MARKET LAMB & GOAT SELECTION & EVALUATION

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Selection

• Selecting your project is one of the most important decisions you will make.

• A good animal can turn into a bad animal, however it is very difficult to make a good animal out of a bad animal. **So start with a good one.**

• People differ in their ability to select animals, so don’t hesitate to ask for help

• Always try to look at lambs that have been shorn.
Where Do I Start?

- What Show are you going to?
- Who will be showing the animal?
- What age do you buy?
- What is your goal at the show?
- What is your target weight?
- What is your budget?
What show are you going to?

• Read the rules of each show
  • # of animals, weight limits, ownership dates, & deadlines
  • Show dates are very important when selecting an animal (weight, frame size, and age)

• Do your home work
  • Who is the judge - what does he/she like?
  • Know the weight breaks (especially if targeting the light or heavy weight divisions. )
Who will be showing the animal?

- Why is this important?
  - Small kids may be much more successful with a light weight type of animal.
  - Tall kids may make a light weight animal look small and short bodied.
  - Some breeds of sheep are easier for young kids to show.
Selection

• What age do you buy?
  • Each animal will mature at a different age most will be around 9-14 months
  • Is there a tooth rule?

• What is your goal at the show?
  • Be realistic

• What is your target weight?
  • Know the weight breaks of the show you are attending

• What is your budget?
  • Each family is different in what they can afford.
Genetics in selection

• Ask about the genetics on the animal you are selecting. Use this to help answer questions you have about the animal after visual appraisal.
  • If you question if the animal will get heavy muscled then see if genetics should allow.

• Don’t get hung up on genetics.
  • A good sire and a good dam can still have poor quality offspring.
Live Animal Evaluation

- Classification
- Finish
- Live weight, size & scale, frame, weight per day of age, growth
- Muscling
- Volume, capacity
- Length – body, loin, rump, hindsaddle
- Structural correctness
- Style and balance
Classification

• Show by breed/breed type with classes broken by weight within breed/breed type

• Texas – finewool, finewool cross, southdown, medium wool, hair sheep

• Show by weight only with all breeds shown together
Finewool
Acceptable FW Characteristics

- Rambouillet, Delaine, Debouillet, or a cross between these breeds
- Silky, white face
- Silky ears, medium to moderate in size
- Soft pelt
- Yellow to white hooves (neutral)
- Black pads on hooves
- Nose should be neutral to pink in color
- May be polled or horned
Discriminatory FW Characteristics

• Moderate amounts of brown or black spots in the skin and/or wool
• Moderate freckling or pigmented skin (brown or black) on the ears, eyes, & lips
• Black streaking in the hooves
• Black eyelashes
• Birthmarks
Absolute FW Disqualifications

• Excessively coarse britch and/or harsh pelt
• Excessive coarse, chalky, white hair on the face, in the flanks, and/or down the front and/or rear legs
• Excessive brown or black spots in the skin and/or wool
• Excessive freckling or pigmented skin (brown or black) on the ears, eyes, & lips
Absolute FW Disqualifications (cont.)

- Brown or black spots in hairline above hooves
- Solid black hooves
- Black lambs
- Surgical alterations other than redocking
- Steep hip or tendency to show callipyge gene
Finewool Cross
Acceptable FWX Characteristics

- Must be a cross with evidence of at least 50% finewool breeding & the remaining percentage exhibiting predominance of medium wool breeding (Hampshire and/or Suffolk)
- Soft pelt which is characteristic of ½ blood wool (60’s-62’s spinning count)
- Face and ears should be soft and silky
Acceptable FWX Characteristics (cont.)

• Mottling and/or some spotting on face & ears & on legs below the knees & hocks
• Wool must be present below the hocks on the rear legs; wool below the knees on the front legs is not necessary
• White, ring-eyed crosses are acceptable if pelt is acceptable
• Birth marks are acceptable
Discriminatory FWX Characteristics

- Solid brown face & ears with little to no mottling
- Excessive black or brown spotting in the skin above the knees and hocks
- Moderate amounts of colored fibers (black or brown) in the wool
Absolute FWX Disqualifications

- Excessive black or solid dark chocolate brown color on face, ears, & legs (including wool)
- Excessively coarse britch and/or harsh pelt
- Excessive coarse, chalky, white hair on the face, in the flanks, and/or down the front and/or rear legs
- Total absence of wool on rear legs
- Black lambs
- Surgical alterations other than redocking
- Steep hip or tendency to show callipyge gene
Southdown
Acceptable SD Characteristics

• Hair color on muzzle should be mouse colored, gray to brown
• Nostril pigmentation may be black to purplish-gray
• Muzzle should be broad; head of moderate length
• Ears of moderate length, covered with short hair or wool
• Black hoof color
• Birth marks are acceptable
Discriminatory SD Characteristics

• Solid white color or dark chocolate color on muzzle
• Coarse, chalky, white hair around eyes extending to & including the muzzle
• Coarse hair in flank
• Coarse britch and/or harsh pelt
• Predominately pink nose with few black spots
• Long, narrow nose
Discriminatory SD Characteristics (cont.)

- Excessive coloration on ears
- Excessive ear length
- Predominately slick ears
- Scurs
- Open poll on head
- Striped hooves
- Black fibers in wool
Absolute SD Disqualifications

- Speckled face or legs
- Horns
- White hooves
- Intentional alteration of hair color or skin pigmentation
- Total pink pigmentation of nostrils
- Black lambs
- Surgical alterations other than redocking
- Steep hip or tendency to show callipyge gene
Hair Sheep
Acceptable HS Characteristics

- Must be a Barbado, St. Croix, Dorper, White Dorper, Katahdin or a cross among these breeds
- No wool below knees & hocks
- No wool forward of poll
- Predominately to all hair covering on body
Discriminatory HS Characteristics (cont.)

- Excessive wool covering
- Strong breed characteristics of breeds other than the five breeds listed above
- Solid black lambs
Absolute HS Disqualifications

- No evidence of hair on britch, belly, or forearm
- Steep hip or tendency to show callipyge gene
Medium Wool
MW Characteristics

This class generally includes the Suffolk and Hampshire breeds, plus all lambs that do not fit in the finewool, finewool cross, Southdown, or hair sheep breed classes.
Finish

• Fat bloomy lambs & kids will look good?
  • But you question if it is muscle or fat?

• Many people cannot distinguish fat from muscle

• Thin lambs or kids look bad.
  • Look for muscle indicators and skeletal quality
    • Forearm
    • Chest floor width
    • Pin set
    • Rib shape (be careful thin lambs & kids sometimes look flatter ribbed)
Muscling

- Leg
- Loin
- Rack
- Rump
- Forearm
Muscling

• Not all lambs will look the same during selection.

• Fat bloomy lambs or kids will look better than thin green lambs or kids.
  • Know the difference of muscle and fat.
  • Look at the forearm on young lambs for a muscle indicator.
  • Shorn animals will be easier to detect muscle on.

• There are different types of muscle patterns
  • Tone expressive (butterfly top) : Firm
  • Nondescript, less shape : Softer
Muscling
Muscling
Volume & Capacity

• Length of body
• Width of body
• Depth of body

“Three Dimensional”
Length

- Length of body
- Length of loin
- Length of rump
- Length of hindsaddle
Structural Correctness

• Is determined by skeletal quality

• The skeleton is the frame that supports muscle

• Key points
  • Feet and Legs
  • Shoulder and neck
  • Top line and hip
  • Rib shape
Structural Correctness – Feet and Legs

- Rear Legs

CORRECT      SICKLE HOCKED      POST LEGGED
Structural Correctness – Feet and Legs

• Front Legs

CORRECT   CALF KNEED   WEAK PASTERNs   BUCK KNEED
Structural Correctness – Feet and Legs

• Rear View

CORRECT  BOWED OUT  COW HOCKED
Structural Correctness – Feet and Legs

• Front View
Structural Correctness-Shoulder and Neck
Style & Balance

• Proper blending of all body parts

• Look like a show animal
Growth Potential and Size

• Size doesn't mean a lamb or goat is good.

• There are good light weight lambs and goats and bad heavy weight lambs and goats.

• “If big is good I’m ate up with it.” (John Kearney)

• Know your desired size
Growth Potential and Size

• Growth indicators
  • Length of cannon bone
  • Length of neck
  • Size and shape of head

• Will the animal be too big or too small for your desired goal?
Growth Potential and Size

• Properly manage the size of your animal

  • Don’t try to make a heavy weight out of a light weight animal.

