In 2012, there were 88,338 sheep farms and ranches in the United States1.

Through genetics, sheep producers in the United States tend to produce a dual-purpose animal – one that is valued for both its meat and its wool. Sheep are also raised for producing milk, some of which is processed into cheese.

Following is a ranking of the total sheep operations per state based on 2012 data1:

1. Texas .................10,674
2. Arizona ...............7,447
3. California ...........4,224
4. Pennsylvania .....3,590
5. Ohio .....................3,568
6. New Mexico .......3,385
7. Iowa .....................2,904
8. Oregon .................2,753
9. Wisconsin ............2,590
10. Missouri ..............2,454
11. Virginia ...............2,315
12. Michigan ..............2,312
13. Minnesota ...........2,171
14. Indiana ...............2,109
15. New York ..............2,017
16. Washington ...........1,967
17. South Dakota .......1,798
18. Oklahoma ..........1,779
19. Utah .....................1,755
20. Illinois ...............1,751
21. Kentucky .............1,743
22. Colorado .............1,509
23. Tennessee ...........1,476
24. Nebraska .............1,464
25. Montana .............1,338
26. North Carolina ......1,311
27. Idaho ...................1,241
28. Florida ...............1,161
29. Kansas ...............1,160
30. West Virginia ........1,043
31. New Jersey ..........819
32. Vermont ...............793
33. Arkansas ..............778
34. Massachusetts ......776
35. Wyoming ..............771
36. Maine ...................759
37. Alabama ..............712
38. Georgia ................688
39. Maryland ..............663
40. North Dakota ........661
41. Louisiana .............643
42. New Hampshire ......618
43. South Carolina .....549
44. Nevada .................508
45. Mississippi ..........499
46. Connecticut ..........498
47. Hawaii ................353
48. Rhode Island .........122
49. Delaware ..............69
50. Alaska ..................50

As of Jan. 1, 2016, there were 5.32 million head of sheep in the United States2.

Sheep are produced in all 50 states. However, the highest sheep-producing states are located west of the Mississippi River, where most of the larger sheep ranches reside. The eastern part of the country supports a greater number of smaller, pasture-based operations.

Following is a state ranking of the total number of sheep and lambs as of Jan. 1, 2016:

1. Texas ...............735,000
2. California ..........575,000
3. Colorado ...........435,000
4. Wyoming ..........355,000
5. Utah .................285,000
6. Idaho ................255,000
7. South Dakota .....255,000
8. Montana ...........230,000
9. Oregon .............190,000
10. Iowa .................175,000
11. Arizona ............145,000
12. Minnesota .......125,000
13. Ohio ................120,000
14. Pennsylvania .....94,000
15. New Mexico .......90,000
16. Missouri ..........88,000
17. Michigan ..........82,000
18. Nebraska ..........80,000
19. New York ..........80,000
20. Wisconsin .........76,000
21. Virginia ..........75,000
22. North Dakota .....73,000
23. Kansas .............65,000
24. Nevada .............60,000
25. Illinois ..........60,000
26. Kentucky ..........53,000
27. Indiana .............50,000
28. Washington .........50,000
29. Tennessee .........48,000
30. Oklahoma ..........46,000
31. West Virginia ......36,000
32. North Carolina ...32,000
33. Other States* ....160,000
34. New England** ...42,000

* Other States includes Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maryland (number of sheep and lambs listing only), Mississippi, New Jersey and South Carolina. NASS does not report individual numbers for these states.

** New England includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont.