



Montana Sheep and Lamb Loss 2009

Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture
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Total Loss, Cause of Death and Value of Loss

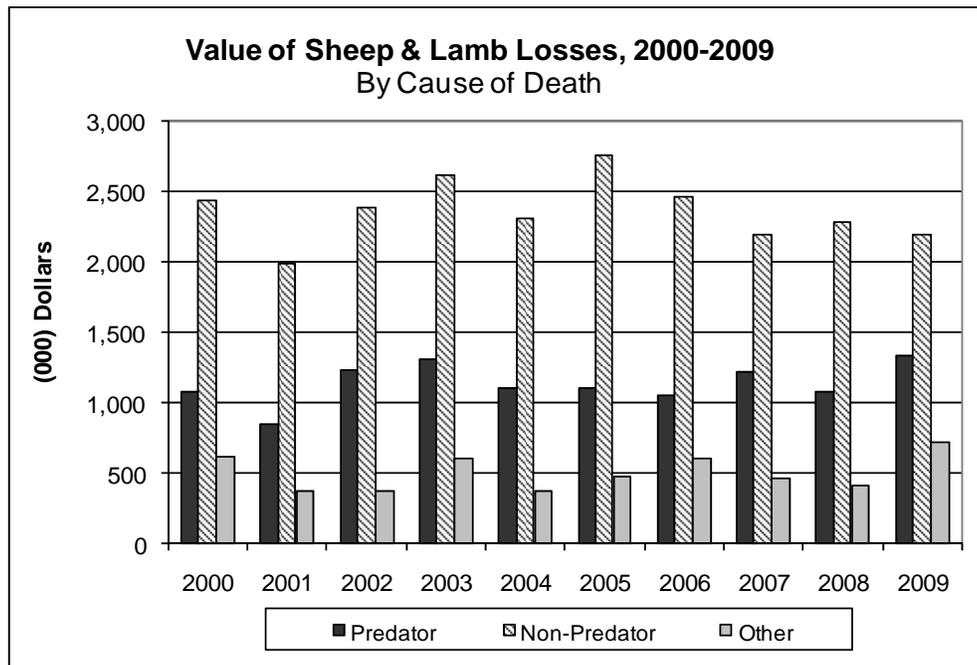
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Montana sheep and lamb producers lost 56,000 animals to weather, predators, disease and other causes during 2009, representing a total value of \$4.2 million, according to a survey conducted by USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Montana Field Office. The total number of sheep and lambs lost was up 6,000 head from last year, and the total value of inventory lost was 12 percent more than a year ago. The January 1, 2009 inventory was 6 percent less than the previous year. Sheep and lamb deaths amounted to 11.0 percent of the January 1 inventory and lambs born, up 2 percent from last year.

The number of sheep and lambs lost to all predators totaled 18,800 head, up 3,600 head from last year. Lamb losses by all predators amounted to 15,400 head, up 26 percent from last year. The number of sheep lost to all predators totaled 3,400, up 400 head from a year ago. Predators caused an estimated \$1.3 million in losses in 2009, up 23 percent from the previous year. Losses due to predators amounted to 3.7 percent of the January 1 inventory plus lambs born and 34 percent of all sheep and lamb deaths. Coyotes remained the largest predator for both sheep and lambs. Coyotes accounted for 78 percent of the predator caused losses and 26 percent of all death losses in the state. The value of losses attributed to coyotes was \$1.0 million.

The total value of non-predatory losses was \$2.2 million in 2009, compared with \$2.3 million in 2008. Non-predatory losses accounted for 50 percent of all losses. The largest non-predatory cause of losses was weather at 13,500 head. Sheep lost to non-predatory factors totaled 8,800 head, 8 percent lower than 2008. Non-predatory lamb losses came in at 19,200 head, 400 head less than a year ago.

Producers reported considerably more sheep and lambs lost to unknown causes this past year. The number of sheep and lambs lost to unknown causes increased 64 percent from last year. Lambs lost to unknown causes totaled 6,400 head, compared with 4,200 head last year. Unknown causes claimed 2,800 sheep, compared with 1,400 head last year. The value of sheep and lambs lost to unknown causes increased considerably to \$0.7 million.



Methodology and Definitions

The sheep and lamb survey utilized multi-frame sampling procedures. The survey involved drawing a random sample from a list of livestock producers maintained by the USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Montana Field Office. In addition, sheep producers living in a selected sample of area segments were interviewed. This procedure assures complete coverage of sheep producers by accounting for ranchers/farmers who may not be on the list.

Sheep and lamb loss estimates published by the USDA include sheep losses for the entire year, but include only those lamb losses that occur after docking. This special report also includes an estimate of lambs lost before docking.

Cooperation

This study was undertaken at the request of the Montana Wool Growers Association who also provided funding. The USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Montana Field Office conducted the survey and expresses appreciation to all cooperating sheep producers.

