

A U.S. TARGHEE SHEEP ASSOCIATION PUBLICATION

TARGHEE TALK



Photo Credit: Kristen McRae Bieber

Winter 2026

VOL 1- 2026

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2026 Nationals Details

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Upcoming Events

March 1, 2026: Starter Flock Application Due!

March 22, 2026: U.S. Junior Targhee Association Meeting on Zoom

May 31st, 2026: Registration Due for 2026 National Show

July 16-18, 2026: 2026 USTSA National Show and Sale

Location: Huron, South Dakota

From My Flock to Yours

A letter from the USTSA President

Greetings from Montana

I assume that most of you received the email from Association President Susie Skinner, announcing her resignation as director and president of the Association on January 18. Susie had informed the Board over a year ago of her husband's cancer diagnoses and, as it was at that time, she could continue as director and president. Since then, circumstances have changed, and she and her family decided something had to be cut out of her schedule. Under these conditions, I think most of us would have made the same choice. I want to thank Susie for the job she has done for the Targhee breed and let her know that she and her family have the full support, and prayers, of the members of this Association. With Susie's resignation, I have moved up to President and the board has elected Scott Kilber as Vice-President.

We are looking for someone to take Susie's At-Large Directorship until the annual meeting in July, where that person, or someone else, will be elected to finish out the term, ending July 2027.

This year is a big anniversary for the Targhee breed. One hundred years ago the U.S. Range Experiment Station, at Dubois, Idaho, began the crossbreeding program to develop a breed of sheep that was three quarters fine wool and one quarter coarse wool. This was to develop a dual-purpose breed of both wool and meat. In 1951, those traits had come together in the Targhee breed and those raising this new breed met at Dubois to form the U.S. Targhee Sheep Association.

This summer's National Show and Sale will be celebrating these two anniversaries, and we hope that both those currently raising Targhees, and those who have done so in the past, will meet in Huron, South Dakota, to celebrate and renew old friendships and make new friendships.

Sincerely,

Jack McRae

USTSA Board of Directors President

Remembering Targhee Legacies



Duane Robert Richards

LODI- Duane R. Richards, ages 86, of Lodi, passed away peacefully on Sunday, October 12, 2025, at Home Again- Waunkee.

He was born on May 4, 1939, in Lodi, the son of the late Glenn and Helen (Patton) Richards.

After graduating from Lodi High School in 1957, Duane attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he earned a bachelor's degree in agriculture in 1964. During his time at UW, he met the love of his life, Judith Ann

Smith and they were married on July 7th, 1961.

Duane proudly served his country in the U.S. Army National Guard, where he trained as a Combat Medic. He went on to specialize as an X-Ray Technologist.

Together, Duane and Judy built a life rooted in family and farming in the Lodi area, where they lovingly raised their two daughters.

He was a member of Lodi United Methodist Church and the Lodi Valley Masonic Lodge #99.

Duane and Judy shared a love of travel, exploring the country, the Caribbean, and Hawaii. Yet their favorite retreat was their home in northern Wisconsin, where they embraced the changing seasons. A passionate outdoorsman,

Duane found joy in hunting, fishing, and curling-his favorite winter sport. He competed in men's leagues and mixed doubles at the Arlington Curling Club, often alongside Judy, with whom he shared many bonspiel victories.

Duane was also a lifelong UW Badgers fan, and had season tickets to football, basketball and hockey over the years.

