

# LAMB CARCASS JUDGING CARD

Exhibitor number: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLACINGS:** 1st \_\_\_\_\_

2nd \_\_\_\_\_

3rd \_\_\_\_\_

4th \_\_\_\_\_

PLACING SCORE: _____
REASON SCORE: _____
TOTAL: _____

REASONS	Weight Ideal Weight: 45- 57.9 lbs  Estimate Weight (lbs)	Fat Cover Ideal: 7-14 mm fat depth  Describe as: Ideal Under Over	Muscling Hindleg Ideal: thick heavy muscled (5)  Score 1-5	Muscling Loin Ideal: long thick loin (5)  Score 1-5	Muscling Shoulder Ideal: smooth, well muscled (5)  Score 1-5	Score (official use only)
I place ____ over ____ because:						
Member Comments:						
I place ____ over ____ because:						
Member Comments:						
I place ____ over ____ because:						
Member Comments:						
I place ____ over ____ because:						
Member Comments:						

## LAMB CARCASS JUDGING GUIDE



### APPROACH TO JUDGING A LAMB CARCASS CLASS

Judging a lamb carcass class is similar to judging other 4-H classes. Members have 20 minutes to evaluate and compare 4 carcasses and complete a judging card. Initially, members should stand back and look at the class from a distance to help form their first impression placing. Then follow with a close inspection of each carcass and adjust your placing if needed and develop your reasons. Carcasses are displayed in a cooler, and members are not allowed to touch the carcasses. The carcasses are numbered 1,2,3,4 from left to right as in other 4-H classes when viewed facing the front of the cooler. The judging card has been modified to help members develop their reasons for lamb carcass judging. An example of the lamb carcass judging card is included, and should be reviewed prior to judging the class.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF AN IDEAL SHEEP CARCASS

The ideal lamb carcass weighs 45-57.9 lbs and has excellent muscling shown by width and thickness in proportion to its length. The ideal lamb carcass has a plump full leg of lamb, a wide thick back and a thick full shoulder. The carcass has fine textured muscle that is pink to light red in color. The external and internal fat is firm and white. There is a light covering of fat over most of the exterior carcass surface. The leg of lamb and shoulder may be slightly bare of fat cover, and there is a small to moderate amount of kidney and pelvic fat.

## JUDGING CRITERIA FOR A SHEEP CARCASS CLASS

Members should develop a systematic way to evaluate the carcass class. Each carcass needs to be compared to the “ideal” lamb carcass and to the other carcasses in the class. The carcass that is most similar to ideal is placed first in the class. Considering the categories outlined below will help members determine which carcass is most ideal and help rank the remaining carcasses with supporting reasons. The categories included on the lamb carcass judging card include:

1. Weight
2. Fat Cover
3. Hind leg muscling
4. Back muscling
5. Shoulder muscling

### Carcass Weight

Lamb carcasses should weigh 45-57.9 lbs. This weight of carcass meets consumer demand the most. Slightly heavier carcasses 58-60 lbs are preferred to carcasses that are 60-65 lbs or slightly those that are below ideal weight from 40-44.9 lbs. The least favorable carcass weights are those that are less than 40 lbs as they are often poorly muscled and under finished and those that are over 65 lbs as they are often over conditioned.

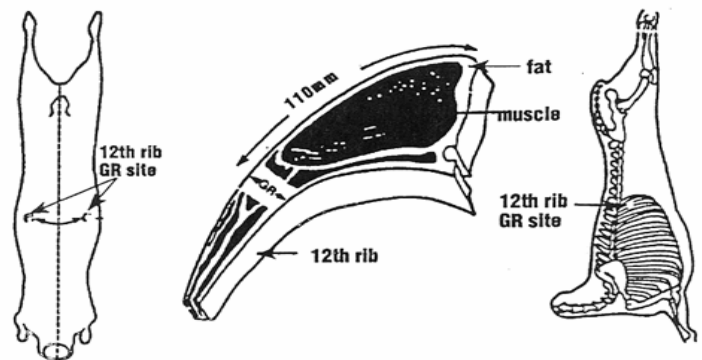
### Fat Covering

When lamb carcasses are graded, the fat cover is determined by measuring the fat depth over the 12th rib 11 cm off the midline of the back. This measurement is often done with either a depth measurement probe or by making a small incision and measuring the depth of the fat with a ruler. Ideally, a carcass should have 7-14 mm of fat in this area. Carcasses with less than 4 mm fat cover are considered under finished.

