

# COLORADO SHEEP AND LAMB LOSSES -- 1996

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Colorado farmers and ranchers lost 75,000 head of sheep and lambs to all causes in 1996, representing a total value of \$6.22 million, according to a survey conducted by the Colorado Agricultural Statistics Service in cooperation with the Colorado Wool Growers Association. A similar survey for 1995 indicated that 80,000 head of all sheep and lambs, valued at \$5.89 million, were lost from all causes. While the number of head lost was down 6 percent from 1995, the higher value for both sheep and lambs resulted in a 6 percent increase in the total value of those losses. The total inventory of all sheep and lambs at the beginning of 1996, at 535,000 head, was down 2 percent from the 545,000 head on hand one year earlier. The 1996 lamb crop totaled 240,000 head. That was the same as the number of lambs docked in 1995. Total sheep and lamb death losses in 1996 accounted for 9.4 percent of the available supply of animals during the year compared with losses in 1995 totaling 10.0 percent of the available supply.

**Predators** caused an estimated \$2.50 million in losses during 1996 compared with a value of \$1.93 million in 1995. They accounted for 30,000 head (40 percent of all losses) in 1996 compared with 26,000 head (33 percent of all losses) in 1995. Predator losses amounted to 3.8 percent of the available supply in 1996, up from 3.3 percent of the sheep and lamb supply in 1995. Coyotes, the most damaging predator in each year, were responsible for \$1.22 million, representing 49 percent of the value loss from predators and 20 percent of the value loss from all causes. Lamb losses by all predators amounted to 25,500 head in 1996 compared with 21,800 head a year earlier.

Coyotes were active in each area of the state in 1996, just as they were in 1995. All of the major predators were active in the Northwest and Mountain area. Losses from dogs were reported in all areas except the southeast and were the major cause of losses in the Northeast District where they preyed upon lambs in commercial feedlots. Mountain Lions were the major predator in the Southwest District, followed closely by bears and coyotes. Coyote and fox caused the most losses in the San Luis Valley, and coyotes were about the only threat to sheep and lambs in the Southeast.

The total value of sheep and lamb losses from **non-predator causes** was estimated at \$3.72 million in 1996, down 6 percent from \$3.96 million a year earlier as the fewer number of head lost more than offset the higher value per head. Non-predator losses of 45,000 head in 1996 represented 60 percent of all losses compared with 54,000 head or 68 percent of all losses the previous year. Losses from disease accounted for 48 percent of the total value of non-predator losses with weather related losses representing 19 percent. Disease claimed more than one-half of the lambs lost from non-predator causes but just 18 percent of the mature sheep losses. Disease and weather related problems were the major cause of loss in the Northeast District where most of the state's commercial feedlots are located. Theft and poisoning were the major causes of loss in the Southwest District.

# **SHEEP & LAMBS: Inventory, Death Losses, and Value of Losses, Colorado, 1994-96**

Year	January 1 Inventory	Lamb Crop	Death Losses					
	All Sheep & Lambs		Sheep	All Lambs			All Sheep & Lambs	
			Total Losses	Before Docking	After Docking	All Lambs	Total Loss	% of Supply <u>1/</u>
	1,000 Head		1,000 Head				Percent	
1994	647	255	15	20	55	75	90	9.8
1995	545	240	10	15	55	70	80	10.0
1996	535	240	10	20	45	65	75	9.4
Year	Total Sheep & Lamb Losses By Cause				Value Of Losses			
	Predator Losses		Non-Predator Losses		Predator	Non-Predator	Total	
	Total Loss	Percent of Supply <u>1/</u>	Non-Predator	Percent of Supply <u>1/</u>				
	1,000 Hd.	Percent	1,000 Head		1,000 Dollars			
1994	33.0	3.6	57.0	6.2	2,073.8	3,528.8	5,602.6	
1995	26.0	3.3	54.0	6.8	1,930.4	3,959.6	5,890.0	
1996	30.0	3.8	45.0	5.7	2,502.3	3,720.8	6,223.1	

1/ Supply includes sheep and lambs on hand January 1 plus lamb crop plus lamb losses before docking.