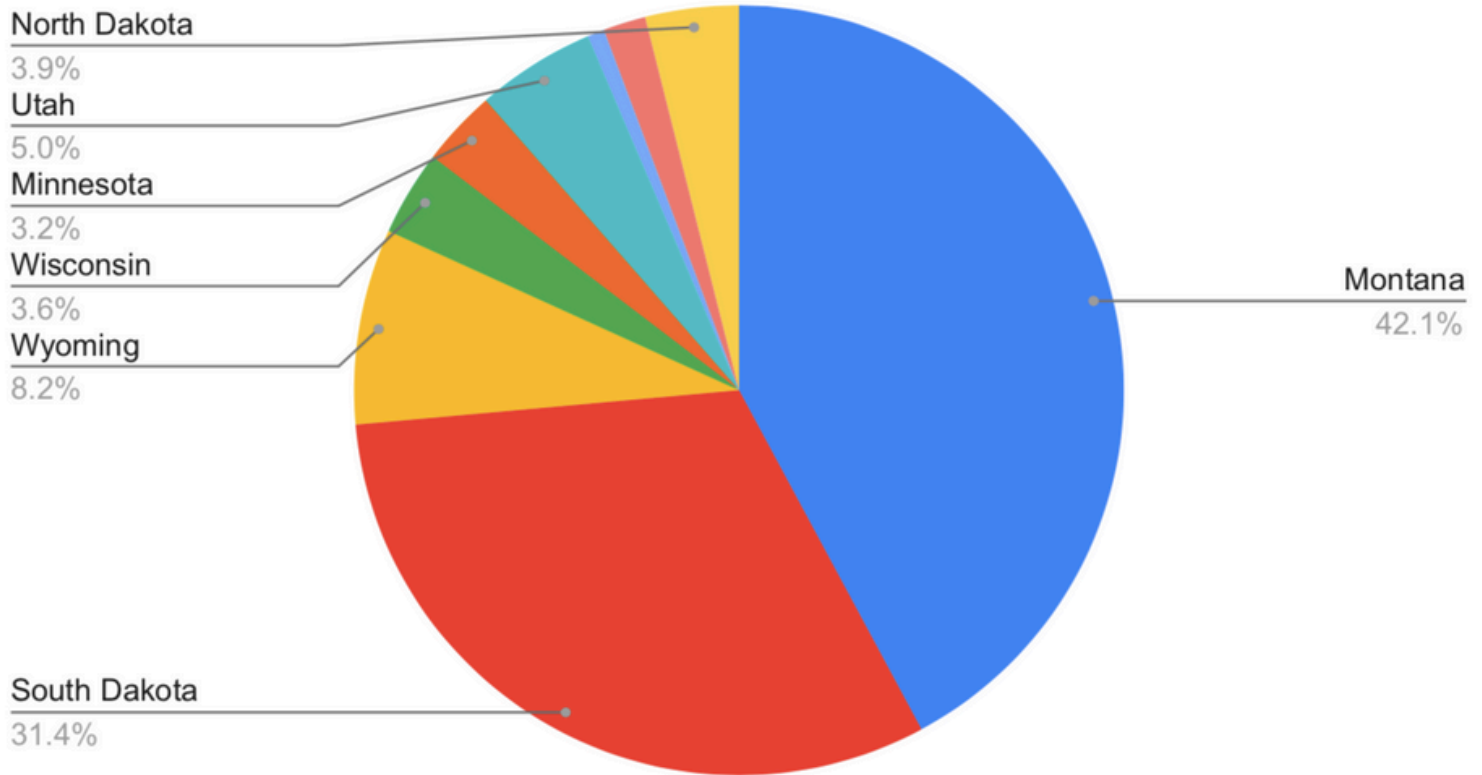
Duane loved being outdoors, working the land and observing nature. A family hobby going back several generations was raising and showing purebred sheep. Richards sheep became known nationwide. Another passion of Duane's was collecting antique fishing lures. He was a member of the National Fishing Lure Collector's Club and spent many enjoyable hours searching for lures, discussing them with his friends and attending regional and national shows.

In addition to Judy, his wife of 63 years, survivors include his daughters, Laurel Richards of Middleton, WI and Leslie (Jeffrey) Nevens of Lodi, WI; two grandchildren, Joelle (Ryan) Wendlandt and Andrew (Patricia "Tricia") Nevens; two great-grandchildren, Melody Wendlandt and Charles Wendlandt; and his sister, Ellyn (John) Wrzeski. Duane's life was marked by devotion-to his family, his community, and the land he loved. His legacy lives on in the hearts of those who knew him and in the traditions he so passionately upheld.