Members will not be able to measure fat cover on the carcasses present in the judging class with a ruler. Estimates of fat cover must be done by visually assessing the external and

internal fat cover. Fat should appear white and firm. It can appear slightly red tinged or light amber and still be acceptable. Carcasses with ideal fat cover have a light covering of fat over most of the external carcass surface. The leg of lamb and shoulder areas may be slightly bare, and the muscles on the back may be no more than barely visible through the fat. There is a small amount of kidney and pelvic fat.

Carcasses with more finish and a fat cover between 14-18 mm often are well covered with fat on their external surface, but the shoulders may be slightly bare of fat. Over finished carcasses, with 19-24 mm of fat cover, often are completely covered with fat over their external surface and have a moderate to

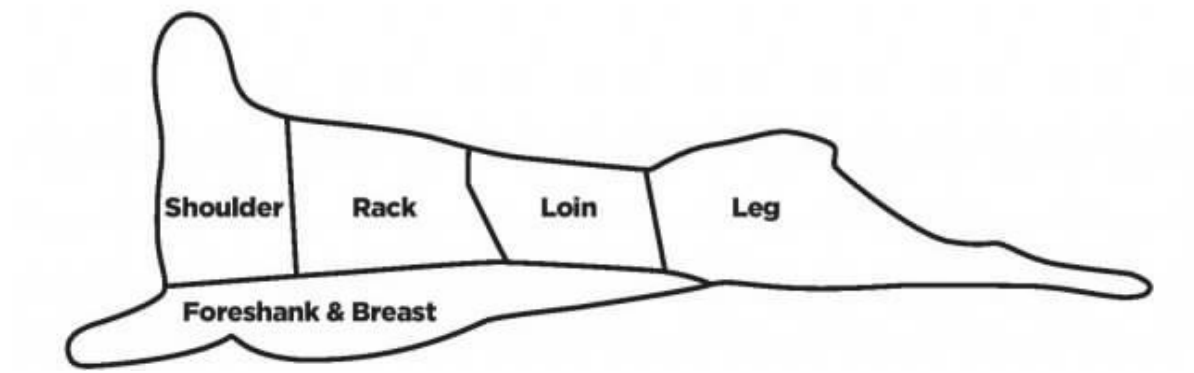


large amounts of kidney and pelvic fat. Heavily over finished carcasses with 25 mm or more fat have excessive fat cover and excessive pelvic and kidney fat. Lambs with more than 14 mm of fat cover have lower yields and are less than ideal.

When carcasses are under finished, they have a very light to minimal covering of fat over their exterior surface and small amounts of pelvic and kidney fat. The flesh is often dark in color and coarser in texture. The fat that is present may appear soft.

### **Muscling**

The muscle score of a lamb carcass is determined by visually evaluating the musculature of three important cuts: the hind leg, loin and shoulder. Each area is assigned a number score from 1-5, with 5 being the closest to ideal and 1 being the furthest from ideal. When lamb carcasses are graded, the overall score for muscling is calculated by taking the average of the three muscle scores. Lambs need to have a minimum score of 2 in all three areas and a minimum average of 2.6 to meet the minimum requirements to grade Canada A. Lambs with lower muscle scores are graded Canada B or C.



### **Meat Color**

The ideal meat color is reddish pink. Carcasses with moderate to dark red colored meat are discounted.

### **Fat Color**

Fat should be white, but slightly blood tinged or amber colored fat is acceptable. Carcasses with yellow fat are discounted.

### **Bibliography**

Publication #148, 4-H BC Lamb Carcass Score Sheet, Revised March 2013.

[www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca)

[www.novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/amlamb.htm](http://www.novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/amlamb.htm)