

DIVISION D - SHEEP

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The fitting and preparation of all animals for exhibit is the responsibility of the Exhibitor. Exhibitors may receive guidance only from immediate family members, Maryland 4-H/FFA Members and appointed UME Volunteers/FFA Advisors; however, all fitting, care, and preparation should be done by the 4-H member. In the case where assistance is by someone other than those listed above, the animal and youth may be disqualified.

Division Rules & Regulations:

- Exhibitors and their exhibits must comply with the "General State Fair Rules & Regulations", "General 4-H and FFA Rules & Regulations", "Animal Rules & Regulations", the "Maryland 4-H Code of Animal Science Ethics", the "MD Department of Agriculture Health Regulations for Livestock Exhibited in Maryland", these "Division Rules & Regulations" and the applicable "Section Rules & Regulations".
- Entries:** Division entries will be received on Wednesday, August 26, 2026, NOON-9pm and Thursday, August 27, 2026 7am – 9 am in the Sheep Barn. **All animals must be in place by 9 a.m. on Thursday.** DO NOT BRING TACK OR ANIMALS BEFORE WEDNESDAY. Animals will be released at 6pm on Sunday, August 30, 2026.

Pre-entry is required. **YOU MUST USE THE INTERNET ENTRY SYSTEMS FOUND AT www.marylandstatefair.com** Internet entries are due July 15th. Please see the "General Rules" section of the Maryland State Fair website for full information on 2025 Entry system. Exhibitors without internet access should contact their County Extension Educator for assistance. All release forms are to be completed via the online entry system at the time of registration. Reminder you must complete the online Animal Husbandry & Quality Assurance program to be able to exhibit your animals. Check with your county to make sure you are up to date with this requirement.

