

USDA Releases Sheep and Lamb Nonpredator Death-Loss Report

The National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS), a program within the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has released a descriptive report titled *Sheep and Lamb Nonpredator Death Loss in the United States, 2004*.

This report provides a breakdown of sheep and lamb death loss in 2004 for all causes by size group and region, with special emphasis on nonpredator causes of loss. Where possible, information for comparison is provided from earlier data collections on death losses from 1994 and 1999.

Data for the report was gathered via a random sample of U.S. producers surveyed by the National Agricultural Statistics Service. Survey procedures ensured that all sheep producers, regardless of operation size, had an opportunity to be included in the survey. Large operations were sampled more heavily than small operations. About 22,000 operators were contacted during the first half of January 2005 by mail, telephone and face-to-face interviews. Here are a few findings from *Sheep and Lamb Nonpredator Death Loss in the United States, 2004*:

- A total of 385,000 lambs and 215,300 sheep were lost due to predator and nonpredator causes in 2004. These totals represent 9.4 and 5.6 percent of lamb crop and sheep inventory, respectively. While the sheep death percentage loss has remained relatively stable since 1994, the lamb death loss percentage declined during the same period.

- Since 1994, nonpredator causes have accounted for the majority of sheep and lamb death losses. In 2004, 62.7 percent of losses were due to non-predator causes.
- In the Pacific and West Central region, the percentage of loss due to predators was higher for lambs (67.6 and 66.7 percent, respectively). The highest percentage of lamb loss due to nonpredator causes occurred in the Central and Northeast regions (84.1 and 80.5 percent respectively).
- In 2004, old age accounted for more sheep losses than any other cause (26.8 percent of losses). Theft and weather-related causes were lower in 2004 than in 1994.

Sheep and Lamb Nonpredator Death Loss in the United States, 2004 is available at the NAHMS Web site at <http://nahms.aphis.usda.gov>.

Note to Stakeholders: Stakeholder announcements and other APHIS information are available on the Internet. Go to the APHIS home page at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov> and click on the "Newsroom" button. For additional information on this topic, contact Teresa Howes at (970) 494-7410 or e-mail teresa.k.howes@aphis.usda.gov.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.