



# FAST FACTS

## ABOUT SHEEP PRODUCTION



In 2012, there were 88,338 sheep farms and ranches in the United States<sup>1</sup>.

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 data<sup>1</sup> (most current data):

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

As of Jan. 1, 2018, there were 5.23 million head of sheep in the United States<sup>2</sup>.

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, 2018:

1. Texas .....750,000	18. Michigan.....80,000
2. California.....570,000	18. Nebraska.....80,000
3. Colorado.....445,000	20. Virginia .....75,000
4. Wyoming .....345,000	20. Wisconsin .....75,000
5. Utah.....275,000	22. North Dakota.....70,000
6. South Dakota.....260,000	23. Kansas.....67,000
7. Idaho.....230,000	24. Nevada.....61,000
8. Montana .....225,000	25. Illinois .....55,000
9. Iowa.....165,000	26. Oklahoma.....54,000
9. Oregon .....165,000	27. Indiana.....53,000
11. Minnesota .....130,000	28. Kentucky.....50,000
12. Arizona .....125,000	29. Tennessee.....46,000
13. Ohio .....119,000	30. Washington.....45,000
14. New Mexico.....96,000	31. West Virginia.....35,000
14. Pennsylvania .....96,000	32. North Carolina...25,000
16. Missouri..... 90,000	33. Other States*....145,000
17. New York.....85,000	34. New England**... 43,000

<sup>1</sup>Source: USDA, NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture, May 2, 2014.

<sup>2</sup>Source: USDA, NASS, Sheep & Goats, Jan. 31, 2018.

\* 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.