



Colorado  
Agricultural  
Statistics  
Service

# COLORADO SHEEP AND LAMB LOSSES -- 1998

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Colorado farmers and ranchers lost 65,000 head of sheep and lambs to all causes in 1998, representing a total value of \$4.70 million, according to a survey conducted by the Colorado Agricultural Statistics Service in cooperation with the Colorado Wool Growers Association. A comparable survey in 1997 indicated that 75,000 head of all sheep and lambs, valued at \$6.46 million, were lost from all causes. The number of head lost was down 13 percent from 1997 and with sharply lower lamb prices, the combined result was a 27 percent decrease in the total value of sheep and lamb losses. The total inventory of all sheep and lambs at the beginning of 1998, at 575,000 head, was unchanged from the 1997 level. The lamb crop totaled 220,000 head, down from the 1997 lamb crop of 225,000 head. Total sheep and lamb death losses in 1998 accounted for 8 percent of the available supply of animals during the year compared with losses in 1997 totaling 9.1 percent of the available supply.

**Predators** caused an estimated \$1.97 million in losses during 1998 compared with a value of \$2.94 million in 1997. They accounted for 27,000 head (42 percent of all losses) in 1998 compared with 34,000 head (45 percent of all losses) in 1997. Predator losses amounted to 3.3 percent of the available supply in 1998, down from the 4.1 percent of sheep and lamb supply in 1997. Lamb losses by all predators amounted to 27,000 head in 1998, compared to 34,000 head a year earlier. Coyotes, the most damaging predator in each year, were responsible for \$1.29 million, representing 66 percent of the value loss from predators and 28 percent of value loss from all causes. Losses from bears and mountain lions had a combined value of \$380,000. More than half of the predator losses occurred in the Northwest and Mountain Districts where all of the major predators were active. Most bear and mountain lion losses occurred in the Northwest and Southwest Districts, while coyotes and dogs continue to be a major cause of predator losses in other Districts.

The total value of sheep and lamb losses from **non-predator causes** was estimated at \$2.73 million in 1998, down 22 percent from \$3.51 million a year. The decline from 1997 resulted mostly from the fewer number of lambs lost and sharply lower lamb prices. Non-predator losses of 38,000 head in 1998 represented 58 percent of all losses compared with 41,000 head or 55 percent of all losses the previous year. Losses from disease accounted for 38 percent of the total value of non-predator losses with weather related losses representing 19 percent. Disease claimed more than 46 percent of the lambs lost from non-predator causes but just 7 percent of the mature sheep losses. More than 65 percent of the non-predator losses occurred in the Northeast District where disease and weather related problems are the predominant cause of loss in the state's commercial feedlots. Lambing problems accounted for \$203,700 of the total value of the non-predator losses with more than 39 percent of the losses occurring in the Southwest District. Most other non-predator losses occurred in the Northwest and Mountain District.

# **SHEEP & LAMBS: Inventory, Death Losses, and Value of Losses, Colorado, 1995-98**

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 1/
	1,000 Head		1,000 Head				Percent	
1995	545	240	10	15	55	70	80	10.0
1996	535	240	10	20	45	65	75	9.4
1997	575	225	10	20	45	65	75	9.1
1998	575	220	10	15	40	55	65	8.0
Year	Total Sheep & Lamb Losses By Cause					Value Of Losses		
	Predator Losses		Non-Predator Losses		Predator	Non-Predator	Total	
	Total Loss	Percent of Supply 1/	Non-Predator	Percent of Supply 1/				
	1,000 Hd.	Percent	1,000 Head		1,000 Dollars			
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	
1997	34.0	4.1	41.0	5.0	2,944.0	3,511.0	6,455.0	
1998	27.0	3.3	38.0	4.7	1,966.5	2,728.5	4,695.0	