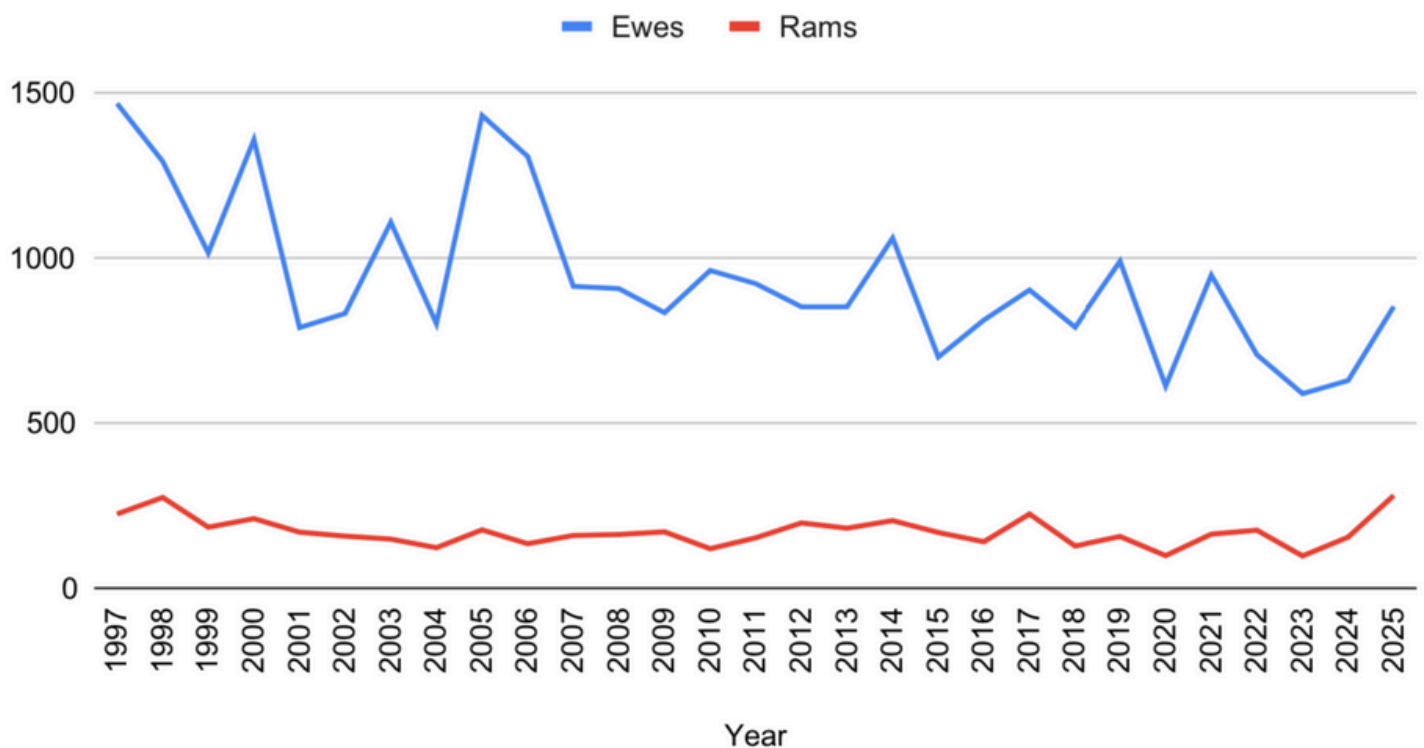
The family would like to thank all who cared for Duane over the past few years. He encountered many wonderful people who were of great help and comfort.

2025 REGISTRATION REPORT

Rams and Ewes



Ewes and Rams



2025 Registration Report by State

State	Rams	Ewes
Montana	118	237
South Dakota	88	182
Wyoming	23	157
Wisconsin	10	32
Minnesota	9	11
Utah	14	57
Idaho	2	20
Pennsylvania	5	7
North Dakota	11	135
Iowa		3
California		11
Total:	280	852

Winter Ewe Supplementation

By Brent Roeder, MSU Extension Sheep and Wool Specialist

This is a short overview on general supplementation for ewes presented at the 2022 Montana Ram Sale in Miles City.

