

“Taking that Big Step: Financial Considerations in Starting a Sheep Business”

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Meat Sheep Operation

Dorset-Finn Crosses

Mature Ewes - 1100

Market Lambs – 1400 – 1600 per year

Markets *(40 – 55 lbs live weight)*

Christmas

New Year's

Western Roman Easter

Eastern Orthodox Easter



Lambing Statistics

1.8 to 2.0 live lambs/ewe

Percent of ewes lambing



Financials

Capital

Land-pasture based

Housing-lambing

Equipment

Operating Expenses

Grain commodities

High quality and quantity pastures/forages

Labor efficiency

In combination with another production
animal enterprise



Profits

Quantity and quality of lambs

Niche markets

2011 Profits

\$110 to \$125 per ewe

Dairy Sheep Operation

East Friesian

Lacaune

Mature ewes – 1100+



Why?

Continuous, predictable cash flow

Similar to dairy cattle farming

Growth opportunities

Financials

Capital

Farm – leasing

Animals – acquiring

Housing – farm with milking facility

Farm (land) - future

Financials

Operating

- Grain commodities

- High quality and quantity

- Pastures/forages

- Labor efficiency

- Replacements

- Bedding

Feeding Lactating Ewes

TMR – quality

Pasture

Grain feeding





Management

Replacements -12-15 months of age

Lactating ewes

150 – 180 DIM

Milk production records

Breeding

Year-round lambing

Profits

\$135 to \$175 per lactating ewe

