

Sheep & Goat Death Loss, 2009

By Adam W. Pike

Sheep and lamb losses from animal predators and non-predator causes in Pennsylvania totaled 11,000. Losses of sheep totaled 4,000 head or 36.4% of total losses. Lamb losses were 7,000 head or 63.6% of the total. Animal predator losses in Pennsylvania totaled 1,700 head. This represents 15.5% of the total losses from all causes and resulted in a loss of \$313,000 to farmers and ranchers. Non-predator losses of sheep and lamb totaled 9,300 or 84.5 percent of the total losses and resulted in a loss of \$976,000 to farmers and ranchers. Old age was the leading cause of non-predator deaths among sheep, while lambing problems, such as dystocia, were reported to be the leading cause of deaths among lambs.

Sheep and lamb losses from animal predators and non-predator causes in the United States totaled 634,500. Losses of sheep totaled 234,500 head or 37.0 percent of total losses. Lamb losses were 400,000 head or 63.0 percent of the total.

Animal predator losses totaled 247,200 head. This represents 39.0 percent of the total losses from all causes and resulted in a loss of \$20.5 million to farmer and ranchers. Non-predator losses of sheep & lamb totaled 387,300 or 61.0 percent of the total losses and resulted in a loss of \$36.3 million to farmers and ranchers. Harsh conditions during the 2009 winter resulted in weather related problems being the leading cause of non-predator deaths accounting for 21.5%. Digestive problems (such as enterotoxemia, internal parasites) followed for a combined 17.3 percent of non-predator deaths.

Goat and kid losses from all causes totaled 554,000 head in 2009. Diseases and other known causes accounted for 255,000 deaths or 46.0 percent of the total deaths. Predators accounted for 180,000 deaths or 32.5 percent of the total while the remainder of goat and kid losses at 119,000 21.5 percent resulted from unknown causes.

Losses of Sheep & Lambs from Predators: Number of Head, Pennsylvania and United States, 2009

Predator	Pennsylvania		United States	
	Sheep (number)	Lamb (number)	Sheep (number)	Lamb (number)
Known Predators	600	400	67,400	157,900
Unknown Predators	300	400	8,300	13,600
Total	900	800	75,700	171,500

Losses of Sheep & Lambs from Non-Predators: Number of Head, Pennsylvania and United States, 2009

Non-Predator	Pennsylvania		United States	
	Sheep (number)	Lamb (number)	Sheep (number)	Lamb (number)
Enterotoxemia	100	100	2,900	14,500
Parasites	500	400	12,300	18,100
Other Digestive Problems ¹	100	200	5,800	13,500
Respiratory Problems ²	100	400	7,600	28,900
Metabolic Problems ³	100	100	900	1,900
Other Diseases ⁴	100	-	7,700	6,100
Weather Related ⁵	200	1,600	24,900	58,400
Lambing Problems ⁶	400	2,000	19,800	33,100
Old Age	800	N/A	39,300	N/A
On Their Back	100	-	2,900	400
Poisoning ⁷	100	200	5,000	5,100
Theft	-	-	800	1,100
Other Non-Predator ⁸	100	200	6,900	15,300
Unknown Non-Predator	400	1,000	22,000	32,100
Total	3,100	6,200	158,800	228,500

¹Other digestive problems include bloat, scours, acidosis, etc. ²Respiratory problems include pneumonia, shipping fever, etc. ³Metabolic problems include milk fever, twin lamb disease, pregnancy toxemia, etc. ⁴Unpublished data for PA for lambs only. Other diseases include mastitis, foot rot, boils, etc. ⁵Weather related deaths include chilling, drowning, lightning, etc. ⁶Estimates shown here are after docking losses only. ⁷Poisoning includes nitrate poisoning, noxious feeds, noxious weeds, etc. ⁸Other non-predator deaths include accidents, fire, starvation, dehydration, etc.

Losses of All Goats: Number by Predators, Diseases or Other Known Causes, Unknown Causes, and Total Value, Pennsylvania, 2009

Item	Losses	
	Goats (head)	Kids (head)
Predator	60,000	120,000
Diseases and Other Known Causes	80,000	175,000
Unknown Causes	41,000	78,000
Total	181,000	373,000