Table 1: Sheep & Lambs: Inventory, Death Loss, and Percent of Total Inventory Lost, Montana, 2000-2009 Revised

Year	January 1 Inventory 2/	Lamb Crop 2/	All Sheep Losses	Lamb Losses			Total Loss	Percent of Total Inventory Lost 1/ 2/
				Before Docking	After Docking	All Lambs		
				(000) Head				
2000	370	365	19	23	24	47	66	8.7
2001	360	340	19	24	23	47	66	9.1
2002	335	295	18	25	24	49	67	10.2
2003	310	275	17	21	20	41	58	9.6
2004	300	260	13	17	14	31	44	7.6
2005	295	255	12	19	15	34	46	8.1
2006	280	255	14	20	17	37	51	9.2
2007	275	255	14	18	18	36	50	9.1
2008	270	235	14	19	17	36	50	9.5
2009	255	235	15	21	20	41	56	11.0

1/ Total inventory equals January 1 inventory, plus lamb crop, plus lambs lost before docking.

2/ Revisions due to 2007 Census of Agriculture

Table 2: Sheep & Lambs: Death Losses by Cause and Value of Loss, Montana, 2000-2009 Revised

Year	Predator Losses		Non-Predator Loss	Unknown Causes	Value of Losses			
	Total	Percent of Total Inventory Lost 1/ 3/			Predator	Non Predator	Unknown	Total 2/
	(000) Head	Percent			(000) Head			(000) Dollars
2000	18.9	2.5	37.3	9.8	1,079.1	2,423.1	609.7	4,111.9
2001	19.9	2.7	38.6	7.5	850.8	1,980.6	375.0	3,206.4
2002	21.4	3.3	39.9	5.7	1,236.0	2,378.2	366.6	3,980.8
2003	17.7	2.9	33.0	7.3	1,309.2	2,608.0	605.7	4,522.9
2004	13.7	2.4	26.0	4.3	1,102.6	2,306.2	364.3	3,773.1
2005	12.4	2.2	28.4	5.2	1,096.4	2,755.6	477.6	4,329.6
2006	14.1	2.5	29.6	7.3	1,044.4	2,453.7	600.3	4,098.4
2007	17.0	3.1	27.5	5.5	1,214.4	2,189.3	458.0	3,861.7
2008 4/	15.2	2.9	29.2	5.6	1,078.3	2,272.6	412.7	3,763.6
2009	18.8	3.7	28.0	9.2	1,328.3	2,185.7	713.1	4,227.1

1/ Total inventory equals Jan 1 inventory, plus lamb crop, plus lambs lost before docking.

2/ Totals may not add because of rounding

3/ Revisions due to 2007 Census of Agriculture.

4/ Revision

Table 3: Sheep & Lambs: Death Losses by Cause, Montana 2008-2009

Cause of Loss	SHEEP LOSS				LAMB LOSS				TOTAL LOSS			
	Number of Head		Value in Dollars (000) 1/		Number of Head		Value in Dollars (000) 2/		Number of Head		Value in Dollars (000)	
	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008 4/	2009	2008	2009	2008 4/	2009
Predators												
Bear	300	200	33.9	23.2	500	200	30.3	12.1	800	400	64.2	35.3
Bobcat	--	--	--	--	100	100	6.1	6.1	100	100	6.1	6.1
Coyote	1,900	2,500	214.7	290.5	8,300	12,100	503.0	733.3	10,200	14,600	717.7	1023.8
Dog	200	200	22.6	23.2	400	200	24.2	12.1	600	400	46.8	35.3
Eagle	--	--	--	--	900	600	54.5	36.3	900	600	54.5	36.3
Fox	--	--	--	--	1,300	1,300	78.8	78.8	1,300	1,300	78.8	78.8
Mountain Lion	200	--	22.6	--	200	300	12.1	18.2	400	300	34.7	18.2
Wolf	200	400	22.6	46.5	300	300	18.2	18.2	500	700	40.8	64.7
Other Animals	--	--	--	--	--	100	--	6.1	--	100	--	6.1
Unknown Predators	200	100	22.6	11.6	200	200	12.1	12.1	400	300	34.7	23.7
Total Predators	3,000	3,400	339.0	395.0	12,200	15,400	739.3	933.3	15,200	18,800	1078.3	1328.3
Non-Predators												
Digestive	3/	300	3/	34.8	3/	400	3/	24.2	3/	700	3/	59.0
Internal Parasites	3/	200	3/	23.2	3/	200	3/	12.1	3/	400	3/	35.3
Respiratory	3/	400	3/	46.6	3/	1,900	3/	115.1	3/	2,300	3/	161.7
Metabolic	3/	--	3/	--	3/	200	3/	12.1	3/	200	3/	12.1
Total Diseases	1,700	1,800	192.1	209.1	3,700	3,600	224.2	218.0	5,400	5,400	416.3	427.1
Lambing Complications	900	700	101.7	81.3	4,800	3,600	290.9	218.2	5,700	4,300	392.6	299.5
Old Age	3,300	2,800	372.9	325.3	--	--	--	--	3,300	2,800	372.9	325.3
On Back	400	300	45.2	34.8	100	100	6.1	6.1	500	400	51.3	40.9
Poison	400	400	45.2	46.6	400	200	24.2	12.1	800	600	69.4	58.7
Theft	--	--	--	--	400	--	24.2	--	400	--	24.2	--
Weather Conditions	2,500	2,700	282.5	313.6	9,000	10,800	545.5	654.5	11,500	13,500	828.0	968.1
Other	400	100	45.2	11.6	1,200	900	72.7	54.5	1,600	1,000	117.9	66.1
Total Non-Predators	9,600	8,800	1,084.8	1022.3	19,600	19,200	1,187.8	1163.4	29,200	28,000	2,272.6	2185.7
Unknown Causes	1,400	2,800	158.2	325.3	4,200	6,400	254.5	387.8	5,600	9,200	412.7	713.1
Total Loss	14,000	15,000	1,582.0	1742.6	36,000	41,000	2,181.6	2484.5	50,000	56,000	3,763.6	4227.1

