



FAST FACTS

ABOUT SHEEP PRODUCTION



In 2019, there were 101,387 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 2019 data¹ (most current data):

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Texas14,672 | 26. Montana1,383 |
| 2. Arizona 7,509 | 27. South Dakota.....1,337 |
| 3. Ohio4,123 | 28. Kansas.....1,234 |
| 4. New Mexico.....4,047 | 29. West Virginia1,226 |
| 5. California.....3,807 | 30. Georgia1,208 |
| 6. Pennsylvania3,749 | 31. Nebraska.....1,153 |
| 7. Oregon3,263 | 32. Alabama.....1,062 |
| 8. Missouri.....3,103 | 33. Arkansas1,053 |
| 9. Wisconsin2,845 | 34. New Jersey1,047 |
| 10. Kentucky.....2,818 | 35. Maryland925 |
| 11. Iowa.....2,801 | 36. Wyoming859 |
| 12. Virginia2,646 | 37. Louisiana785 |
| 13. Tennessee.....2,503 | 38. Mississippi.....748 |
| 14. Michigan.....2,483 | 39. Maine738 |
| 15. Indiana2,316 | 39. South Carolina738 |
| 16. Washington2,281 | 41. Massachusetts.....728 |
| 17. Minnesota2,248 | 42. Vermont.....704 |
| 18. Oklahoma.....2,216 | 43. North Dakota.....573 |
| 19. New York.....2,113 | 44. Hawaii.....548 |
| 20. Utah.....1,898 | 45. New Hampshire502 |
| 21. Illinois.....1,870 | 46. Connecticut.....428 |
| 22. Colorado.....1,731 | 47. Nevada.....328 |
| 23. North Carolina1,679 | 48. Rhode Island108 |
| 24. Florida.....1,666 | 49. Delaware.....89 |
| 25. Idaho.....1,447 | 50. Alaska.....49 |

As of Jan. 1, 2021, there were 5.17 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, 2021:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Texas730,000 | 18. New Mexico.....85,000 |
| 2. California.....555,000 | 19. New York79,000 |
| 3. Colorado.....445,000 | 20. Virginia78,000 |
| 4. Wyoming340,000 | 21. Nebraska.....74,000 |
| 5. Utah.....285,000 | 22. North Dakota73,000 |
| 6. South Dakota.....245,000 | 23. Kansas.....70,000 |
| 7. Idaho.....230,000 | 24. Indiana60,000 |
| 8. Montana200,000 | 25. Nevada.....59,000 |
| 9. Iowa160,000 | 26. Kentucky.....58,000 |
| 10. Oregon.....155,000 | 27. Illinois53,000 |
| 11. Ohio126,000 | 27. Tennessee.....53,000 |
| 12. Minnesota113,000 | 29. Oklahoma.....51,000 |
| 13. Arizona110,000 | 30. Washington.....50,000 |
| 14. Missouri.....100,000 | 31. West Virginia.....30,000 |
| 15. Pennsylvania.....97,000 | 32. North Carolina...28,000 |
| 16. Michigan.....87,000 | 33. Other States*....150,000 |
| 17. Wisconsin86,000 | 34. New England**...55,000 |

¹Source: USDA, NASS, 2017 Census of Agriculture, April 11, 2019.

²Source: USDA, NASS, Sheep & Goats, Jan. 29, 2021.

* 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.