



Holidays to Consider When Marketing Lambs

Demand for lamb may increase in the weeks before various holidays. Producers can take advantage of the increased demand by carefully timing lamb crops and knowing the type of product preferred for each market.

Some holidays that may affect demand include the following (see the following page for details):

Holiday	2025	2026
Easter (Christian)	April 20	April 5
Passover (Jewish)	April 12 - April 20	April 1 - April 9
Othodox Easter	Apr 20	April 12
Ramadan (Muslim)	March 1 - 29	February 18 - March 19
Eid-al-Fitr (Muslim)	March 30	March 20
Eid-ul-Adha, Festival of Sacrifice (Muslim)	June 6	May 27
Muharram (Islamic New Year)	July 27	July 14
Rosh Hashanah (Jewish)	September 22 - September 24	September 11 - September 13
Thanksgiving (Christian)	October 13	October 12
Hanukkah, Festival of Rededication (Jewish)	December 14 - December 22	December 4 - December 12
Christmas (Christian)	December 25	December 25

Easter / Passover / Orthodox Easter

These holidays typically occur within a few weeks of each other and may all contribute to a rise in demand. The traditional market is for healthy, milk-fed lambs weighing under 50lbs live and not over 3 months of age. Having lambs of the correct type ready for the spring market will require planning a lamb crop in late fall/early winter. An increase in demand for older, heavier lambs may also be seen during the weeks leading up to Easter. Note: For the Jewish holiday, Passover, animals must be slaughtered and processed according to Kosher laws.

Ramadan and Eid al Fitr

Muslims observe the month of Ramadan by fasting from sunrise to sunset. Goat or lamb meat is commonly part of the daily evening feast. The end of Ramadan is marked by a one-day holiday, Eid al Fitr - Festival of Fast Breaking, which traditionally features lamb or goat. Weaned market lambs (60-80 lbs live weight) are preferred.

The timing of this holiday is based on the Islamic lunar calendar, and occurs 11 days earlier every year.

Note: Animals must be slaughtered and processed according to Halal requirements.

Eid al-Adha (Sacrifice Day)

Traditionally, adult Muslims who do not have any financial constraints are expected to sacrifice a goat or a lamb and distribute the meat to the needy. Weaned market lambs under a year of age are preferred. However, large market kids/lambs and older goats/sheep are also used. The animals must be healthy, non-pregnant and blemish free (no broken horns, no open wounds, intact ears and no lameness, etc.). Intact ram lambs may be preferred. Wethers and lambs with docked tails may not be acceptable.

The timing of this holiday is based on the Islamic lunar calendar, and occurs 11 days earlier each year.

Note: Animals must be slaughtered and processed according to Halal requirements.

Muharram

The Islamic New Year is the first day of the Muslim calendar. Mutton is often served as the main course for this holiday meal. There is no preferred weight for this holiday, although animals should appear healthy. Steady market, a limited influencer.

Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year)

Well finished, weaned market lambs (60-110lbs).

Note: Animals must be slaughtered and processed according to Kosher laws.

Hanukkah

Chanukah celebrations last for eight days. Chanukah occurs in December and may coincide with Christmas. Healthy, heavy lambs are usually in high demand before the start of these holidays.

Note: Animals must be slaughtered and processed according to Kosher laws.

Christmas

Light, milk-fed lambs may also increase in demand in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Producing lambs for the Christmas market requires out-of-season breeding resulting in a late summer/early fall lambing. The demand for "curry" mutton/market lamb may also increase during this time of the year.