1/ Using average reported value for Ewes 1+.

2/ Lamb values equal to market year average price received for lambs multiplied by an average weight of 60 pounds per lamb.

3/ Not available.

4/ Revision

-- Denotes less than 100 head.

Sheep and Lamb Loss by Predators 2009

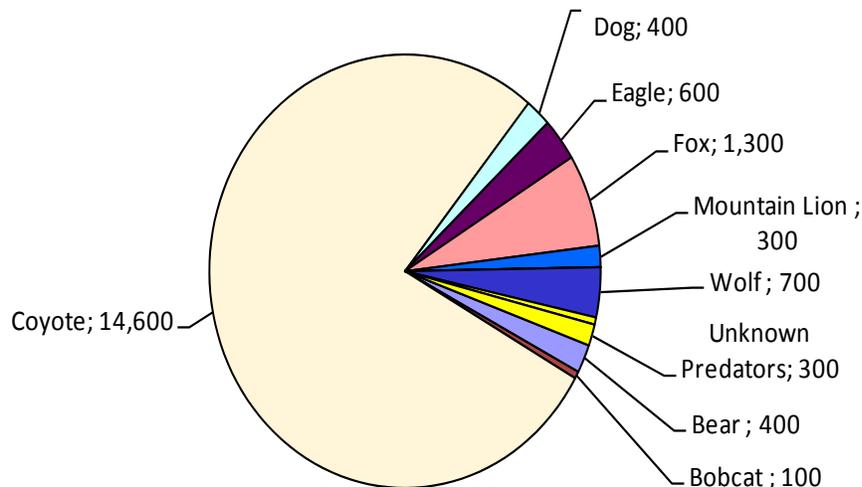


Table 4: Sheep & Lambs: Percent of Death Losses by Cause, Montana, 2000-2009

Cause of Loss	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Predators										
Bear	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1
Bobcat	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Coyote	20	22	21	20	21	19	20	23	20	26
Dog	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1
Eagle	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
Fox	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	3	2
Mountain Lion	1	1	1	1	1	--	1	1	1	1
Wolf	--	--	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Other Animals	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Unknown Predators	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1
Total Predators 1/	28	30	31	30	31	27	28	34	30	34
Non-Predators										
Digestive	2/	2/	2/	2/	7	2/	2/	2/	2/	1
Internal Parasites	2/	2/	2/	2/	2/	2/	2/	2/	2/	1
Respiratory	2/	2/	2/	2/	10	2/	2/	2/	2/	4
Metabolic	2/	2/	2/	2/	2	2/	2/	2/	2/	1
Other Diseases	2/	2/	2/	2/	3	2/	2/	2/	2/	3
Total Diseases	15	16	12	14	22	17	13	16	11	10
Lambing Complications	12	11	12	15	11	13	13	13	11	8
Old Age	9	8	4	6	8	7	6	6	7	5
On Back	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1
Poison	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	1
Theft	1	1	1	3	--	1	1	1	1	--
Weather Conditions	11	13	20	11	12	15	18	14	23	24
Other	5	7	7	5	3	5	3	2	3	2
Total Non-Predators 1/	57	58	60	57	59	62	58	55	58	50
Unknown Causes	15	12	9	13	10	11	14	11	11	16
Total Loss 1/	100									

1/ Totals may not add due to rounding.

2/ Not available.

-- Denotes less than 1 percent.

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