

# Sheep Quick Facts

## Fact Sheet

### Vital information for mature sheep:

Body Temperature:	102.5 degrees F (102 - 103)
Pulse:	75 beats per min. (70 - 90)
Respiratory Rate:	20 breaths per min. (10 - 20)

### Taking Temperature

- 1) Tie a long string to the end of the thermometer
- 2) Holding the sheep, fully insert the thermometer into the rectum, touching the rectum wall.
- 3) Leave the thermometer in for 2 to 3 minutes, then remove.

### Lamb Temperatures

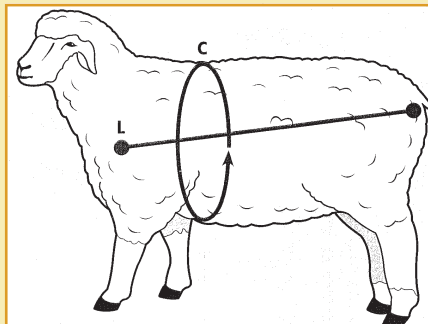
Normal Body Temperature: 103° F ( 39.5° C)  
 < 102 ° F (39° C) indicates hypothermia or chilling  
 < 98.6° F (37° C) take serious action to save the lamb  
 > 104 ° F (40° C) a fever can be suspected

Note: A sick lamb may have a normal temperature, look for other symptoms

### Weigh without a scale

1. Measure Circumference in inches (C)
2. Measure Length in inches (L)
3. Calculate Weight

$$\text{Weight} = \frac{C \times C \times L}{300}$$



**RECOGNIZE** the signs that your sheep are not well.

Abnormal signs include:

- Loss of appetite
- Standing apart from the group
- Weakness or staggering
- Labored or fast breathing
- Change in bowel activity
- Change in personality
- Temperature greater than 103° F (39.5° C)

### General Information:

- Average mature height: 36 inches at the shoulder
- Average ewe wt: 150 lb
- Average ram wt: 250 lb
- Average wt at birth: 10 lb
- Average rate of wt. gain: 1 lb per day
- Ready for slaughter: 4 - 6 months
- Sexual Maturity: ~ 7 months
- First breeding: ~ 8 months
- Length of gestation: ~ 148 days
- Average # of offspring per birth: 2 lambs

## Rules of Thumb - Reproductive Functions

1. **First Estrus** - generally occurs when ewe lambs are 6 months of age and 2/3 of adult weight.
2. **Length of Estrous Cycle** - 14 to 19 days between cycles.
3. **Length of Time Standing in Heat** - 30 hours, this can range from 3 to 73 hours.
4. **Factors Affecting Multiple Births** - ewes are most likely to birth multiples if they are genetically disposed; receive very good nutrition at time of breeding; are under minimal stress; if the ram has not been overused; and if the ewes are in their prime (2-6 years)
5. **Time of Ovulation** - Occurs 28 hours after the start of the estrous cycle.
6. **Length of Time the Egg Remains Viable** - Between 12 and 24 hours
7. **Length of Gestation** - This is the length of pregnancy, time between breeding and lambing. This period is 147 to 153 days
8. **Ewe's Cycle** - In most breeds of sheep, ewes will respond strongly to seasonal shifts and ovulate in response to more hours of darkness. Natural breeding season lasts from late August to February. Some breeds are not affected by seasonal changes.

### SHEEP GESTATION TABLE

		DATE OF BREEDING					
Month	Day	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
	1	May 27	Jun 27	Jul 25	Aug 25	Sep 24	Oct 25
	2	28	28	26	26	25	26
	3	29	29	27	27	26	27
	4	30	30	28	28	27	28
	5	31	Jul 1	29	29	28	29
	6	Jun 1	Jul 2	Jul 30	Aug 30	Sep 29	Oct 30
	7	2	3	31	31	30	31
	8	3	4	Aug 1	Sep 1	Oct 1	Nov 1
	9	4	5	2	2	2	2
	10	5	6	3	3	3	3
	11	Jun 6	Jul 7	Aug 4	Sep 4	Oct 4	Nov 4
	12	7	8	5	5	5	5
	13	8	9	6	6	6	6
	14	9	10	7	7	7	7
	15	10	11	8	8	8	8
	16*	Jun 11	Jul 12	Aug 9	Sep 9	Oct 9	Nov 9
	17	12	13	10	10	10	10
	18	13	14	11	11	11	11
	19	14	15	12	12	12	12
	20	15	16	13	13	13	13
	21	Jun 16	Jul 17	Aug 14	Sep 14	Oct 14	Nov 14
	22	17	18	15	15	15	15
	23	18	19	16	16	16	16
	24	19	20	17	17	17	17
	25	20	21	18	18	18	18
	26	Jun 21	Jul 22	Aug 19	Sep 19	Oct 19	Nov 19
	27	22	23	20	20	20	20
	28	23	24	21	21	21	21
	29	24	---	22	22	22	22
	30	25	---	23	23	23	23
	31	26	---	24	---	24	---

Example: If bred on November (Top) 16 (Side)

### -- (148 DAYS)

Month	Day	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov*	Dec
	1	Nov 24	Dec 25	Jan 25	Feb 24	Mar 27	Apr 26
	2	25	26	26	25	28	27
	3	26	27	27	26	29	28
	4	27	28	28	27	30	29
	5	28	29	29	28	31	30
	6	Nov 29	Dec 30	Jan 30	Mar 1	Apr 1	May 1
	7	30	31	31	2	2	2
	8	Dec 1	Jan 1	Feb 1	3	3	3
	9	2	2	2	4	4	4
	10	3	3	3	5	5	5
	11	Dec 4	Jan 4	Feb 4	Mar 6	Apr 6	May 6
	12	5	5	5	7	7	7
	13	6	6	6	8	8	8
	14	7	7	7	9	9	9
	15	8	8	8	10	10	10
	16*	Dec 9	Jan 9	Feb 9	Mar 11	Apr 11	May 11
	17	10	10	10	12	12	12
	18	11	11	11	13	13	13
	19	12	12	12	14	14	14
	20	13	13	13	15	15	15
	21	Dec 14	Jan 14	Feb 14	Mar 16	Apr 16	May 16
	22	15	15	15	17	17	17
	23	16	16	16	18	18	18
	24	17	17	17	19	19	19
	25	18	18	18	20	20	20
	26	Dec 19	Jan 19	Feb 19	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
	27	20	20	20	22	22	22
	28	21	21	21	23	23	23
	29	22	22	22	24	24	24
	30	23	23	23	25	25	25
	31	24	24	---	26	---	26

Expected Lambing: April 11