

OPTIONS FOR MARKETING

sheep and goats (for meat)

Marketing is an important aspect of raising sheep and goats. Market prices are one of the main factors affecting profitability. There are many options for marketing sheep and goats (and their products), and each option has pros and cons. Most sheep/goats are marketed through auctions/sale barns. Marketing direct to consumers is becoming increasingly common, especially for smaller producers who have difficulty competing at the commodity level.



Marketing option		Pros	Cons	
Sale barn Auction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local auction barn Graded sales Special sales (e.g., holiday) Terminal markets Teleauctions Online platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almost always an option Quick, easy, and convenient Price discovery Certified weights Access to buyers/competition Prompt guaranteed payment Social hub Support for rural community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unpredictable prices Sometimes lack of competition Weekly price volatility Shrink loss Selling fees deducted Transportation costs Animal welfare issues 	
Middlemen Intermediaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brokers, order buyers, dealers Live markets Feedlots Direct marketers Packers/Abattoir 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to negotiate price, shrink, and delivery conditions Opportunity for processor agreements, forward contracts, and retained ownership No selling fees involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Payment risk (sometimes) Middlemen need their cut. Not always highest price 	
Direct to consumers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Live animals Whole carcasses Meat, cuts Value-added 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-farm sales On-farm slaughter Custom slaughter Farm Store Farmers' Market CSA Online platforms Retail, food service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher profit potential Ability to set own prices Greater share of food dollar Relationship with customers Product (brand) identity Market whole animal Value added opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High labor and marketing costs Competition Regulatory environment May be left with product Not for everyone: different skill set required

Market prices are often tied to ethnic holidays or seasonal demand.