- Ownership:**
 - All breeding sheep must be the *bona fide* property of the exhibitor and must have been owned and registered with the Breed Association **in the full name of the exhibitor only** by July 1 of the current year. Initials are not acceptable; full names must be shown on all paperwork. A bill of sale is not acceptable. Registration papers and proper, recognized identification of animals will be checked by the Superintendent. No joint ownership will be allowed. **Only Purebred Registered animals will be shown in registered breed classes. All others will be shown in Commercial Breed classes.** Commercial Breeding animals **must be tagged with a MD 4-H/FFA Livestock Ear Tag. All breeding animals must be owned by July 1st of the current year.**
 - All Market lambs must be the *bona fide* property of the exhibitor and registered in the exhibitor's name only by June 1 of the current year. All market lambs must be tagged with a Maryland 4-H Livestock Tag prior to arrival at fairgrounds. Born after January 1 of the current year. **Lambs will be weighed on Thursday, August 27th at 10:30 am.**
 - Bred and Owned Classes:** Exhibitors in the Bred and Owned Classes in 4-H/FFA animal divisions must be the breeder and the first and continuous (only) owner of the animal entered. "Breeder" is defined as the recorded owner of the dam at the time of breeding/service. "First Owner" is defined as the recorded owner of the dam at the time the animal was born to be shown as Bred and Owned.
- Substitutions: Exhibitors are permitted to substitute one breeding animal for another in any class, but substitution must be within the same breed and registered in the same youth's name. Market animals must be shown in the classes to which they were assigned by the Superintendent, based on their weight.
- All market lambs **MUST** be slick-shorn, **UNWRAPPED** and **UNCOVERED PRIOR TO ARRIVAL** at the fairgrounds. Per Maryland Association of Agricultural Fairs and Shows and the Maryland Department of Agriculture. This is a step to decrease problems from Club Lamb Fungus.
- Proper 4-H/FFA attire must be worn during all shows, particularly closed-toed, sturdy footwear. No "cros" or **tennis shoes** will be allowed. Disqualification may result from violating this rule. Please review Animal Rules and Regulations for proper 4-H attire.
- A bedding fee will be charged at the time of entry to cover the initial bedding (Wood Shavings) that will be supplied by the Fair. Additional bedding straw or wood shavings is the responsibility of the exhibitor. NO ASTRO TURF ALLOWED IN THE PENS. A limited amount of Shavings & Straw will also be available for purchase on the grounds. Exhibitors are responsible for cleaning their pens, and the Superintendent, or appointed staff person, must check out each, prior to exhibitors leaving the barn area. Prior to checking out, exhibitors must clean their pens. Anyone not cleaning their pens will forfeit all premiums.**
- Once sheep are checked in, they may NOT be removed from the grounds during the Fair without the Superintendent's permission.
- All sheep must be clean and dry to be considered properly presented to show.
- No artificial coloring may be used on any part of any animal regardless of class. **No muzzles** may be used. Icing of lambs is **not permitted**, including cold towels.
- Teeth requirements: Spring Lambs—All lamb teeth must be present. Fall Lambs—Yearling teeth may be present but must not have grown even with the lamb teeth at time of show. Yearling—Sheep may not have more than 4 permanent teeth showing at time of show.
- Prolapses: Any sheep (breeding sheep or lambs) that exhibit a rectal prolapse at a 4-H activity will be ineligible for that show and will be sent home as soon as possible, by the Extension Educator, Sheep Superintendent, or State Fair Veterinarian. The following will be used as a guideline for making this determination: 'A rectal prolapse is defined as an inversion of the rectum that protrudes 4 cm (1.6") or more outside the body and remains exterior to the body while the animal is standing.' (Journal of Animal Science, 2003, Thomas et al.) If a lamb is observed with a rectal prolapse (by one of the above people) and in future is not observed with a rectal prolapse, it is still classified as having a rectal prolapse" at that event.
- County Groups** - A county group shall consist of 4 animals owned by 4 different 4-H and/or FFA members. County groups will be comprised of all 4-H OR FFA members, no combinations. Each county is limited to one entry for 4-H exhibitors and one for FFA exhibitors. Exhibitors may show in only one county group.
- Production (Rate of Gain) awards will be calculated by the State Fair entry system following the official weigh-in at the State Fair. Starting weights will be those recorded with the MD State 4-H Office at the start of the project at the county weigh-ins.
- Refer to Youth Livestock Sale Rules found in 4-H/FFA Division X, Section XIV pertaining to market lamb sale animals. 4-H'ers may only nominate one animal for the sale selection process. The judge will make the sale selection and their decision is final.
- Exhibitors will show their own animals (Refer to Rule No. 6 of the "Animal Rules & Regulations" found at the beginning of this catalog.) Helpers will be permitted only in group classes. **When there are two animals in the same class and another 4-H member of the same age or younger may show the second animal. Others may not show a 4-H/FFA member's animal if the youth is participating in an open show.**
- MANDATORY Exhibitor Orientation: Thursday, August 21st at 10:00 am BEFORE weigh-in of market lambs. Orientation will be held in the South Cow Palace Ring.**
- No wet lambs will be weighed; all leg wraps and covers must be removed prior to entering the scale.**
- Slapping/hitting of any kind on the sheep is not permitted in the showing. Exhibitors will be asked to leave the ring and forfeit their class.**
- Drenching of any kind is not permitted, unless is done by the State Fair veterinarian.**
- Failure to provide water or perform daily cleaning daily of pens could result in forfeiture of premiums.**

GENERAL REMINDER: Please do not block access to the barn or loading areas at any time. Use these areas only for loading/unloading, and do NOT leave vehicles and trailers unattended. MD State Fair Officials reserve the right to tow unattended vehicles that block those areas. Towing will occur at the owner's expense.

SHOWMANSHIP, Section 1 – Friday, August 28, 2026 at Noon

Section Rules & Regulations:

1. Internet pre-entry is required. Internet Entries due to State Fair by July 15th. Exhibitors compete according to their 4-H Age (age as of 1/1/26). Previous Grand Champions may not compete in Fitting & Showing except in the Dean's Champion Challenge (refer to "4-H & FFA Fitting & Showmanship Regulations").
2. Halters will not be permitted unless pre-approved by the Superintendent.
3. Judging criteria: Performance in the show ring (60), Knowledge (30), and Personal Appearance (10).
4. Showmanship Grand Champion will be eligible to participate in the 4-H/FFA All-Star Showmanship for Market Livestock Contest on Sunday, August 30, 2026 @ 5 p.m. ~See Division X, Section XV - 4-H/FFA All-Star Showmanship Contest for rules.~

