

IVAN RUSH

Sheep have been a part of my life since I was a farm boy many years ago. I have had a small ewe flock for many years even though I had a full time job with the University of Nebraska, serving most years as a beef extension specialist with the Department of Animal Science/ Panhandle Research and Extension Center. I specialized in nutrition and management. I served as sheep program director for a Colombia, S.A. Agriculture Institute for 2 years before my tenure with UNL at Scottsbluff.

I have always enjoyed working with youth in livestock programs. Assisting with sheep projects has always been a part of my life – from daughters, to 4-H club and FFA members and grandsons.

After my retirement from UNL, I pursued a cow-calf operation where calves have been retained to harvest. I currently have about 65 commercial Suffolk and Hampshire ewes that I lamb from January to March. A few lambs are sold as club lambs, but the majority of the lambs are finished on self-feeders and are sold on the rail in Colorado. Cull ewes are sold at Centennial at Fort Collins, CO. I do appreciate some eye appeal and structural correctness in lambs however I will not sacrifice performance for non-economical show ring fads. My lambs usually excel in performance and carcass traits.

I have some farmland and raise alfalfa and corn for the cattle and sheep. I enjoy training Border Collie dogs for my own use.

I currently serve on the Education committee of the Nebraska Beef Council and Advisory Board of the Cattlemen's Ball of Nebraska. I attended Lamb 300 workshop at Laramie, WY, where we elevated live animals, observed ultrasound plus all aspects of harvesting cutting and preparing lamb. I make every effort to participate in webinars sponsored by ASI – Let's Grow Program and plus other educational opportunities.

I feel there are some real opportunities in the sheep industry as we see some renewed interest in consumption of lamb and quality wool. I enjoy visiting with those enthused about the future of the industry so feel free to contact me at any time.

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