Spring Needs = Energy, minerals and fiber.

- Spring grass is high in protein (and moisture) and low in energy.
- Need to supplement with energy and try and slow passage rate.
- Cold, cloudy days in early spring lead to magnesium deficient grass.
- Feed intakes are very high and they are eating mostly water and chasing grass.
- Ewes generally need energy and minerals due to high milk demands.

Fall & Early Winter Needs = Protein

- Fall grass is generally high in energy and lower in protein and moisture.
- Need to supplement protein to feed the microbes digesting the high fiber grass.
- Focus on supplementing and not substituting

Winter Needs = Dependent on Forage Availability

- Range conditions have generally deteriorated.
- Ewes generally not meeting intake or nutritional requirements.
- Severe winter conditions stress ewes, especially if shearing early.
- Must match supplementation with pregnancy stage.

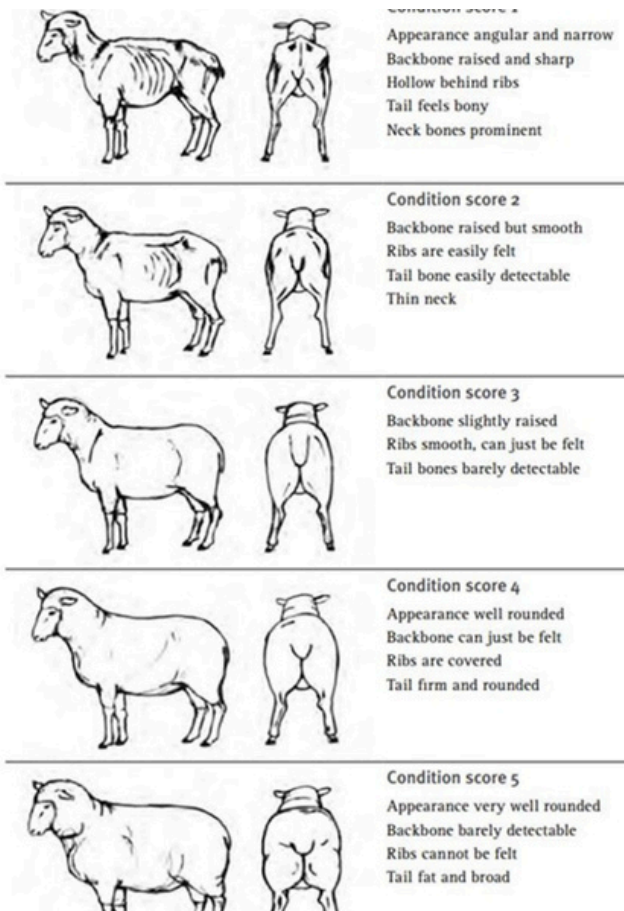
Sheep Pregnancy Stages

- Sheep are scored for feed needs using the 1 to 5 Body Condition Score (BCS) rating (See figure below).
- 150-day gestation period broken into three trimesters of 50 days each.
- **October 15:** Bucks in. Remember flushing does not work on fat ewes (BCS 4 & 5).
- **October 16-December 4:** *Early-gestation (1 to 50 days)* Just maintain weight, if in good condition (BCS 3+). However, if below BCS 3, need supplementation.
- **December 5-January 23:** *Mid-gestation (51 to 100 days)* Placental development and brown adipose tissue laid down in the lamb. Just maintain weight, if in good condition (BCS 3+). Cannot afford to lose weight.
- **January 24-March 14:** *Late-gestation (101-150 days)* Rapid fetal and mammary development based on the size of the placenta. Needs to gain weight with shearing in mid to late February and lambing starting around March 14. BCS around 3 to 4 is ideal. Over BCS 4 and predisposed to Pregnancy Toxemia and dystocia problems. Under BCS 3, can have poor milk and lamb vigor.

