

Sheep Ranching (Range Lambing)
Sample Costs and Returns for
Mendocino County

January 25, 1983

This is a sample budget for an owner-operated, sheep ranch using range lambing in Mendocino County. The owner provides the management, capital, and his/her labor; additional labor is hired as needed.

An 80 percent lamb crop at six months is expected, 20 percent of the ewes are replaced each year, and there is a four percent ewe and lamb (after six months) mortality rate. Range land is charged at current rental rates assuming a carrying capacity of four acres per ewe.

The sample cash costs per ewe are itemized below. These costs are fairly stable on a per ewe basis regardless of the flock size. On the next page, investment costs and returns for two flock sizes are estimated. The "Your Estimates" column is for you to adjust these estimates to your own ranch.

<u>Cash Costs</u>	<u>Per Ewe</u>	<u>Your Estimates</u>
Range; 4 acres, \$2.50/acre	\$10.00*	
Hay; 70 lbs., \$120/ton	4.20	
Salt and minerals	1.00	
TOTAL FEED =	\$15.20	
- Hired labor: general; 1 hr./head, \$6.50/hr.	6.50**	
Shearing; \$1.85 per ewe or lamb ^{a/}	3.20	
\$3.70 per ram, 1 ram per 20 ewes	.19	
Wool bags; 32 fleeces/bag, \$4.50/bag	.25	
Replacement rams; 1 per 20 ewes, 20% replaced annually, \$250/head	2.00	
Veterinary and medicine	3.40	
Utilities	3.00	
Repairs	2.00	
Hauling	1.00	
Insurance	2.00	
Office & misc. expenses	3.00	
Interest on operating capital; 14%	2.92	
TOTAL CASH COSTS =	\$44.66	

^{a/}4% mortality rate subtracted.

* Rental rates vary by area.

**Small flocks may need no help.

To show the importance of good management, weather, and other factors, the estimated cash costs per ewe are used to calculate the cash costs per pound of lamb sold. The costs per pound of lamb are calculated by subtracting the values of cull ewes and rams per ewe (\$2.63) and of wool per ewe (\$14.24) from the total cash cost per ewe (\$44.66) then dividing by the lamb weight which is adjusted for a 4% mortality rate and a 20% ewe replacement rate. Different lambing percentages and weaning weights show the effect of timeliness, proper management, weather, and other factors.

Cash Costs Per Pound

Lamb Sale Weight (lbs.)	Lambing Percentages				
	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
	-----(\$/lb.)-----				
65	1.14	.91	.75	.64	.56
75	.99	.79	.65	.56	.49
85	.87	.69	.58	.49	.43
95	.78	.62	.52	.44	.38
105	.70	.56	.47	.40	.35
115	.64	.51	.43	.36	.32

The investment costs will vary by flock size. Larger flocks may make better use of some machinery and equipment, thus giving them a competitive advantage. The estimated investment costs and returns for a 500 ewe flock and a 1500 ewe flock are specified below.

<u>Livestock</u>	<u>Total Investment for</u>		<u>Your Estimates</u>
	<u>500 ewes</u>	<u>1500 ewes</u>	<u>ewes</u>
Ewes; \$65	\$32,500	\$ 97,500	
Rams; \$250, 1 per 20 ewes	6,250	18,750	
Replacement ewes; \$60, 20% of ewe flock	6,000	18,000	
Horses; \$1000/horse	2,000	6,000	
Dogs; \$200/dog	400	1,200	
	SUBTOTAL = \$47,150	\$141,450	
<u>Machinery & equipment</u>			
Pickup, 3/4 ton, 4WD (7 yrs. life)	\$12,000	\$ 12,000	
Horse trailer (7 yrs. life)	3,000	3,000	
Sprayer, 100 gal. (5 yrs. life)	500	500	
Corrals, gates, chutes (7 yrs. life)	7,000	18,000	
Saddles & tack (7 yrs. life)	1,600	2,400	
Misc. tools & equipment (10 yrs. life)	3,000	6,000	
	SUBTOTAL = \$27,100	\$ 41,900	
	TOTAL INVESTMENT = \$74,250	\$183,350	
	PER EWE = \$ 149	\$ 122	

Estimated Returns and Costs for two flock sizes:

<u>Gross Income</u>	<u>Total Returns & Costs</u>		<u>Your Estimates</u>
	<u>500 ewes</u>	<u>1500 ewes</u>	<u>ewes</u>
Lambs; \$.60/lb. ^{b/}	\$13,110	\$ 39,330	
Cull ewes; \$16/head, 16% replaced	1,280	3,840	
Cull rams; 1 per 20 ewes, 20% replaced, \$12/head ^{c/}	60	180	
Wool ^{c/} , 8.5 lbs./ewe or ram, 1.32¢/lb.	5,666	16,998	
3.5 lbs./lamb, 1.04¢/lb.	1,456	4,368	
	TOTAL = \$21,572	\$ 64,716	
<u>Cash Costs</u> ; \$44.66 per ewe	\$22,330	\$ 66,990	
<u>Cash Income</u> (Gross Income - Cash Costs) = (\$ 758)		\$ 2,274)	
<u>Fixed Investment Costs</u>			
Depreciation:			
Rams, horses, dogs	\$ 1,480	\$ 4,440	
Machinery and equipment	3,771	5,757	
Interest on investment; 14% of 1/2 investment	5,198	12,835	
	TOTAL = \$10,449	\$ 23,032	
Return to owner's labor and management:	(\$11,207)	(\$25,306)	

^{b/}80% lamb crop, 20% ewe replacement, 4% mortality, and 77 lbs. per lamb sold equal an average of 43.7 lbs. of lamb sold per ewe.

^{c/}Adjusted for 4% mortality. Includes estimated incentive payment of 74¢/lb.