CLASSES

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| D1 Showmanship – Senior (4-H Age 18) | D11 Showmanship - Junior (4-H Age 10) |
| D2 Showmanship - Senior (4-H Age 17) | D12 Showmanship - Junior (4-H Age 9) |
| D3 Showmanship - Senior (4-H Age 16) | D13 Showmanship - Junior (4-H Age 8) |
| D4 Showmanship - Senior (4-H Age 15) | D14 Award Class (Fair Use Only) - Showmanship Jr Champion Rosette |
| D5 Showmanship - Senior (4-H Age 14) | |
| D6 Award Class (Fair Use Only) - Showmanship Sr Champion – Rosette | D15 Award Class - Showmanship Grand Champ - Rosette & Trophy |
| D7 Showmanship - Intermediate (4-H Age 13) | D18 Dean's Champion Challenge (previous year's champ and prior Grand Champs who are still of 4-H age are invited to compete) |
| D8 Showmanship - Intermediate (4-H Age 12) | D19 Award Class -Champ Challenge Grand Champ-Rosette & Special Award |
| D9 Showmanship - Intermediate (4-H Age 11) | |
| D10 Award Class (Fair Use Only) - Showmanship Int Champion – Rosette | |

BREEDING SHEEP – Sunday, August 30, 2026 at 11:00 am

Section Rules & Regulations:

1. Ownership Deadline – Breeding sheep must be owned by July 1 of the current year.
2. Exhibitors are permitted to make 2 entries in each breeding sheep class. Include ear tag, flock number, and registration number on entry form.
3. Breeding animals must be shown in proper age category. Lambs may NOT be moved up to a different category.
4. Spring Lamb birth date for all breeds will be January 1 of the current year. Fall Lambs cannot be born before September 1, 2025.
5. The Sheep Breeding Show will be divided into 3 divisions, Meat Breeds, Wool Breeds, & Hair Breeds.
 - Meat Breeds** - Dorset-Sec.2, Hampshire-Sec.3, Shropshire-Sec.4, Southdown-Sec.5, Suffolk-Sec.6, Tunis-Sec.7, Other Registered Meat Breeds-Sec.8 and Commercial Breeding Sheep-Sec.9 (Must be tagged with a MD 4-H Livestock tag prior to arrival at the fair and have met ownership date guidelines).
 - Wool Breeds** - Black Lincoln- Sec.10, White Border Leicester–Sec.11, Black Border Leicester–Sec.12, White Lincoln–Sec.13, Nature Colored–Fine/Med-Sec.14, Nature Colored–Long Wool–Sec.15, Bluefaced Leicester – Sec. 16, Leicester Long Wool – Sec. 17, Other Recognized Wool Breeds-Sec.18.
 - Hair Breeds** – Dorper-Sec.19, Katahdin-Sec.20 and Other Hair Breeds-Sec.21.
6. If fewer than five (5) animals have entered in a given breed above, that breed may be shown in the "Other Breeds" division at the discretion of the Superintendent.
7. 4-H'ers will be responsible for setting of their sheep's feet.
8. Leased animals must have signed copy of lease at registration check.
9. All commercial breeding sheep must have a copy of their county weigh-in and tagging paperwork for check-in.

CLASSES

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| D20 Yearling Ram - Born between Aug 31, 2024-Aug 31, 2025 | D24 Award Class (Fair Use Only) - Rams - Breed Champion (Each Breed) - Rosette |
| D21 Fall Ram Lamb - Born between Sep 1-Dec 31, 2025 | D25 Award Class (Fair Use Only) - Rams - Breed Res Champ (Each Breed) - Rosette |
| D22 Early Ram Lamb - Born Jan 1, 2026 – February 15, 2026 | D29 Award Class (Fair Use Only) - Rams - Grand Champion - Rosette |
| D23 Late Ram Lamb - Born February 16, 2026 or after | |
| | D36 Award Class (Fair Use Only) - Ewes - Breed Champion (Each Breed) - Rosette |
| | D37 Award Class (Fair Use Only) - Ewes - Breed Res Champ (Each Breed) - Rosette |
| D31 Yearling Ewe - Born between Aug 31, 2024-Aug 31, 2025 | D41 Award Class (Fair Use Only) - Ewes - Grand Champion - Rosette |
| D32 Fall Ewe Lamb - Born between Sep 1-Dec 31, 2025 | |
| D33 Early Ewe Lamb - Born Jan 1, 2026 – February 15, 2026 | D43 Award Class (Fair Use Only) – Junior Best Bred and Owned - Rosette |
| D34 Late Ewe Lamb – Born February 16, 2026 or after | D44 Award Class (Fair Use Only) – Senior Best Bred and Owned - Rosette |
| D35 Pair of Lambs - can be either rams or ewes | |

MARKET LAMBS, Section 23 – Thursday, August 27, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

Section Rules & Regulations:

