

Show Lamb Management Guide

ShowRite Feeds

Putting You in the Spotlight-Show Lamb Management Guides

The show lamb industry is a very competitive game. The management of your lamb project will determine the difference between being in the "spotlight" or watching from the sidelines. Many hours of hard work and dedication are needed to get your lamb in show shape. This starts the day you get your lamb home. The payoff for all of this hard work and time is the gratification of being able to present your lamb in a well-fitted manner and know that you have done everything to make your lamb look the "BEST" on show day. This management guide is intended to help you learn basic fitting and management techniques to help you but keep in mind that these are just guidelines and we can not guarantee your success.

- [Getting Off to the "Rite" Start](#)
- [When You Get Your Lamb Home](#)
 - Have a clean, dry, well-bedded pen ready for your lamb prior to bringing the animal home. Avoid any drafts and have access to clean, fresh water at all times. Feed your lambs high quality alfalfa hay for the first three days when you get your lamb home. Gradually introduce your show feed to the lamb during the first three days. Feed very small amounts of feed and gradually increase your lamb to full feed over an extended period of time.

Treat for internal parasites, over-eating disease, tetanus and prevention of coccidiosis with the assistance of your local veterinarian. Once your lamb become acclimated to its new environment, slick shear your lamb. Shearing your lamb will keep the animal cooler, thereby increasing appetite and, at the same time, increasing overall growth traits. The aforementioned steps are all very important to getting your lamb off to a good, healthy start.

- Proper weight manipulation and desired amount of finish will be achieved by weighing your lamb everyday and monitoring their body condition by handling your lamb and feeling for finish and muscle tone. An easy way to evaluate your lamb's condition is to gently feel for finish over mid rib of the lamb using the tips of your fingers in a circular motion.

A good way to describe how condition feels on a market lamb is to take

your hand and make a fist. If the condition over the lamb's ribs feels like the back side of your hand, your lamb is over-conditioned. If the lamb's ribs feel like the knuckles on your hand, your lamb is under-conditioned. However, if your lamb's ribs feel similar to the covering on the lower part of the back side of your fingers, you are on the right track.

- When evaluating muscle tone and volume of your lamb , you are simply feeling for the amount of muscle that your lamb has, how firm the muscle is and if the animal is market ready. This can be achieved by evaluating three areas.

1) *Muscle over the lamb's rack:* When evaluating the muscle over the lamb's rack, one should start directly behind the shoulder by softly gripping the lamb's top and gliding your hand towards the rear of the animal. This area of the lamb's top should fill your hand and be firm and bulging with no evidence of the spine.

2) *Muscle over the lamb's loin:* When evaluating the muscle over the lamb's loin, one should look for two areas of importance. The first area is for freshness of muscle tone and condition across the top of the loin. This can be achieved in one of two ways. First , the top of the loin should feel the same as over the rack, once again firm and bulging with no evidence of the spine. The second area of concern is the depth of muscle in the loin. This can be achieved by taking your fingers on the underneath side of the loin and gripping the loin like a sandwich.

Place your thumb on the spine of the animal and roll down in an outward motion. If there is less muscle felt on each side of the spine when doing this procedure, your lamb's loin is "washed out". "Washing out" happens when lambs are overworked and under-fed. The lamb loses muscle volume and freshness in this area first. This indicates that the lamb is not show ready and still needs more feed and condition. It will take a minimum of 20 days with little to no exercise to regain muscle tone and freshness in this area.

3) *Muscle on the lamb's leg:* The final area to be evaluated for muscle tone is the leg of the lamb. Grip the backside of the leg. This area should be extremely firm and expressive. The leg should bulge with muscle from both the inner and outer muscle areas with evidence of expression in the stifle region.

- [Exercising Your Lamb](#)