In 2019, there were 101,387 sheep farms and ranches in the United States\(^1\).

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 2019 data\(^1\) (most current data):

1. Texas .................. 14,672
2. Arizona ................ 7,509
3. Ohio ...................... 4,123
4. New Mexico .......... 4,047
5. California ............ 3,807
6. Pennsylvania .......... 3,749
7. Oregon ................. 3,263
8. Missouri ............... 3,103
9. Wisconsin ............. 2,845
10. Kentucky ............. 2,818
11. Iowa .................. 2,801
12. Virginia .............. 2,646
13. Tennessee .......... 2,503
14. Michigan .......... 2,483
15. Indiana ............... 2,316
17. Minnesota .......... 2,248
18. Oklahoma .......... 2,216
19. New York .......... 2,113
20. Utah .................. 1,898
21. Illinois .............. 1,870
22. Colorado ............ 1,731
23. North Carolina .... 1,679
24. Florida .............. 1,666
25. Idaho .................. 1,447
26. Montana ........... 1,383
27. South Dakota ..... 1,337
28. Kansas .............. 1,234
29. West Virginia .... 1,226
30. Georgia ............ 1,208
31. Nebraska .......... 1,153
32. Alabama ........... 1,062
33. Arkansas .......... 1,053
34. New Jersey ........ 1,047
35. Maryland ........... 925
36. Wyoming ......... 859
37. Louisiana ........... 785
38. Mississippi ....... 748
39. Maine ............... 738
40. South Carolina .... 738
41. Massachusetts ... 728
42. Vermont ........... 704
43. North Dakota .... 573
44. Hawaii ............. 548
45. New Hampshire ... 502
46. Connecticut ...... 428
47. Nevada ............ 328
48. Rhode Island ..... 108
49. Delaware .......... 89
50. Alaska ............ 49

As of Jan. 1, 2020, there were 5.2 million head of sheep in the United States\(^2\).

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, 2020:

1. Texas ................. 735,000
2. California .......... 570,000
3. Colorado .......... 425,000
4. Wyoming .......... 340,000
5. Utah ................. 285,000
6. South Dakota .... 250,000
7. Idaho ................. 230,000
8. Montana ........... 200,000
9. Oregon ............. 165,000
10. Iowa ............... 151,000
11. Ohio ............... 126,000
12. Minnesota ...... 115,000
13. Arizona ............ 105,000
14. Missouri .......... 100,000
15. Pennsylvania .... 96,000
16. New Mexico ...... 95,000
17. New York .......... 87,000
18. Michigan ..........85,000
19. Wisconsin ......... 81,000
20. Nebraska .......... 78,000
21. North Dakota ... 75,000
22. Kansas ............. 73,000
23. Virginia .......... 73,000
24. Nevada ............ 65,000
25. Kentucky .......... 62,000
26. Indiana .......... 57,000
27. Illinois .......... 55,000
28. Oklahoma ....... 52,000
29. Washington ....... 50,000
30. Tennessee ....... 49,000
31. West Virginia ... 33,000
32. North Carolina ... 30,000
33. Other States* .... 155,000
34. New England** 52,000

* 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.

\(^1\)Source: USDA, NASS, 2017 Census of Agriculture, April 11, 2019.