  • Don’t try to make a light weight out of a heavy weight animal.
Management

- Now that you have selected a quality animal you must maintain and maximize his quality.
  - Proper feed & nutrition
  - Exercise
  - Showmanship
Carcass Terminology

• Two Major Parts to a Carcass
  • Hindsaddle – leg, loin
  • Foresaddle – rack, shoulder

• Four Major Primal or Retail Cuts
  • Leg
  • Loin
  • Rack
  • Shoulder
Lamb Carcass
Carcass Evaluation

- Live weight
- Carcass weight
- Dressing %
- Adjusted 12\textsuperscript{th} rib fat
- Body wall fat
- Loin eye area
- Leg score
- Quality grade
- Yield grade
- % BCTRC (boneless closely trimmed retail cuts)
## % Wholesale Cut Composition for Goats & Sheep

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cut</th>
<th>Goat</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leg</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loin</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rack</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoulder</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shank</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breast</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>KP fat</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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Live Weight

- Traditional market lamb – 100 to 150 lb.
- Ethnic market lamb – 60 to 100 lb.
- Stock Show lamb – 100 to 200 lb.

HOW BIG IS TOO BIG?
Live Weight

• Traditional/ Ethnic market goat
  • Up to 80 lb. then price will decrease

• Stock Show goat – 60 to 115 lb.
Carcass Weight

• Carcass is weighed after removal of the head, feet, viscera (contents of the abdominal cavity) and pluck (contents of the thoracic cavity)

• The minimum and maximum for carcass weight is 45 and 85 pounds on lambs and 35 and 70 on goats.
Dressing Percent

• Chilled carcass weight expressed as a percent of live weight

• Dressing % = chilled carcass weight/live weight x 100

• Fat and muscle will increase dressing percent

• Gut fill and pelt weight will decrease dressing percent
# Dressing Percent

<table>
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<tr>
<th>General Dressing % Parameters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feedlot Lambs</td>
<td>48-56%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Show Lambs</td>
<td>58-65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Goats</td>
<td>48-55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show Goats</td>
<td>55-62%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Finish

• Ideal – 0.1” to 0.25” fat thickness

• Range – 0.0” to 0.9” fat thickness

• Determined by feeling back, ribs, shoulder pocket, loin edges, flank, and tail

• Many people cannot distinguish fat from muscle
Adjusted 12th Rib Fat Lambs

• Measured over the center of the loin eye (longissimus dorsi) muscle between the last two (12th and 13th) ribs

• Carcasses with less than 0.1 inch fat thickness tend to dehydrate when shipped long distances

• Carcasses with greater than 0.25 inch fat thickness have to be trimmed to less than 0.25 inch for ideal consumer acceptance
Adjusted 12\textsuperscript{th} Rib Fat Goats

- Measured over the center of the loin eye (longissimus dorsi) muscle between the last two (12\textsuperscript{th} and 13\textsuperscript{th}) ribs

- Goats Deposit more internal fat and less external fat than lambs.

- Most goat carcass will have less than 0.1 inch of fat.

- Body wall fat is a better indicator of fat in goats.
Lamb Carcass
Body Wall Fat Lambs

• Measured 5 inches from the spinal cord.

• Will generally range from 0.6 to 1.6 inches.
Body Wall Fat Goats

• Better indicator of fat in goats

• Measured 1 inch from the end of the lion eye muscle.
Loin Eye Area

• Measured between the 12\textsuperscript{th} and 13\textsuperscript{th} rib.

• Will vary depending on weight and muscularity.

• Very seldom will a show lamb have over a 4.5 loin eye or a show goat over a 3.0 loin eye
## Loin Eye Area

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<tr>
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<th>Parameters</th>
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<tr>
<td>Show Lambs</td>
<td>1.5 - 5.0 Sq inches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Show Goats</td>
<td>1.0 - 3.5 Sq inches</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Leg Score

• Scores assigned according to plumpness of leg

• P+ = 15; Po = 14; P- = 13; Ch+ = 12; Cho = 11; Ch- = 10; etc.

