

## Sheep and Lamb Inventory

On July 1, 2004, all sheep and lamb inventory in the United States was 7.65 million head, 2 percent below July 1, 2003. Breeding sheep inventory nationwide declined 1 percent to 4.55 million head. The breeding herd consists of 3.75 million ewes one year old and older, 180,000 rams one year old and older, and 620,000 replacement lambs (including newborn lambs). National market sheep and lamb inventory (including newborn lambs) totaled 3.11 million head, a 3 percent decrease from July 1, 2003. Market lamb inventory at 3.03 million head was comprised of 1.80 million lambs under 65 pounds, 635,000 lambs 65-84 pounds, 355,000 lambs 85-105 pounds, and 240,000 lambs over 105 pounds. Market sheep inventory was 75,000.

The 2004 U.S. lamb crop is expected to total 4.08 million head, down 1 percent from 2003. Lambs born during the first half of 2004 totaled 3.61 million head, or 88 percent of the expected yearly total.