale barn to see if you can find a "big" ram lamb to

breed your ewes. Shop early before the rush. There is more choice, the prices are better, and if you go to the farm you might be able to check not only your prospective stud ram, but also his mother,

father, and the flock from which he came. Even if now is your busiest time, take time to plan for your ram's busiest time of the year - the fall breeding season.

## Franklin 4-H's Kick Off Beef Show Season

SHIPPENSBURG - The Franklin County 4-H Baby Beef Club got its show season off to a start by hosting its fourth annual Preview Show on May 31. Held at the Shippensburg Fairgrounds, the show attracted 64 entries from 10 counties. Judging the event was Scott McIntyre of Virginia.

Lancaster County's Kelly Rohrer took grand champion honors with her Angus-Chianina crossbred. She also placed fifth in the senior showing and fitting

division.

The reserve champion steer was an Angus-Chi-Limousin cross shown by Regina Lebo of Franklin County. Lebo won the senior fitting and showing division and was named overall reserve champion in showing and fitting.

Paul Miller Jr., of York County, won the junior fitting and showing class, then went on to be named overall champion fitter and showman with his white Chi-Angus-Charolais steer.



Kelly Rohrer (left) showed grand champion steer and Regina Lebo had reserve at Franklin County's Preview Show.

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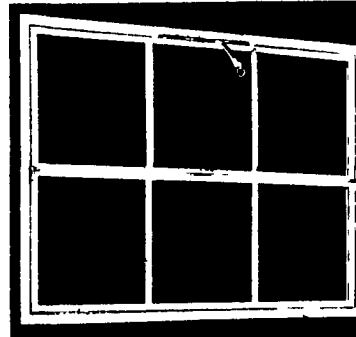
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