1. All market lambs **MUST** be slick-shorn, **UNWRAPPED, and UNCOVERED PRIOR TO ARRIVAL** at the fairgrounds. Per Maryland Association of Agricultural Fairs and Shows and the Maryland Department of Agriculture. This is a step to decrease problems from Club Lamb Fungus.
2. Exhibitor may enter, weigh-in and show a max of 5 market lambs. Re-weighs will not be permitted. Market lambs will be shown by weight and not by breed. Lambs may be moved to the next higher weight class only when the exhibitor has more than 2 lambs in a class. Only ewe and wether lambs may be shown in market classes. All market lambs must be tagged with a MD 4-H/FFA Livestock Tag prior to arrival at fair. Market lambs must be owned by June 1 of the current year and born after January 1. Counties have the right to require earlier ownership. Exhibitors may show 1 animal in the Bred & Owned class according to their 4-H age.
3. All wether lambs must be completely healed. A show-appointed veterinarian will examine any wether showing evidence of testicular tissue, signs of testicle presence, unhealed scrotum, or any stag characteristics. The veterinarian will have the FINAL DECISION in determining the eligibility for show. Ewe lambs shown in a breeding class are not eligible to be shown in market lamb classes.
4. **New for 2026: There is not a minimum rate of gain/average daily gain requirement for market lambs to be able to show and sell at the Maryland State Fair. Starting weight and date must be verified by the County 4-H Extension Educator / FFA Advisor at the initial county lamb tagging/weighing event.** Market Lambs must weigh a minimum of 90 pounds. Lambs less than 100 pounds may participate in showmanship and market exhibition only. All animals will be weighed and divided into classes at the Superintendent's discretion. The number of classes may vary from year to year. A maximum of 5 market lambs can be entered and shown by an exhibitor but not more than 2 in the same weight class. **See General Rules & Regulations- Animal section rule #10 for details.**
5. The fitting and preparation of all animals for exhibit is the responsibility of the Exhibitor. Exhibitors may receive **GUIDANCE ONLY** from immediate family members, Maryland 4-H/FFA Members and appointed UME Volunteers/FFA Advisors; however, all fitting, care, and preparation should be primarily done by the 4-H member. In the case where assistance is by someone other than those listed above, the animal and youth maybe both be disqualified.
6. Sale animals will be selected at the conclusion of the Market Lamb Show. Exhibitors may only nominate one animal for the sale selection process. The judge will make the sale selection and their decision is final. Refer to Youth Livestock Sale Rules found in 4-H/FFA Division X, Section XIV rules for additional information pertaining to market lamb sale animals.
7. All 4-H/FFA members who have lambs selected for the sale, are responsible for the care and feeding and watering of the animal until it is sold on Monday night.
8. Grand Champion must be sold through the sale, Reserve Champion may sale their animal if they choose. (For all rules refer to the Youth Livestock Sale Rules)

CLASSES

- D45 Market Lambs
 D46 Award Class (Fair Use Only) - Grand Champion Market Lamb—Rosette, Trophy and Banner
 D47 Award Class (Fair Use Only) - Reserve Grand Champion Market Lamb—Rosette
 D48 Award Class (Fair Use Only) – 3rd Overall Market Lamb
 D49 Award Class (Fair Use Only) – 4th Overall Market Lamb
 D50 Award Class (Fair Use Only) – 5th Overall Market Lamb
- D51 Bred and Owned- Junior Division (4-H ages 8-13)
 D52 Award Class (Fair Use Only) - Bred & Owned Junior Champion - Rosette & Trophy
- D53 Bred and Owned- Senior Division (4-H ages 14-18)
 D54 Award Class (Fair Use Only) - Bred & Owned Senior Champion - Rosette & Trophy

PREMIUM SCHEDULE	Classes	1st Place	2nd – 20th Place
	Showmanship Classes & Bred & Owned	\$20	\$15
	Breed Classes & Market Classes	\$17	\$12
	Group classes (Paid to County 4-H Program)	\$35	\$25, \$20, \$15
	Rate of Gain -	Excellent (\$7), Very Good (\$6), Good (\$5).	
	<i>Note: Premiums will not be paid on the following class: Dean's Champion Challenge</i>		

Rate of Gain Production Awards & Premiums

- Rate of Gain for each market lamb will receive one of the following ribbons: Excellent-Blue, Very Good-Red or Good-White according to the following schedule:
 Excellent (.61+), Very Good (.46-.60), Good (.35-.45).
- D58 Award Class (Fair Use Only) Market Lamb Rate of Gain
 D59 Award Class (Fair Use Only) Market Lamb Rate of Gain Champion - Rosette & Trophy