## **SHEEP AND LAMBS: Number and Value of Losses by Cause, Colorado, 1995-96 1/**

Cause	Sheep				Lambs				Total Sheep & Lambs			
	No. Lost		Value <u>2/</u>		No. Lost		Value <u>2/</u>		No. Lost		Value <u>2/</u>	
	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996
<b>Predator:</b>	1,000 Head		\$1,000		1,000 Head		\$1,000		1,000 Head		\$1,000	
Bear .....	.8	1.5	70.8	158.3	1.7	2.5	121.6	198.8	2.5	4.0	192.4	357.1
Bobcat .....	...	...	...	...	.2	.4	14.3	31.8	.2	.4	14.3	31.8
Coyote .....	1.8	1.2	159.3	126.6	14.3	13.8	1,022.5	1,097.1	16.1	15.0	1,181.8	1,223.7
Dog .....	.7	.1	62.0	10.6	1.3	2.4	93.0	190.8	2.0	2.5	154.9	201.4
Eagle .....	...	...	...	...	.6	.6	42.9	47.7	.6	.6	42.9	47.7
Fox .....	...	...	...	...	1.0	.9	71.5	71.6	1.0	.9	71.5	71.6
Mountain Lion .....	.8	1.4	70.8	147.7	2.4	4.5	171.6	357.8	3.2	5.9	242.4	505.5
Other Predator <u>3/</u> ...	.1	.3	8.9	31.7	.3	.4	21.5	31.8	.4	.7	30.3	63.5
<b>Total Predator</b> .....	4.2	4.5	371.7	474.9	21.8	25.5	1,558.7	2,027.4	26.0	30.0	1,930.4	2,502.3
<b>Non-Predator:</b>												
All Diseases .....	1.5	1.0	132.8	105.5	33.7	21.0	2,409.6	1,669.5	35.2	22.0	2,542.3	1,775.0
Weather related ....	.3	.5	26.6	52.8	3.7	8.0	264.6	636.0	4.0	8.5	291.1	688.8
Lambing problems ..	.3	.4	26.6	42.2	2.9	3.6	207.4	286.2	3.2	4.0	233.9	328.4
Old age .....	1.0	1.4	88.5	147.7	...	...	...	...	1.0	1.4	88.5	147.7
Being on back .....	.2	.2	17.7	21.1	...	...	...	...	.2	.2	17.7	21.1
Poisoning .....	.6	.3	53.1	31.7	1.4	.3	100.1	23.9	2.0	.6	153.2	55.6
Theft .....	.1	.2	8.9	21.1	.3	.1	21.5	8.0	.4	.3	30.3	29.1
Other causes <u>4/</u> ....	1.8	1.5	159.3	158.3	6.2	6.5	443.3	516.8	8.0	8.0	602.6	675.1
<b>Total Non-Predator</b> ..	5.8	5.5	513.5	580.4	48.2	39.5	3,446.3	3,140.4	54.0	45.0	3,959.6	3,720.8
<b>Total All Causes</b> ....	10.0	10.0	885.0	1,055.3	70.0	65.0	5,005.0	5,167.8	80.0	75.0	5,890.0	6,223.1

1/ Sheep value is based on a two year average value per head of ewes 1 year old and older; Value of \$88.50 for 1995, \$105.50 for 1996. Lamb value is based on the marketing year average price received for a 90 pound lamb; \$71.50 for 1995, \$79.50 for 1996.

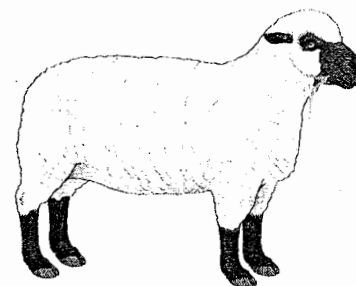
2/ Totals may not add due to rounding. 3/ Includes unknown predator losses. 4/ Includes unknown non-predator losses.

**SHEEP AND LAMBS:**  
**Percent Loss Within Each Agricultural Statistics District,**  
**by Type of Predator, Colorado, 1996 1/**

Cause	Agricultural Statistics District						State
	NW & Mountain	Northeast	East Central	Southwest	San Luis Valley	Southeast	
<b>Predator:</b>	<b>Percent</b>						
Bear .....	66.1	...	...	27.9	6.0	...	100.0
Bobcat .....	100.0	...	...	...	...	...	100.0
Coyote .....	38.9	12.9	2.1	27.2	16.5	2.4	100.0
Dog .....	.1	86.8	.1	8.5	4.5	...	100.0
Eagle .....	87.5	...	...	12.5	...	...	100.0
Fox .....	79.7	4.3	...	...	16.0	...	100.0
Mountain Lion .....	61.9	...	...	34.1	4.0	...	100.0
Other Predators <u>2/</u> .....	57.7	...	...	22.4	19.9	...	100.0
<b>Total Predator .....</b>	<b>47.2</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>

1/ Includes all lamb losses both before and after docking.

