



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
ILLINOIS FIELD OFFICE
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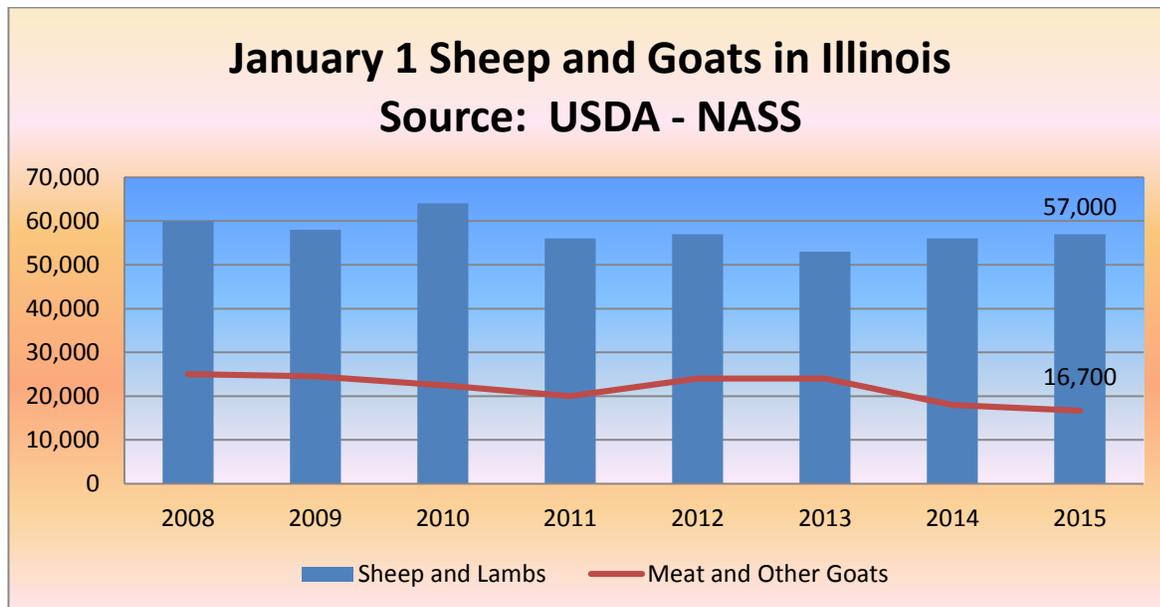
USDA SURVEYING SHEEP AND GOAT OPERATIONS

Springfield, IL – Starting in late December, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will measure sheep and goat inventories and wool and mohair production during a nationwide survey.

“Interest in sheep and goat data continues to grow with increased diversification in agriculture and consumer demands,” said Illinois State Statistician Mark Schleusener. “The Sheep and Goat Survey gives producers the opportunity to report the latest information on conditions and trends in the industry.”

Beginning in late December, Illinois operators will be asked to provide information about their sheep and goat inventories, counts of lambs and kids born during 2015, and production and prices received for wool and mohair. In Illinois, NASS will contact more than 500 operations to request their responses to the survey.

“Accurate data on sheep and goat inventory and production is a critical decision-making tool for USDA and the industry to be more responsive to domestic and international markets and consumer needs,” Schleusener said. “The information can also help create public appreciation for the many benefits of U.S. sheep and goats and their products,” he added.



To make it as easy as possible for producers to participate in the survey, NASS offers the option of responding via the Internet, telephone, mail, or a personal interview with a local NASS representative.

Schleusener noted that, as is the case with all NASS surveys, information provided by respondents is confidential by law. “NASS safeguards the privacy of all responses and publishes only

state- and national-level data, ensuring that no individual producer or operation can be identified,” he said.

NASS will publish the survey results January 29, 2016, in the *Sheep and Goats* report. This and all NASS reports are available online at www.nass.usda.gov. For more information, call the NASS Heartland Regional Field Office at (800) 551-1014.

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