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, 1997-98 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>	
	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998
<b>Predator:</b>	<b>1,000 Head</b>		<b>\$1,000</b>		<b>1,000 Head</b>		<b>\$1,000</b>		<b>1,000 Head</b>		<b>\$1,000</b>	
Bear .....	1.8	1.2	214.2	134.4	3.1	1.2	251.1	78.0	4.9	2.4	465.3	212.4
Bobcat .....	...	...	...	...	.3	.1	24.3	6.5	.3	.1	24.3	6.5
Coyote .....	2.2	1.4	261.8	156.8	19.5	17.5	1,579.5	1,137.5	21.7	18.9	1,841.3	1,294.3
Dog .....	.5	.2	59.5	22.4	1.1	.8	89.1	52.0	1.6	1.0	148.6	74.4
Eagle .....	...	...	...	...	1.0	.5	81.0	32.5	1.0	.5	81.0	32.5
Fox .....	...	...	...	...	1.0	.7	81.0	45.5	1.0	.7	81.0	45.5
Mountain Lion .....	.4	.8	47.6	89.6	2.2	1.2	178.2	78.0	2.6	2.0	225.8	167.6
Other Predator <u>3/</u> ...	.1	.9	11.9	100.8	.8	.5	64.8	32.5	.9	1.4	76.7	133.3
<b>Total Predator .....</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>595.0</b>	<b>504.0</b>	<b>29.0</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>2,349.0</b>	<b>1,462.5</b>	<b>34.0</b>	<b>27.0</b>	<b>2,944.0</b>	<b>1,966.5</b>
<b>Non-Predator:</b>												
All Diseases .....	.7	.4	83.3	44.8	13.8	15.1	1,117.8	981.5	14.5	15.5	1,201.1	1,026.3
Weather related .....	.6	.3	71.4	33.6	13.3	7.5	1,077.3	487.5	13.9	7.8	1,148.7	521.1
Lambing problems ..	.5	.6	59.5	67.2	4.2	2.1	340.2	136.5	4.7	2.7	399.7	203.7
Old age .....	1.7	2.3	202.3	257.6	...	...	...	...	1.7	2.3	202.3	257.6
Being on back .....	.2	.1	23.8	11.2	...	...	...	...	.2	.1	23.8	11.2
Poisoning .....	.8	.5	95.2	56.0	.6	1.4	48.6	91.0	1.4	1.9	143.8	147.0
Theft .....	.1	...	11.9	...	...	...	...	...	.1	...	11.9	...
Other causes <u>4/</u> ...	.4	1.3	47.6	145.6	4.1	6.4	332.1	416.0	4.5	7.7	379.7	561.6
<b>Total Non-Predator ..</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>595.0</b>	<b>616.0</b>	<b>36.0</b>	<b>32.5</b>	<b>2,916.0</b>	<b>2,112.5</b>	<b>41.0</b>	<b>38.0</b>	<b>3,511.0</b>	<b>2,728.5</b>
<b>Total All Causes ....</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>1,190.0</b>	<b>1,120.0</b>	<b>65.0</b>	<b>55.0</b>	<b>5,265.0</b>	<b>3,575.0</b>	<b>75.0</b>	<b>65.0</b>	<b>6,455.0</b>	<b>4,695.0</b>

1/ Sheep value is based on a two year average value per head of ewes 1 year old and older; Value of \$119.00 for 1997, \$112.00 for 1998.

Lamb value is based on the marketing year average price received for a 90 pound lamb; Value of \$81.00 for 1997, \$65.00 for 1998.