2/ Includes unknown predators.



**SHEEP AND LAMBS:**  
**Percent Loss Within Each Agricultural Statistics District,**  
**by Non-predator Causes, Colorado, 1996 1/**

Cause	Agricultural Statistics District						State
	NW & Mountain	Northeast	East Central	Southwest	San Luis Valley	Southeast	
<b>Non-Predator:</b>	<b>Percent</b>						
All Diseases .....	7.0	66.6	.9	16.6	8.4	.5	100.0
Weather related causes	7.2	63.6	4.9	16.2	6.8	1.3	100.0
Lambing problems .....	28.6	3.5	3.4	42.2	18.8	3.5	100.0
Old age .....	20.2	21.9	6.7	18.9	25.9	6.4	100.0
Being on their back .....	51.5	.7	1.5	17.9	26.9	1.5	100.0
Poisoning .....	27.6	.6	1.7	64.4	5.7	...	100.0
Theft .....	26.5	...	...	73.0	.5	...	100.0
Other non-predator <u>2/</u> .....	12.3	68.8	1.9	14.0	2.1	.9	100.0
<b>Total Non-Predator Causes .....</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>59.1</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>

1/ Includes all lamb losses both before and after docking.

2/ Includes unknown non-predator losses.

# SHEEP AND LAMBS: Percent of Loss by Cause and Size of Flock, Colorado, 1995-96 <sup>1/</sup>

Cause	Stock Sheep Operations by Size of Flock						Commercial Feedlots		All Sizes	
	1 - 99		100 - 999		1,000 Plus					
	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996
<b>Predator:</b>	<b>Percent</b>		<b>Percent</b>		<b>Percent</b>		<b>Percent</b>		<b>Percent</b>	
Bear .....	.3	.8	4.4	5.9	5.4	11.3	...	...	3.1	5.6
Bobcat .....	...	...	...	...	.9	1.3	...	...	.2	.6
Coyote .....	25.1	30.9	24.9	27.1	29.3	26.3	3.6	8.0	20.1	19.1
Dog .....	6.9	3.8	9.7	1.9	.5	.5	.4	6.9	2.5	3.6
Eagle .....	...	.4	.7	...	2.5	1.8	...	...	.8	.8
Fox .....	.2	.2	.8	.2	1.8	2.9	...	...	1.3	1.3
Mountain Lion .....	2.8	4.6	4.8	6.7	7.5	18.9	...	...	4.0	7.9
Other Predator <u>2/</u> ...	.4	.8	.7	.4	.7	1.9	...	...	.5	.9
<b>Total Predator: ....</b>	<b>35.7</b>	<b>41.5</b>	<b>46.0</b>	<b>42.2</b>	<b>48.6</b>	<b>64.9</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>32.5</b>	<b>39.8</b>
<b>Non-Predator:</b>										
All Diseases .....	22.3	6.9	21.4	17.0	16.3	9.5	86.5	55.7	44.0	30.0
Weather related .....	10.0	16.0	5.9	14.7	7.5	5.0	2.6	16.0	5.0	11.2
Lambing problems ...	6.9	13.8	8.7	7.7	3.8	7.4	...	...	4.0	4.7
Old age .....	7.6	5.7	2.6	5.3	1.4	1.8	...	...	1.3	1.5
Being on back .....	.3	.3	1.1	.4	.3	.4	...	...	.2	.2
Poisoning .....	.8	.9	1.7	.6	4.1	1.8	...	...	2.5	.9
Theft .....	.2	...	.3	1.0	...	.6	...	...	.5	.4
Other non-predator <u>3/</u>	16.2	14.9	12.3	11.1	18.0	8.6	6.9	13.4	10.0	11.3
<b>Total Non-Predator</b>	<b>64.3</b>	<b>58.5</b>	<b>54.0</b>	<b>57.8</b>	<b>51.4</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>96.0</b>	<b>85.1</b>	<b>67.5</b>	<b>60.2</b>
<b>Total All Causes ....</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

... = none reported.

<sup>1/</sup> Includes lambs before and after docking.

<sup>2/</sup> Includes unknown predator losses.

<sup>3/</sup> Includes unknown non-predator causes.



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