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Winter Ewe Supplementation

CONTINUED



Sheep Body Condition Scoring | www.daf.qld.gov.au

General findings from Thomas and Kott 1995.

- Supplementation is cost effective most winters in Montana.
- Supplements fed at 0.2 to 0.3% of ewe body weight (1/2 lb. per 175 lb. ewe) did not reduce forage intake.
- Body condition entering winter influences ewe productivity and the response to supplementation. Ewes in better shape can use supplementation more effectively.
- Energy supplements are cost effective when ewes can afford to lose some weight (BCS 4+), range forage is available and winter weather is mild.
- Protein supplements are cost effective when ewes cannot afford to lose weight and/or when winter weather reduces forage intake.
- Ewes can be supplemented on alternate days while grazing winter range.

Thomas VM and RW Kott 1995. A Review of Montana Range Ewe Nutrition Research, Sheep and Goat Research Journal, Volume 1, Number 11, 1995.

Final Thoughts

- Sort young, old and thin ewes off and supplement separately.
- Tubs can be a good option if weather or other duties impede daily feeding.
- If the ewes are stressed or a storm is coming, the best supplement is the one you have on hand regardless of energy or protein needs.
- Don't cut back on supplement if the weather gets nice.
- The researchers concluded that increased body weight gain does not always translate into increased economic returns when ewes are in good body condition entering winter, forage availability is good, winter weather is mild and ewes are fed adequately in late pregnancy.

If You Just Woke Up and Take Nothing Else Home from Thomas and Kott 1995

Inadequate ewe nutrition during mid-pregnancy can impede the growth and development of the placenta, which results in low oxygen transfer to the fetus. **If nutrient restriction during mid-pregnancy is severe enough, it cannot be made up for in late pregnancy.**



Ever wanted to get your start into the sheep industry?

APPLY TODAY!

for the US Targhee Sheep Association Starter Flock!

The winner will be awarded 3 ewes, consisting of at least 1 ewe lamb, all registered sheep, donated by members of the USTSA.

For more information, please visit targheesheepus.com

Applications due March 1, 2026



2026 U.S. Targhee Sheep Association (USTSA) Starter Flock Program

Purpose

To promote growth and visibility of the Targhee breed, and to promote youth involvement and education within the breed.

Who is eligible? Any youth, age 10 to 15 as of January 1, 2026, whose immediate family does not raise registered Targhee sheep.

What Comprises the Starter Flock? The winner will be awarded a Starter Flock of three (3) ewes, consisting of at least one (1) ewe lamb donated by members of the USTSA. The donors from the USTSA will have quality sheep that meet Targhee breed standards. In order to achieve this, the donated ewes will go through the sifting process at the show and sale. Each animal will be a USTSA registered animal, with a side micron less than 24.94 and must have a QR scrapie codon 171 genotype.

Promotion The program will be featured on the USTSA website, and advertisements will be advertised on social media and in youth organizations as declared by the Starter Flock committee. Promotion by current members at shows and sales is strongly recommended.

Award The winning applicant will be notified by May 1, 2026, and will be awarded the starter flock at the 2026 USTSA National Show and Sale, held July 16-18th, 2026, in Huron, South Dakota. **Attendance at the National Show & Sale is mandatory.**

-
- a. The recipient will be eligible and encouraged to participate in the showmanship competition at the 2026 USTSA National Junior Show.
 - b. A buyer credit of a minimum of \$500 will be donated by the USTSA for the intended use of purchasing sheep at the 2026 National Show & Sale.

Complete applications with supporting material will be reviewed by the USTSA Starter Flock Committee. The chosen applicants will complete a primary interview via Zoom on a device with camera access, and a possible farm visit from members of the USTSA.