• In goats circumference of both legs is sometimes measured.
Quality Grades

• Refers to the eating quality or palatability of the meat

• Quality grades are prime, choice, good, utility, and cull with each broken down to 1/3 of a grade: low (-), average (o) and high (+).

• As an animal gets fatter the quality grade increases

• Nearly all lambs will grade prime or choice without any problem
Yield grade (Cutability)

- Refers to the percent of closely trimmed retail cuts from the leg, loin, rack, and shoulder

  YG 1 = 47.3% or more
  YG 2 = 45.5% to 47.3%
  YG 3 = 43.7% to 45.5%
  YG 4 = 41.9% to 43.7%
  YG 5 = 41.9% or less
Yield Grade (cont)

• As an animal gets fatter the yield grade becomes less desirable (cutability decreases)

• The 5 yield grades are based on the following adjusted fat thickness at the 12\textsuperscript{th}-13\textsuperscript{th} rib
  
  YG 1 = 0.00 – 0.15 inches
  YG 2 = 0.16 – 0.25 inches
  YG 3 = 0.26 – 0.35 inches
  YG 4 = 0.36 – 0.45 inches
  YG 5 = 0.46 inches & up

YG Formula = 0.4 + (10 x adjusted fat thickness, in.)
% BCTRC

• % boneless, closely trimmed retail cuts from the leg, loin, rack, and shoulder

• Calculated as follows:

%BCTRC = 49.936 – (0.0848 x hot carcass weight)
- (4.376 x adjusted fat thickness)
- (3.53 x body wall thickness)
+ (2.456 x ribeye area)
Carcass Contest Rules

• Weight Parameters
  • Lambs
    • 45 lbs to 85 lbs
  • Goats
    • 35 lbs to 70 lbs

• Fat Thickness
  • Must be under 0.25 inches
Average/Large Size (90 lbs.)
Very Lean
Average Muscle
Carcass Data

- Live weight, lb.  90
- Carcass weight, lb.  43
- Dressing %  48
- Adjusted fat thickness, in.  0.1
- Body wall thickness, in.  0.6
- Loin eye area, in.  2.3
- % BCTRC  49.4
Very Large Size (130 lbs.)
Very Fat
Average Muscle
Carcass Data

- Live weight, lb. 130
- Carcass weight, lb. 70
- Dressing % 54
- Adjusted fat thickness, in. 0.3
- Body wall thickness, in. 1.0
- Loin eye area, in. 2.5
- % BCTRC 45.3
Large Size (100 lbs.)
Lean
Heavy Muscle
## Carcass Data

- Live weight, lb. 100
- Carcass weight, lb. 50
- Dressing % 50
- Adjusted fat thickness, in. 0.15
- Body wall thickness, in. 0.75
- Loin eye area, in. 2.8
- % BCTRC 49.3
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<td>Carcass weight, lb.</td>
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<td>Dressing %</td>
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<td>Adjusted fat thickness, in.</td>
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<td>Body wall thickness, in.</td>
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<td>Loin eye area, in.</td>
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<td>Leg score</td>
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<tr>
<td>% BCTRC</td>
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Carcass Data

- Live weight, lb. 166
- Carcass weight, lb. 93
- Dressing % 56
- Adjusted fat thickness, in. 0.35
- Body wall thickness, in. 1.30
- Loin eye area, in. 3.50
- Leg score P+
- % BCTRC 44.5
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<td>Carcass weight, lb.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dressing %</td>
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<td>Adjusted fat thickness, in.</td>
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<td>Body wall thickness, in.</td>
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<td>Loin eye area, in.</td>
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<td>Leg score</td>
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<td>% BCTRC</td>
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Carcass Data

- Live weight, lb. 83
- Carcass weight, lb. 39
- Dressing % 47
- Adjusted fat thickness, in. 0.09
- Body wall thickness, in. 0.5
- Loin eye area, in. 2.30
- Leg score Ch+
- % BCTRC 50.1
Carcass Data

- Live weight, lb. 123
- Carcass weight, lb. 63
- Dressing % 51
- Adjusted fat thickness, in. 0.47
- Body wall thickness, in. 1.35
- Loin eye area, in. 2.30
- Leg score Ch
- % BCTRC 43.4
Market Animal Selection

Remember start with a good one
end with a good one.