The PSBO Post

Purebred Sheep Breeders of Ontario Newsletter

WWW.PSBO.CA PSBO.SECRETARY@GMAIL.COM

OCTOBER 2026 ISSUE #03

THE ANNUAL FLOCK FUSION AND PSBO SALE WILL HAVE A NEW DATE AND LOCATION IN 2027!

WE ARE EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE EVENT WILL BE HELD IN METCALFE, ONTARIO ON JUNE 19TH AND 20TH. WE ARE SUPER EXCITED ABOUT TRYING A NEW LOCATION AND NEW DATE WHILE CONTINUING GREAT LEARNING AND MAKING NEW FRIENDS. MORE INFORMATION WILL FOLLOW IN THE SPRING.

LAST CALL!! DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 31ST!

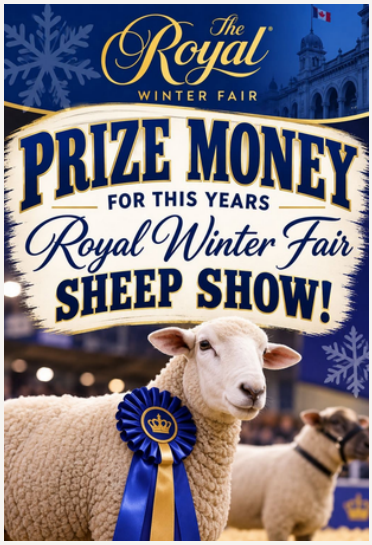


The PSBO Annual Scholarship may be pursued by any Ontario Student looking to continue their education above and beyond the high school level. The PSBO is pleased to announce it will be awarding two separate scholarships of $500 each. A background in agriculture is an asset. Please apply online at https://psbo.ca/

HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE ONTARIO SHEEP FARMERS PODCAST? LOTS OF DIFFERENT TOPICS TO CHECK OUT



CLICK HERE FOR YOUTUBE



THE PSBO ARE PROUD SPONSORING THE ROYAL LIVESTREAM, THE JUNIOR SHOW CHAMPION BANNERS AND THE SHEEP AND WOOL AMBASSADOR COMPETITION

WATCH FOR THE NEW-PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD!

VOTING WILL HAPPEN DURING THE SHOW BOTH ON LIVESTREAM AND RINGSIDE VIA QR CODE

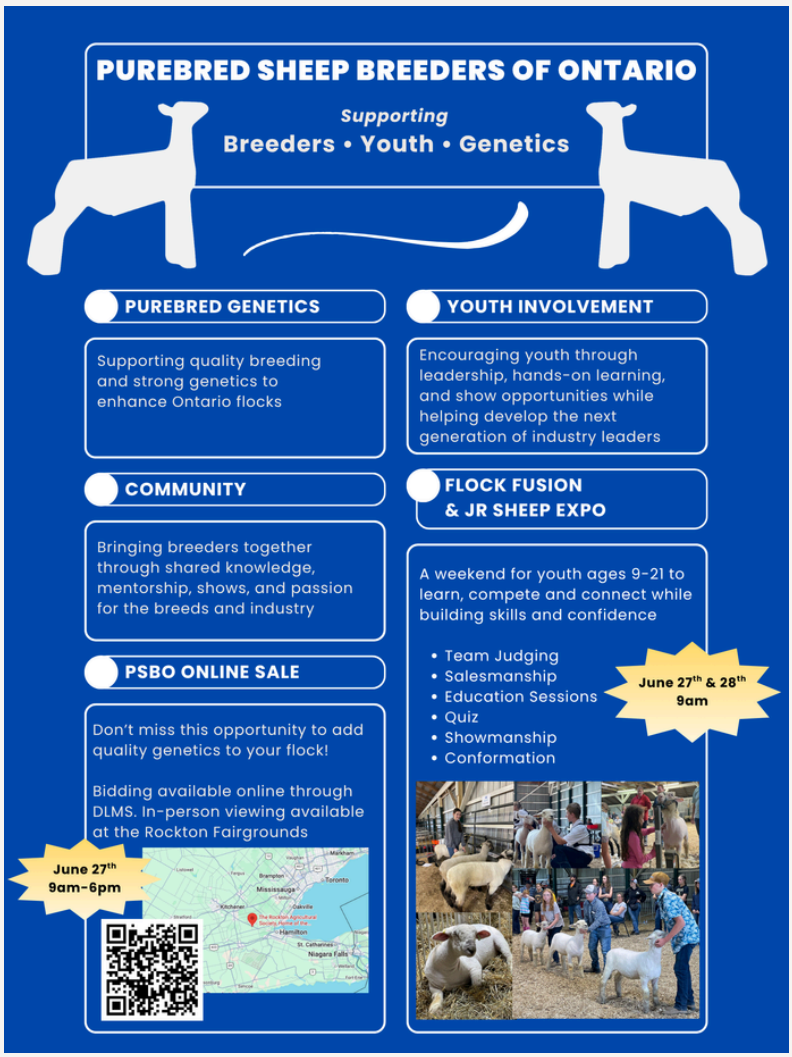
THE LAST OF THE FANTASTIC PSBO MARKETING ENTRIES!



