



2026 LAMB PROJECT **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**



Species-Chair: Shayna Conger

(231) 357-6898

Assistant Species-Chair: Clayton Porter

(520) 400-0384

Lamb Barn Email: sheepbarn4hnwmf@gmail.com

IMPORTANT DATES		IMPORTANT INFO	
Registration	March 2nd, 2026	Minimum Weight @ Fair	100 lbs
Birth Date	After December 1 st , 2025	Shearing	TBD
Possession	May 1st, 2026	Record Book (Both Market & Show-only)	Required Due: 9/07/26
Tagging	Required Virtual Tagging: May 1st, 2026 Physical Tagging: TBD	Thank You Note	Required Due: 10/5/26

Participating 4-H youth must abide by all general rules and regulations listed in the Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council's Policies & Procedures books and the Premium Book of the Northwestern Michigan Fair. This includes, but is not limited to, Code of Conducts, registration deadlines, showmanship and market requirements, record book and thank you letter requirements, etc.

Registration Requirements

- Youth must be **8 years old or older** by January 1 of the current year and registered in **4-H Online 2.0** to participate in a 4-H market lamb project.
 - **All lamb participants** (Market, Show-Only, and Cloverbuds) must complete online registration through the **Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council website no later than midnight on the first Monday of March.**
 - *Optional:* Each market lamb participant may register **one extra lamb** for a **\$10 fee**, paid on tagging day.
 - The extra lamb may only be used within the same family.
 - Only **one** market lamb may be brought to the fair per 4-H member.
 - Youth must follow all registration requirements listed in the **Northwestern Michigan Fair Premium Book** to participate in livestock shows and the auction.
 - To participate in the livestock auction, youth must register for and compete in **both showmanship and market classes.**
 - Market lambs **cannot** be registered or shown in breed classes.
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Animal Requirements

- All lambs must have a **Farm Identification Tag** (from the breeder) for scrapie compliance.
 - All market lambs must also be tagged by the **Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council.**
 - Lambs must be **born on or after December 1** of the current year.
 - Lambs must be in the possession or care of the 4-H member **on or before May 1.**
 - Lambs must be **wethers or ewes**; rams are disqualified.
 - All lambs must receive an **overeating shot** and be **wormed.**
 - These are often administered by the breeder.
 - Obtain medication information for the **Lamb Health Record.**
 - A second worming dose may be needed before fair; follow label withdrawal times.
 - **Proof of vaccination** is required at fair check-in.
 - Lambs should be **sheared as close to fair as possible.**
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Weight Requirements

- Minimum weight for market class entry: **100 lbs.**
- Lambs under 100 lbs at weigh-in may participate in **Showmanship only** and are **not eligible** for market class or the auction.
- Underweight or extra animals must be removed from the fairgrounds at the end of fair week or may be sent on a slaughter truck for a fee.

- No “For Sale” signs or private treaty sales are allowed for underweight, extra, or Cloverbud lambs while on the fairgrounds.
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Fair Week Requirements

General Requirements

- Weigh-in occurs the **first Saturday of fair**.
 - Youth must be present or make prior arrangements with the species chair.
- Protective boots or solid shoes are required when working with lambs.
- No feed, feed bags, or supplies may be stored in the barn unless approved.
- Pens must be kept clean and bedded with natural material (sawdust provided).
 - No carpets allowed.
- **No muzzles** on lambs at any time.

Animal Care Requirements

- Animals must be treated humanely at all times.
 - Reports of unethical or abusive treatment may result in disqualification.
- Youth must provide enough grain and hay for the entire week.
 - **No liquid feeding** allowed.
- Youth must feed, water, and care for their lamb daily.
- Water must remain **full and fresh** at all times.
- For safety, **lamb coverings** (blankets, leg wraps, etc.) may need to be removed depending on weather or barn temperatures.

Show Day Policies

- The lamb barn closes **2 hours before the first show**.
 - Only the 4-H'er and **one support person** may enter during closure.
 - The support person must follow footwear requirements.
 - Identification badges may be required.
- The 4-H'er and their support person may fit and prepare the lamb for show.

Fair End Responsibilities

- Pens must be completely cleaned and scraped.
 - Pen bars must be scrubbed and wiped down.
 - All lambs must be checked out by the species chair or assistant before loading.
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After Fair Requirements

- All market and show-only participants must submit a **completed record book** at the **September Livestock Council meeting**.

- A **thank-you note** and **5×7 auction photo** must be given to the buyer, with a copy of the thank-you note submitted at the **October meeting**.
 - Failure to submit required materials results in **suspension** from the following year's livestock classes and auction.
 - Youth may regain eligibility by submitting the record book by the **November meeting**.
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Important Information & Tips for a Successful Lamb Project

Estimated Costs

- Lamb purchase: **\$250–\$500**
- Feed:
 - Grain: 350–450 lbs @ ~\$30 per 50 lbs
 - Alfalfa pellets: 100 lbs @ ~\$10 per 50 lbs
 - OR Hay: 4–5 bales @ ~\$12 each
- Wormer: ~\$8
- Shearing: ~\$15
- Additional supplies: lead rope, feed dish, water bucket, blanket, tools, etc.
- Fair week expenses: registration fees, camping fees, 4% commission.

Health & Safety Notes

- **Never** feed lambs anything containing copper (goat feed contains copper).
 - **Do not** use bleach on lambs; it burns their skin.
 - Prevent foot rot by keeping lambs dry; report suspected cases immediately.
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Tips

Lamb Selection

- Look for strong structure, sound hooves, straight back, wide loin, and full hindquarters.
- Choose healthy lambs with no runny eyes/nose, no cough, and normal movement.
- Ideal purchase weight: **45–50 lbs**.

Bringing Your Lamb Home

- Prepare a clean pen with shelter, shade, and clean water.
- Transition feed gradually based on breeder recommendations.
- Expect crying for the first few days; spend time bonding.

Training & Handling

- Stay calm and quiet.
- Be patient with halter training; gentle pressure works best.

- After halter training, practice showmanship skills.

Feeding

- Grain twice daily; amount based on 15-minute consumption or ~1 lb per feeding.
- Adjust grain based on weight gain.
- Provide hay as recommended (approx. 10–20% of diet).

Exercise & Muscle Building

- Elevate feed dish to encourage stretching.
- Build muscle through hill walking, sand running, and small jumps.

Hot Weather Care

- Keep lambs cool; bathe if temperatures exceed 90°F.
- Dry thoroughly after cooling.
- Use Skin So Soft or livestock fly spray on non-wool areas.
- Exercise during cooler morning or evening hours.

Preparing for the Fair

- Give a thorough bath before arrival.
- Wash knees, belly, and armpits; trim hooves; clean ears and tags.
- Gather supplies: feed dish, water bucket, tack box, wheelbarrow, shovel, bathing supplies, lamb blanket.

Show Day Attire

- Clean pants/jeans without holes
- Button-down shirt

Record Keeping

Track:

- Purchase
 - Grain amounts
 - Weight gain
 - Worming
 - Other health or care notes
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Cloverbuds

- Ages 5–7 as of January 1 of the current year.
- Have their own showmanship class.

- May bring their own lamb or show another member's lamb.
- Cloverbuds **cannot** market their lamb.
- A parent, leader, or adult must be present at all times, including in the show ring.