

Alberta Research Priorities 2016-2017



1. Improving production performance

- Key flock performance indicators
 - Improve animal performance through nutrition, ration and cost management
 - Research into improved nutrition, by-product feeds, toxins, ergot
 - Improve flock performance, selection and culling practices with recording and analysis
 - Improve management systems for highly productive ewes
- Genetic selection
 - Terminal sire evaluation for carcass quality
 - Parasite / disease resistance
- Carcass quality / performance and supply chain practices
 - On-farm practices (i.e. feeding) to improve lamb performance and carcass quality
 - Farm to market handling and transportation to minimize carcass damage
 - Processing improvements focused on carcass quality, quality assessment, technology
- Sustainable lamb production management systems:
 - profitable (productive, enhanced supply)
 - environmental resources (soil, water, forage)
 - social responsibility (safe food, animal welfare)
 - identification of data, research and knowledge gaps

2. Improving business performance and profitability

- Cost of production
 - Improved management, financial skill solutions
 - Develop new knowledge/information transfer options
- Manage production costs
 - Feed, labour, energy, overhead
 - Capital investment, cash-flow
- Identify, assess alternative practices in key cost areas (forages, grazing, feeds, labour, technology, equipment)
- Adapt flock models, production systems, risk management to meet changing environmental and societal demand

3. Improving animal health and welfare

- Knowledge and tools to reduce death losses and early-culling (eg. neonatal, feeder lambs, ewes)
- Research on the impact and cost of disease (lameness, pneumonias, chronic conditions like OPP, etc.) and parasites (eg. *T. ovis*, *Haemonchus*)
- Access to drugs, medications for disease management
- Uptake of new and existing tools and programs (food safety, traceability, biosecurity, and animal welfare)
- Identification, development, transfer to supply chain members, of clear 'best practices' for flock health and welfare

Developed by the Alberta Lamb Producers and Susan Hosford, Sheep Specialist, Alberta Agriculture, and aligned with the Canadian Research Priorities 2014-2015.