



# COLORADO SHEEP AND LAMB LOSSES -- 2011

USDA/NASS Colorado Field Office  
PO Box 150969  
Lakewood CO 80215 Ph: 303-236-2300 1-800-392-3202

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Colorado farmers and ranchers lost 36,000 head of sheep and lambs to all causes in 2011, representing a total value of \$6.53 million, according to a survey conducted in January 2012 by the Colorado Agricultural Statistics Service. A comparable survey for 2009 indicated that 36,000 head of all sheep and lambs, valued at \$3.84 million, were lost from all causes. Higher sheep and lamb prices are responsible for the 70 percent higher loss of value compared to the previous survey. The number of head lost was unchanged from 2009. The total inventory of all sheep and lambs at the beginning of 2012 was 460,000 head, up 24 percent from the total inventory of 370,000 head at the beginning of 2011. The beginning inventory of 190,000 head in 2012 for breeding sheep and lambs is up 9 percent from 2011, but down 7 percent from 2009, while the inventory of market sheep and lambs, at 270,000 head, was up 38 percent from the 195,000 head in 2011 and up 32 percent from 2009. The 2011 lamb crop totaled 190,000 head, up 6 percent from 2009. Total sheep and lamb death losses in 2011 accounted for 6.3 percent of the available supply of animals during the year.

**Predators** caused an estimated \$1.64 million in losses of sheep and lambs during 2011 compared with a value of \$1.67 million in 2009. They accounted for 9,000 head (25 percent of all losses) in 2011 compared with 16,000 head (44 percent of all losses) in 2009. Predator losses represented 1.6 percent of the available supply in 2011, down from the 2.7 percent of the sheep and lamb supply in 2009. Lamb losses by all predators amounted to 6,900 head in 2011 compared to 12,500 head in the 2009. Coyotes, the most damaging predator, were responsible for 58 percent (5,200 head valued at \$923,300) of the total sheep and lamb losses to predators. Bears were the next most damaging predator claiming a total of 1,700 head of sheep and lambs valued at \$320,600. Foxes and mountain lions killed 1,100 head of sheep and lambs valued at \$202,800 during 2011. Eighty-seven percent of all predator losses occurred in the Northwest & Mountain and Southwest Districts. Coyotes and dogs were the major predators in the Northeast and San Luis Valley Districts.

The total value of sheep and lamb losses from **non-predator causes** was estimated at \$4.89 million in 2011, up 126 percent from \$2.17 million in 2009. Non-predator losses of 27,000 head in 2011 represented 75 percent of all losses, up from 20,000 head (56 percent) in 2009. Total diseases accounted for the loss of 9,100 head of sheep and lambs in 2011, up from 2,700 head in 2009. Weather-related issues were the next most damaging non-predator factor in sheep and lamb losses at 6,900 head (26 percent). Eighty-three percent of all non-predator losses occurred in the Northwest & Mountain, and Northeast Districts.

**Bill Meyer, Director**

**Rodger Ott, Deputy Director**

**Tom Sabel, Agricultural Statistician**

**SHEEP & LAMBS: Inventory, Death Losses, and Value of Losses, Colorado, 2004-2012 1/**

| Year | January 1 Inventory | Lamb Crop | Death Losses |                   |               |           |                   |                      |
|------|---------------------|-----------|--------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------|-------------------|----------------------|
|      |                     |           | Sheep        | All Lambs         |               |           | All Sheep & Lambs |                      |
|      | All Sheep & Lambs   |           | Total Losses | Before Docking    | After Docking | All Lambs | Total Loss        | Percent of Supply 2/ |
|      | <b>1,000 Head</b>   |           |              | <b>1,000 Head</b> |               |           | <b>Percent</b>    |                      |
| 2004 | 360                 | 200       | 5            | 9                 | 19            | 28        | 33                | 5.8                  |
| 2005 | 365                 | 225       | 6            | 10                | 20            | 30        | 38                | 6.3                  |
| 2007 | 400                 | 210       | 11           | 12                | 19            | 31        | 42                | 6.8                  |
| 2009 | 410                 | 180       | 9            | 10                | 17            | 27        | 36                | 6.0                  |
| 2011 | 370                 | 190       | 16           | 12                | 8             | 20        | 36                | 6.3                  |
| 2012 | 460                 | ...       | ...          | ...               | ...           | ...       | ...               | ...                  |