ZOEY THOMPSON-CLICK TO VIEW

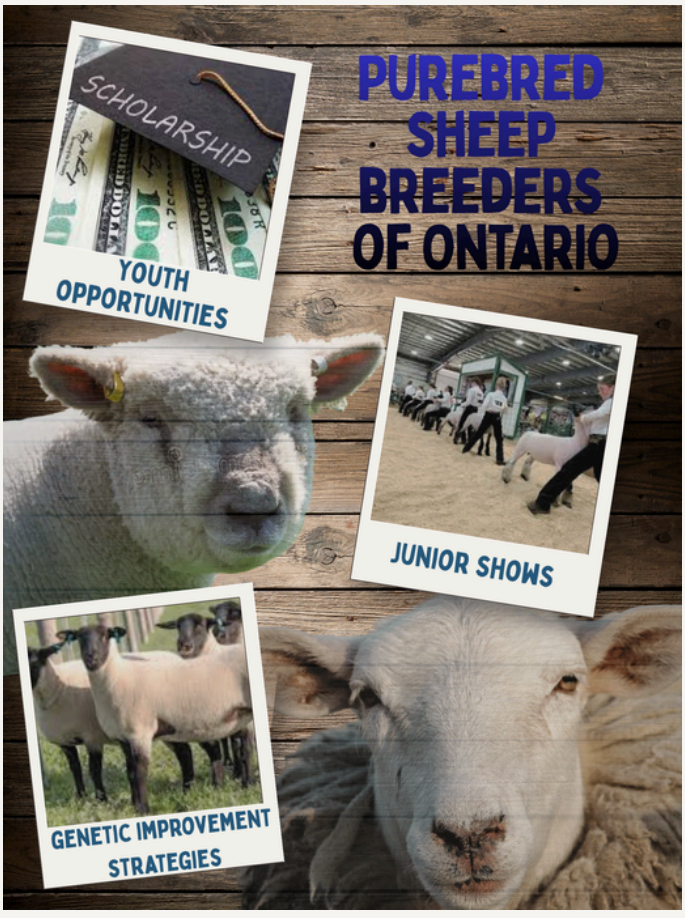
AUTUMN MCINTYRE





BETHANY WOODHOUSE

DANIELLE LAMONT



AROUND THE FAIRGROUNDS













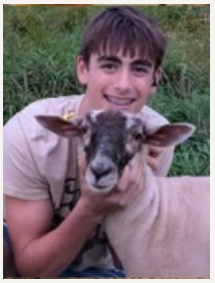










































WANT TO SEE YOUR PHOTO FEATURED HERE NEXT MONTH? SEND IT TO US!

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR RAWF SUPREME QUALIFIERS!



SUPREME RAM-
REJEAN GIRARD,
SAINT-CESAIRE, QC

SUPREME EWE-
ROBERT MASTINE-ST.
FELIX DE KINGSEY, QC





SUPREME RAM-
GROVES FAMILY, BRANTFORD

SUPREME EWE-
TREVOR MCGLASHAN-
DUNNVILLE





SUPREME RAM-
LEO ATKINSON-NEW
LOWELL

SUPREME EWE-
CHRIS ATKINSON-
NEW LOWELL





SUPREME RAM-
REJEAN GIRARD, SAINT-
CESAIRE, QC
SUPREME EWE-
MCINTYRE FAMILY,
RENFREW



Flock Management Guideline: Pregnancy Determination by Ultrasound

Presented by Mary Robertson

Why Use Ultrasound Pregnancy Scanning?

Ultrasound scanning is a valuable flock management tool that allows producers to identify pregnant and non-pregnant ewes and estimate litter size before lambing. The procedure is safe, non-invasive, and can provide important information to improve nutrition, health management, and overall flock productivity.

Best Time to Scan

Optimal scanning period:

- **45 to 90 days after ram removal**
- Most accurate litter size determination occurs between **45 and 80 days of gestation**
- Earlier than 40 days may reduce accuracy
- Later pregnancy scanning may make counting fetuses more difficult

Preparing Ewes for Scanning

Before Scanning

- ✅ Record breeding dates and ram exposure periods.
- ✅ Identify ewes with readable tags.
- ✅ Gather ewes into manageable groups.
- ✅ Avoid excessive handling stress.
- ✅ Withhold feed for several hours before scanning if recommended by the technician.

During Scanning

- ✅ Handle sheep calmly and quietly.
- ✅ Ensure adequate space for scanning equipment and staff.
- ✅ Maintain good animal welfare practices.

