

Sheep and Goat Inventories

As of July 1, 2009, sheep and lamb inventories were down 3 percent from the previous year, bringing the total inventory in the United States to 7.05 million head. Breeding sheep inventory fell 3 percent from a year ago, to 4.28 million head. The current U.S. breeding herd consists of 3.47 million ewes one year and older, 180,000 rams one year and older, and 630,000 replacement lambs. Market sheep and lambs, at 2.77 million head, were also down from last July. Market lamb inventory includes 1.60 million lambs under 65 pounds, 560,000 lambs 65-84 pounds, 290,000 lambs 85-105 pounds, and 240,000 lambs over 105 pounds. Market sheep accounted for 80,000 head. The U.S. lamb crop is expected to total 3.70 million head in 2009, down slightly from the 2008 lamb crop of 3.71 million head. During the first half of the year 3.25 million lambs were born, with 450,000 head expected to be born from July through December.

Goat inventory in the U.S. totaled 3.71 million head, down 2 percent from July 2009. Breeding goat inventory totaled 2.79 million head. All market goats and kids totaled 925,000 head, down 2 percent from the previous July. Meat goat inventories were down 1 percent from a year ago, to 3.16 million head. Milk goat inventory was up 4 percent, increasing to 385,000 head. Angora goat inventories fell 28 percent to 165,000 head. The 2009 U.S. kid crop is expected to total 1.96 million head, virtually unchanged from last year. The 2009 expected kidding rate of 103 kids per 100 does is up 1 percent from the kidding rate in 2008.