



LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The American Sheep Industry (ASI) is the national organization representing the interests of the 100,000 sheep producers located throughout the United States.

FARM BILL REAUTHORIZATION AND NEED FOR RISK MANAGEMENT TOOL

- ASI thanks Congress for the passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (P.L. 119-21) which delivered on key provisions for the sheep industry by updating the marketing assistance loan rate for wool, increasing funding for trade promotion programs, reauthorizing and funding orphan programs like the Sheep Production and Marketing Grant Program, Agriculture Wool Apparel Manufacturers Trust, Wool Research and Promotion and Animal Disease Prevention and Management.
- U.S. sheep producers are dealing with record high input costs alongside depressed and stagnant lamb and wool markets. Meanwhile, the industry does not have a viable risk management tool allowing producers to hedge against risks, especially in times of increasing domestic and international market volatility and adverse weather events.
- **ASI strongly supports the reauthorization and enhancement of a new five-year farm bill for the remaining titles and sections not otherwise covered in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. The inclusion of language directing USDA to assess the feasibility of a margin coverage like risk management program tool for domestic lamb producers modeled after existing livestock production and risk management protection programs is a key priority for the industry.**

LEVEL THE TRADE PLAYING FIELD

- In 2025, imports accounted for 73% of total U.S. lamb and mutton consumption. a market share that has steadily increased over the last 25 years. It has now reached a criticality that threatens the livelihood and sustainability of America's sheep and lamb producers and the families and communities reliant upon them. Australia and New Zealand account for 75 and 24% respectively of the foreign lamb imported to the U.S. And that market share has solely come at the expense of domestic producers.
- In October 2025, ASI formally submitted a request with personal injury data to the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) urging the U.S. International Trade Commission to initiate a global safeguard investigation into U.S. imports of lamb meat, pursuant to Sections 201-202 of the Trade Act of 1974.
- In January 2026, the House and Senate addressed letters to USTR further urging the Commission to support ASI's request to pursue meaningful trade relief measures with respect to foreign lamb imports.
- **ASI strongly encourages Congress and the Administration to utilize tariffs and any other viable remedies to help stem the destructive rise in foreign lamb imports and protect our broader domestic industry.**

H2-A TEMPORARY AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

- U.S. sheep farmers and ranchers are largely dependent on a workable temporary agriculture labor program to help care for more than one-third of the ewes and lambs raised in the U.S. and, for over 50 years, have used and helped craft the current provisions of the H2A program.
- Any guest worker program MUST maintain the specific regulatorily defined special procedures for sheep producers, giving our members a fighting chance to compete in an increasingly difficult financial environment, all while employing and protecting both domestic and foreign ag workers.

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- **ASI strongly supports any efforts from Congress and the Administration to address and pass meaningful agricultural labor reform. Such legislation must include a herder specific allocation of not less than 2,500 annual visas and the codification of the current shepherd specific special procedures as contained in H.R. 1773, the Agriculture Guestworker Act of 2013.**

ADDITIONAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR WOOL

- U.S. wool producers have experienced sustained market losses since 2018; however, unlike other export-dependent agricultural commodities, the American wool industry has remained consistently excluded from federal trade and market relief programs.
- Most recently, the wool industry was excluded from the Farmer Bridge Assistance Program that was created to help farmers traverse times of market disruption and increased production costs.
- **ASI strongly encourages Congress to explore options to provide additional economic assistance for the agricultural sector with an emphasis on explicitly including wool as an eligible commodity.**

MINOR USE MINOR SPECIES ANIMAL PHARMACEUTICALS

- U.S. sheep producers have limited access to approved veterinary pharmaceuticals essential to animal health, welfare and food safety, placing domestic producers at a competitive disadvantage to imports from countries that have access to and utilize significantly more animal health products.
- Rising development costs and ineffective incentives under the Minor Use and Minor Species Animal Health Act of 2004 (MUMS Act) have resulted in virtually no meaningful expansion of sheep drug approvals in two decades.
- **ASI urges Congress to restore and fund the USDA Minor Use Animal Drug Program, strengthen Food and Drug Administration Office of Minor Use, provide incentives for minor species through meaningful economic tools such as priority review vouchers and enhanced exclusivity, and consider an reform of the approval pathway to ensure regulatory parity with foreign competitors.**

LIVESTOCK MANDATORY PRICE REPORTING

- Amending and reauthorizing the Livestock Mandatory Reporting (LMR) Act of 1999 must be accomplished to rectify an ongoing data gap. While supportive of the program, we ask USDA and Congress to address shortcomings in current confidentiality rules and its chilling effect on price reporting.
- While LMR was reauthorized in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, the 3/70/20 confidentiality guidelines continue to limit producer access to market price reporting and should be amended to ensure timely, transparent and accurate reporting of market data.
- **ASI urges USDA to continue working with the sheep industry to explore administrative pathways that would ensure access to vital price reports, despite continued market consolidation.**

FY27 APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS

- USDA Animal and Plant Inspection Service Wildlife Services Operations
- U.S. Sheep Experiment Station
- Scrapie Eradication
- Bighorn Sheep in Domestic Sheep Grazing Allotments