| Year | Total Sheep & Lamb Losses By Cause |                      |                     |                      | Value Of Losses |              |         |
|------|------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------|
|      | Predator Losses                    |                      | Non-Predator Losses |                      | Predator        | Non-Predator | Total   |
|      | Total Loss                         | Percent of Supply 2/ | Non-Predator        | Percent of Supply 2/ |                 |              |         |
|      | <b>1,000 Head</b>                  |                      | <b>Percent</b>      |                      | <b>\$1,000</b>  |              |         |
| 2004 | 15.3                               | 2.9                  | 17.7                | 3.3                  | 1,490.0         | 1,735.0      | 3,225.0 |
| 2005 | 14.6                               | 2.6                  | 23.4                | 4.3                  | 1,579.5         | 2,558.5      | 4,138.0 |
| 2007 | 23.8                               | 3.9                  | 18.2                | 3.0                  | 2,441.8         | 2,050.3      | 4,492.1 |
| 2009 | 16.0                               | 2.8                  | 20.0                | 3.5                  | 1,671.0         | 2,166.5      | 3,837.5 |
| 2011 | 9.0                                | 1.3                  | 27.0                | 4.1                  | 1,635.0         | 4,893.6      | 6,528.6 |

1/ No survey was conducted covering 2003, 2006, or 2008. 2/ Supply includes sheep and lambs on hand January 1 plus lamb crop plus lamb losses before docking.

**SHEEP & LAMBS: Number of Head and Value of Loss by Cause, Colorado, 2009 and 2011 1/**

| Cause                      | Sheep             |             |                |                | Lambs             |             |                |                | Total Sheep & Lambs |             |                |                |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|
|                            | No. Lost          |             | Value 2/       |                | No. Lost          |             | Value 2/       |                | No. Lost            |             | Value 2/       |                |
|                            | 2009              | 2011        | 2009           | 2011           | 2009              | 2011        | 2009           | 2011           | 2009                | 2011        | 2009           | 2011           |
| <b>Predators:</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                       | 1.4               | .9          | 221.8          | 177.6          | 2.4               | .8          | 214.4          | 143.0          | 3.8                 | 1.7         | 436.2          | 320.6          |
| Bobcat                     | .1                | ...         | 15.8           | ...            | .5                | .3          | 44.7           | 45.0           | .6                  | .3          | 60.5           | 45.0           |
| Coyote                     | 1.3               | 1.0         | 205.9          | 179.7          | 7.6               | 4.2         | 678.9          | 743.6          | 8.9                 | 5.2         | 884.8          | 923.3          |
| Dog                        | .2                | .1          | 31.7           | 9.1            | .1                | .1          | 8.9            | 26.4           | .3                  | .1          | 40.6           | 35.5           |
| Eagle                      | ...               | ...         | ...            | ...            | .3                | .2          | 26.8           | 41.8           | .3                  | .2          | 26.8           | 41.8           |
| Fox                        | .1                | ...         | 15.8           | ...            | .6                | .6          | 53.6           | 108.1          | .7                  | .6          | 69.4           | 108.1          |
| Mountain Lion              | .3                | .1          | 47.5           | 26.1           | .5                | .4          | 44.7           | 68.6           | .8                  | .5          | 92.2           | 94.7           |
| Other Predators 3/         | .1                | .1          | 15.8           | 10.9           | .5                | .3          | 44.7           | 55.1           | .6                  | .4          | 60.5           | 66.0           |
| <b>Total Predators</b>     | <b>3.5</b>        | <b>2.1</b>  | <b>554.3</b>   | <b>403.4</b>   | <b>12.5</b>       | <b>6.9</b>  | <b>1,116.7</b> | <b>1,231.6</b> | <b>16.0</b>         | <b>9.0</b>  | <b>1,671.0</b> | <b>1,635.0</b> |
| <b>Non-Predators:</b>      |                   |             |                |                |                   |             |                |                |                     |             |                |                |
| Diseases                   | .5                | 8.0         | 79.2           | 1446.9         | 2.2               | 1.1         | 196.5          | 204.7          | 2.7                 | 9.1         | 275.7          | 1651.6         |
| Toxemia                    | .3                | 3.0         | 47.5           | 600.0          | 1.3               | .7          | 116.1          | 126.1          | 1.6                 | 3.7         | 163.6          | 726.1          |
| Weather related            | 1.2               | .3          | 190.1          | 58.0           | 1.9               | 6.6         | 169.7          | 1181.0         | 3.1                 | 6.9         | 359.8          | 1,239.0        |
| Lambing problems           | .8                | .5          | 126.7          | 95.5           | 2.3               | 1.2         | 205.5          | 214.2          | 3.1                 | 1.7         | 332.2          | 309.7          |
| Old age                    | .9                | 1.0         | 142.6          | 212.2          | ...               | ...         | ...            | ...            | .9                  | 1.0         | 142.6          | 212.2          |
| Poisoning                  | .7                | .4          | 110.9          | 80.6           | .7                | .5          | 62.5           | 83.4           | 1.4                 | .9          | 173.4          | 164.0          |
| Theft                      | ...               | .2          | ...            | 33.2           | ...               | .2          | ...            | 30.2           | ...                 | .4          | ...            | 63.4           |
| Other causes 4/            | 1.1               | .5          | 174.3          | 33.2           | 6.1               | 2.8         | 544.9          | 494.4          | 7.2                 | 3.3         | 719.2          | 527.6          |
| <b>Total Non-Predators</b> | <b>5.5</b>        | <b>13.9</b> | <b>871.3</b>   | <b>2,559.6</b> | <b>14.5</b>       | <b>13.1</b> | <b>1,295.2</b> | <b>2,334.0</b> | <b>20.0</b>         | <b>27.0</b> | <b>2,166.5</b> | <b>4,893.6</b> |
| <b>Total All Causes</b>    | <b>9.0</b>        | <b>16.0</b> | <b>1,425.6</b> | <b>2,963.0</b> | <b>27.0</b>       | <b>20.0</b> | <b>2,411.9</b> | <b>3,565.6</b> | <b>36.0</b>         | <b>36.0</b> | <b>3,837.5</b> | <b>6,528.6</b> |

