

Sheep and Goat Inventories

As of July 1, 2008, sheep and lamb inventories were down 3 percent from the previous year, and 5 percent below 2006, bringing the total inventory in the United States to 7.35 million head. Breeding sheep inventory fell 3 percent from a year ago, to 4.42 million head. The current U.S. breeding herd consists of 3.62 million ewes one year and older, 180,000 rams one year and older, and 620,000 replacement lambs. Market sheep and lambs, at 2.86 million head, were also down from last July. Market lamb inventory includes 1.67 million lambs under 65 pounds, 595,000 lambs 65-84 pounds, 340,000 lambs 85-105 pounds, and 250,000 lambs over 105 pounds. Market sheep accounted for 75,000 head. The U.S. lamb crop is expected to total 3.97 million head in 2008, down 2 percent from July 2007. During the first half of the year 3.48 million lambs were born, with 490,000 head expected to be born from July through December.

Goat inventory in the U.S. totaled 3.73 million head, up 4 percent from July 2007. Breeding goat inventory rose 4 percent to 2.81 million head. All market goats and kids totaled 925,000 head, up 2 percent from the previous July. Meat goat inventories increased 5 percent from a year ago, to 3.15 million head. Milk goat inventory was up 4 percent, increasing to 350,000 head. Angora goat inventories fell 12 percent to 230,000 head. The 2008 U.S. kid crop is expected to total 2.03 million head, up 5 percent from last year.