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, 1998 1/**

Cause	Agricultural Statistics District						State
	NW & Mountain	Northeast	East Central	Southwest	San Luis Valley	Southeast	
<b>Predator:</b>	<b>Percent</b>						
Bear .....	75.9	1.9	...	22.2	...	...	100.0
Bobcat .....	100.0	...	...	...	...	...	100.0
Coyote .....	47.7	18.7	2.8	19.6	11.0	.2	100.0
Dog .....	1.9	41.6	17.0	20.8	16.2	2.5	100.0
Eagle .....	96.5	...	...	3.5	...	...	100.0
Fox .....	88.6	...	...	.6	10.8	...	100.0
Mountain Lion .....	87.7	.7	...	11.5	...	.1	100.0
Other Predators <u>2/</u> .....	98.5	...	...	1.4	.1	...	100.0
<b>Total Predator .....</b>	<b>63.6</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>0.2</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, 1998 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 .....	6.2	55.7	2.2	7.0	28.6	0.3	100.0
Weather related causes ...	15.8	50.8	4.0	19.8	4.1	5.5	100.0
Lambing problems .....	37.3	3.3	5.0	39.1	11.6	3.7	100.0
Old age .....	11.7	62.3	1.5	13.8	9.4	1.3	100.0
Being on their back .....	23.8	...	6.3	8.8	61.1	...	100.0
Poisoning .....	35.4	50.4	0.4	12.4	1.4	...	100.0
Theft .....	...	11.1	...	...	88.9	...	100.0
Other non-predator <u>2/</u> ....	5.8	78.0	1.2	12.8	1.5	0.7	100.0
<b>Total Non-Predator .....</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>65.9</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>

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

2/ Includes unknown non-predator losses.



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**SHEEP AND LAMBS: Percent of Loss by Cause and Size of Flock, Colorado, 1997-98 <sup>1/</sup>**

Cause	Stock Sheep Operations by Size of Flock						Commercial Feedlots		All Sizes	
	1 - 99		100 - 999		1,000 Plus					
	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998
<b>Predator:</b>	<b>Percent</b>		<b>Percent</b>		<b>Percent</b>		<b>Percent</b>		<b>Percent</b>	
Bear .....	...	.4	5.4	2.4	13.4	10.5	...	...	7.4	4.5
Bobcat .....	...	...	...	...	1.0	.4	...	...	.5	.2
Coyote .....	16.9	26.3	25.9	32.2	39.7	30.0	9.8	5.6	27.2	18.9
Dog .....	14.8	10.7	4.5	3.0	.6	.2	.6	.9	2.1	1.4
Eagle .....	.3	...	.3	...	3.0	2.2	...	...	1.6	.9
Fox .....	.7	.5	1.6	1.2	2.4	3.1	...	...	1.4	1.4
Mountain Lion .....	1.7	1.3	5.6	6.1	6.1	7.8	...	...	3.8	3.8
Other Predator <u>2/</u> .....	1.4	.4	2.0	.4	2.6	11.9	...	...	1.6	4.9
<b>Total Predator:</b> .....	<b>35.8</b>	<b>39.6</b>	<b>45.3</b>	<b>45.3</b>	<b>68.8</b>	<b>66.1</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>45.6</b>	<b>36.0</b>
<b>Non-Predator:</b>										
All Diseases .....	12.6	9.1	13.0	11.0	3.7	4.0	53.4	81.0	20.8	39.4
Weather related .....	12.2	22.4	13.0	9.9	12.0	10.1	23.2	10.0	15.7	10.8
Lambing problems .....	23.0	14.7	13.3	11.9	7.4	8.0	...	...	6.9	5.1
Old age .....	6.2	5.9	5.5	4.9	1.6	2.3	...	...	1.9	1.7
Being on back .....	1.6	.5	.9	.7	.4	.3	...	...	.4	.2
Poisoning .....	1.4	1.1	2.6	1.9	3.1	4.0	...	.3	1.9	2.0
Theft .....	...	.2	.6	.9	.2	...	...	...	.2	.1
Other non-predator <u>3/</u> .....	7.2	6.5	5.8	13.5	2.8	5.2	13.0	2.2	6.6	4.7
<b>Total Non-Predator</b> ...	<b>64.2</b>	<b>60.4</b>	<b>54.7</b>	<b>54.7</b>	<b>31.2</b>	<b>33.9</b>	<b>89.6</b>	<b>93.5</b>	<b>54.4</b>	<b>64.0</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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