1/ Includes all lambs losses before and after docking. 2/ Sheep value is based on a two year average value per head of ewes 1 year old and older. Lamb value is based on the marketing year average price received for a 90 pound lamb. Totals may not add due to rounding. 3/ Includes ravens, vultures, wolves and unknown predators 4/ Includes unknown non-predator causes; on back, digestive and respiratory problems.

**SHEEP & LAMBS:**  
**Percent of Head Loss Within Each Agricultural Statistics District, by Type of Predator, Colorado, 2011 1/**

| Cause                     | Agricultural Statistics District |            |              |             |                 |           | State        |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------|--------------|
|                           | NW & Mountain                    | Northeast  | East Central | Southwest   | San Luis Valley | Southeast |              |
| <b>Predators:</b>         | <b>Percent</b>                   |            |              |             |                 |           |              |
| Bear                      | 80.1                             | 1.7        | ...          | 14.1        | 4.1             | ...       | 100.0        |
| Bobcat                    | 98.0                             | ...        | ...          | ...         | 1.5             | .5        | 100.0        |
| Coyote                    | 60.8                             | 8.4        | 3.5          | 20.7        | 6.3             | .3        | 100.0        |
| Dog                       | 17.0                             | 4.3        | 21.0         | 28.8        | 24.8            | 4.1       | 100.0        |
| Eagle                     | 95.7                             | ...        | ...          | 4.3         | ...             | ...       | 100.0        |
| Fox                       | 72.5                             | ...        | ...          | 22.7        | 4.8             | ...       | 100.0        |
| Mountain Lion             | 58.8                             | ...        | ...          | 39.7        | ...             | 1.5       | 100.0        |
| Other Predators <u>2/</u> | 78.5                             | .4         | .4           | 20.7        | ...             | ...       | 100.0        |
| <b>Total Predators</b>    | <b>66.7</b>                      | <b>5.2</b> | <b>2.5</b>   | <b>19.9</b> | <b>5.3</b>      | <b>.4</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

1/ Includes all lamb losses both before and after docking. Totals may not add due to rounding. 2/ Includes ravens, vultures, wolves and unknown predators.

**SHEEP & LAMBS:**  
**Percent of Head Loss Within Each Agricultural Statistics District, by Non-predator Causes, Colorado, 2011 1/**

| Cause                         | Agricultural Statistics District |             |              |             |                 |            | State        |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|------------|--------------|
|                               | NW & Mountain                    | Northeast   | East Central | Southwest   | San Luis Valley | Southeast  |              |
| <b>Non-Predators:</b>         | <b>Percent</b>                   |             |              |             |                 |            |              |
| Total Diseases                | 16.0                             | 78.6        | .3           | 11.1        | 2.7             | .4         | 100.0        |
| Toxemia                       | 9.1                              | 83.0        | .7           | 3.1         | 2.9             | 1.2        | 100.0        |
| Weather related causes        | 86.8                             | 3.6         | 1.2          | 2.3         | 4.4             | 1.7        | 100.0        |
| Lambing problems              | 35.4                             | 8.0         | 5.2          | 38.6        | 3.7             | 9.1        | 100.0        |
| Old age                       | 51.5                             | 8.1         | 7.3          | 27.7        | 2.2             | 3.2        | 100.0        |
| Poisoning                     | 76.8                             | 1.9         | .6           | 19.0        | .3              | 1.4        | 100.0        |
| Theft                         | 51.3                             | 5.9         | ...          | 40.5        | 2.3             | ...        | 100.0        |
| Other non-predators <u>2/</u> | 13.6                             | 52.0        | 3.2          | 25.3        | 4.3             | 1.6        | 100.0        |
| <b>Total Non-Predators</b>    | <b>42.1</b>                      | <b>41.0</b> | <b>1.6</b>   | <b>10.0</b> | <b>3.5</b>      | <b>1.8</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

1/ Includes all lamb losses both before and after docking. Totals may not add due to rounding. 2/ Includes unknown non-predator causes; on back, digestive and respiratory problems.