U.S. Targhee Sheep Association
2026 Starter Flock Program Application
Applications are due March 1st, 2026

Name: _____ Age: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Phone Number: _____ Email: _____
Parent/Guardian Name(s): _____

Does your family currently raise livestock? _____ If yes, what species/breed? _____

If chosen, you must be able to attend the 2025 USTSA National Show and Sale, held July 16-18th, 2026 in Huron, South Dakota. Will you be able to attend? Y/N? _____

Do you have the means to transport your sheep from the National Show and Sale? Y/N? _____

Please provide videos and pictures via email adequately showing facilities and basic necessities for the awarded sheep. To help provide guidance to the Starter Flock winner, a USTSA member will be available for support and to check on the welfare of the awarded animals.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please feel free to use an extra sheet of paper if needed.

1 How did you hear of the U.S. Targhee Sheep Association Starter Flock program?

2) Do you currently own sheep? If yes, how many years of experience do you have involving sheep? (4-H, FFA, or Junior Show Involvement)

3) What facilities do you have available to house and care for sheep?

4) Describe your knowledge/experience of the Targhee breed? Including both, encouraging and challenging moments.

5) Part of the program is to be an active member in the U.S. Junior Targhee Sheep Association and the U.S. Targhee Sheep Association. How do you see yourself contributing and giving back to the Association?

6) What do you know about the National Sheep Improvement Program (NSIP)?

If you have no knowledge of the NSIP program, please leave it blank.

7) Please tell us about your short and long term goals within raising registered Targhee Sheep?

[illegible]

References:

Please provide a letter of recommendation from an 4-H or FFA leader along with an email address and phone number.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Veterinarian Contact:

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

The 2026 U.S. Targhee Sheep Association Starter Flock winner will be notified no later than May 1st, 2026.

Applications can be sent to ustargheesheep@gmail.com or mailed to Jonalyn Beastrom at 20344 293rd Ave. Pierre, SD 57501

If you have any questions about this application, please feel free to call Jonalyn Beastrom at 605-280-8182 or Scott Kilber at 605-380-5262

Policies:

- The starter flock winner will be required to donate a Registered Targhee Ewe that meets breed standards back to the program within three (3) years. In the first five (5) years if the recipient finds it necessary to liquidate their Targhee Flock or cannot maintain them, he/she/they **MUST** notify the U.S. Targhee Sheep Association. The donated sheep will be returned to their original donors. Only USTSA registered Targhee rams may be used for breeding. Basic needs (feed, water, shelter, vaccinations, etc.) to grow and maintain the sheep in good health must be provided at all times. If failure to do so, mentors will visit and evaluate the accommodations to decide if the sheep need to be surrendered to the USTSA at the cost of the recipient. The recipient will be required to exhibit at least one (1) of the awarded animals in a local, county, state or national show within one year (July 2026) of being awarded. Results will be posted on the U.S. Targhee Sheep Association and the U.S. Junior Targhee Sheep Association Facebook pages, Targhee Talk and our website. This is a one-time award, previous awarded recipients may not reapply. Your parents and or guardian must understand the responsibility and approve of this application. The donated ewe lamb shall be transferred early into the recipient's name to be eligible to show in the USTSA Junior Show as well as meeting deadlines for local, county and state fairs.

By signing this agreement, I have read the above policies and assume the responsibility of any and all that is required with the awarded sheep from the U.S. Targhee Sheep Association Starter Flock program. A signature from a USTSA member indicates that they agree to be your mentor for the duration of the applicant owning Targhee sheep.

Applicant

Parent or Guardian

Name: _____

Signature: _____

USTSA Member/Mentor (If directed you to application)

2026 Nationals Details

July 16-18

Huron, South Dakota at the SHED



- Hotel Block is available at the Crossroads Hotel located 1 mile from the SHED
- Camping is available on-site and is first come first serve

More information to come in the next few months.
Can't wait to see you all there to celebrate 100 years of the
Targhee Breed and 75 years of our Association!



Photo Credits: Kirsten Innes

U.S. Targhee Sheep Association

Stay current with us by using www.targheesheepus.com
and following us on Facebook @US Targhee Sheep
Association