Live Animal Evaluation
Sheep

Steven M. Jones
Associate Professor
Lamb Evaluation: Fat Indicators

- Shoulder
- Breast
- Flank
- Forerib
Lamb Evaluation: Fat Indicators

- Base of leg/Twist
- Loin Edge
- Spine
- Dock
Lamb Evaluation: Muscle Indicators

- Leg
- Stifle
- Forearm
Lamb Evaluation: Muscle Indicators

- Rack
- Loin
- Leg
Reading Top Shape
Reading Top Shape
Live Lamb Evaluation

- Weight
- Dressing percent
- 12th rib fat
- Ribeye area
- Yield grade
- Quality grade
Weight

- **Live weight**
  - Range: 90 - 150 lb
  - Avg: 125 lb

- **Carcass weight**
  - Weight of dressed carcass with kidney and pelvic fat removed
Dressing Percentage

- Percentage of live weight that ends up as carcass
- Range: 45 - 58%
- Avg:
  - 53% for shorn lambs
  - 50% for unshorn lambs
Factors Affecting Dressing

- Pelt weight
  - Unshorn lambs will dress 1-5% lower than shorn
- Fill
- Muscling
- Fat cover
Fat Thickness

- Taken at the 12th rib
- Normally adjusted up to a .1 inch due to body wall fat
- Used in YG equation
- Range: .05 - .50 in.
- Avg: .25 in.
- Minimum requirement: .15 in.
Ribeye Area

- Measured at 12th rib
- Indicator of total muscle in carcass but not used in YG equation

- Range: 1.5 - 4.5 sq. in.
- Avg: 2.5 sq. in.
Yield Grade

- Predicts the yield of boneless, closely trimmed retail cuts from the leg, loin, rib, and shoulder
- Only includes adjusted 12th rib fat thickness
- \( YG = 0.4 + (10 \times \text{Adj. fat thickness}) \)
Quality Grade

- Predictor of eating quality based on three factors:
  - Maturity
  - Lean Quality
    - Texture
    - Firmness
    - Marbling
  - Conformation
Lamb Quality Grades

- Range: Good to Prime
- Avg: Choice

- Majority of market lambs will grade Choice
Lamb Quality Grades

- Superior conformation can compensate for inferior lean quality and vice versa
  - Good lean quality with **Choice** conformation = **Choice**
  - **Prime** lean quality with **Choice** conformation = **Prime**
- To qualify for Ch or Pr, lamb carcass must have at least .10 in. fat covering