Recording Results

Classify ewes into management groups:

Group	Description
Open	Not pregnant
Single-bearing	Carrying 1 lamb
Twin-bearing	Carrying 2 lambs
Triplet+ bearing	Carrying 3 or more lambs

Accurate records help guide feeding and health decisions throughout pregnancy.

Benefits for Flock Management

1. Improved Nutrition Management

Nutrient requirements increase with litter size.

- Single-bearing ewes require less energy and protein.
- Twin and triplet-bearing ewes need additional nutrition during late gestation.
- Feeding according to pregnancy status reduces feed waste and improves lamb birth weights.

Benefit: Better feed efficiency and lower feed costs.

2. Identification of Open Ewes

Ultrasound identifies ewes that are not pregnant.

Producers can:

- Cull unproductive animals
- Rebreed if timing allows
- Investigate fertility issues

Benefit: Improved flock reproductive performance and profitability.

3. Better Lambing Management

Knowing expected litter size allows producers to:

- Prepare lambing facilities
- Monitor high-risk pregnancies
- Allocate labour more effectively
- Ensure adequate colostrum supplies

Benefit: Reduced lamb mortality and improved lamb survival.

4. Improved Animal Health

Twin- and triplet-bearing ewes have a higher risk of:

- Pregnancy toxemia
- Ketosis
- Hypocalcemia

Early identification allows targeted health monitoring and preventive feeding programs.

Benefit: Fewer metabolic diseases and veterinary interventions.

5. More Efficient Use of Facilities

Pregnancy scanning allows producers to:

- Group ewes by nutritional needs
- Manage pen space efficiently
- Plan lambing barn occupancy

Benefit: Better use of housing and labour resources.

6. Enhanced Financial Performance

Pregnancy scanning supports:

- Targeted feeding strategies
- Reduced feed waste
- Increased lamb survival
- Better culling decisions
- Improved reproductive efficiency

Benefit: Increased return on investment and overall flock profitability.

Recommended Management After Scanning

Open Ewes

- Assess for culling or rebreeding.
- Investigate possible reproductive issues.

Single-Bearing Ewes

- Moderate nutrition program.
- Monitor body condition score (BCS).

Twin-Bearing Ewes

- Increase energy and protein in late pregnancy.
- Monitor closely around lambing.

Triplet-Bearing Ewes

- Highest nutritional priority.
- Frequent monitoring for pregnancy toxemia.
- Prepare for potential lambing assistance and supplemental colostrum.

Key Take-Home Messages

✓ Scan ewes approximately **45-90 days after breeding**.

✓ Sort ewes into **open, single, twin, and triplet-bearing groups**.

✓ Use scan results to tailor feeding, health care, and lambing management.

✓ Pregnancy scanning improves feed efficiency, lamb survival, labour planning, and flock profitability.

✓ Accurate records and appropriate follow-up management maximize the value of ultrasound scanning.

Portions of this guideline were drafted with assistance from Microsoft Copilot (GPT-5), and the content was reviewed and edited by the author for accuracy and relevance.

References and Further Reading

1. **South Dakota State University Extension.** *Detecting Pregnancy and Litter Size in Ewes Using Ultrasound.* Provides guidance on optimal scanning timing, fetal counting, and management

decisions based on pregnancy status. Recommends scanning between 45 and 65 days of gestation for the most accurate litter-size determination. [extension....dstate.edu], [extension....dstate.edu]

2. **Merck (MSD) Veterinary Manual.** *Pregnancy Determination in Ewes.* Reviews the use of transabdominal ultrasonography as a practical method for pregnancy diagnosis, fetal counting, and gestational age estimation in sheep. Highlights benefits for nutritional management, culling decisions, and prevention of pregnancy toxemia. [merckvetmanual.com], [msdvetmanual.com]
3. **Ontario Sheep and Goat Production Resource.** *Pregnancy Scanning: Management Tips.* Discusses pregnancy scanning as a valuable management tool for Ontario sheep producers, including identification of open ewes, fetal counting, feeding management, and improved lamb survival. [sheepandgo...duction.ca]
4. **The Sheep Institute (Ontario).** *Pregnancy Scanning.* Recommends scanning ewes approximately 40 to 80 days after ram removal to accurately identify pregnancy status and litter size and support flock management decisions. [sheepinstitute.ca], [sheepinstitute.ca]
5. **NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.** *Pregnancy Scanning for Ewes.* Describes how pregnancy scanning supports targeted feeding, paddock allocation, flock fertility management, and improved ewe and lamb survival. [nsw.gov.au]
6. **Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) and Australian Wool Innovation (AWI).** *Pregnancy Scanning in Sheep.* Evidence-based resources demonstrating the economic and production benefits of pregnancy scanning and differential management of single- and multiple-bearing ewes. [mla.com.au], [wool.com]