

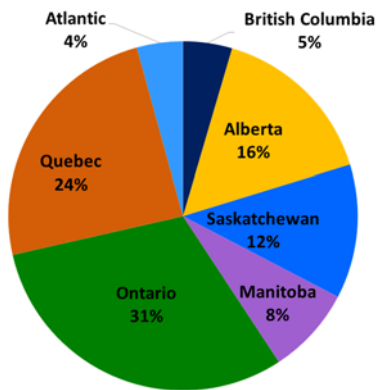


Alberta's Lamb Industry

The Alberta lamb industry has a lamb supply chain with all the key players in place: producers, feeders, federal and provincial licensed abattoirs, as well as wholesale and retail markets.

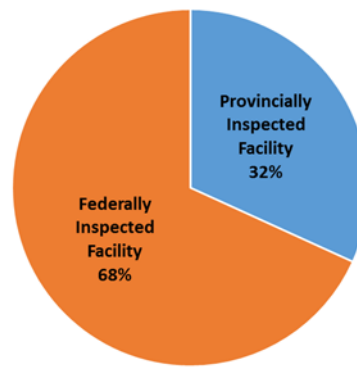
Lamb Production and Processing

Total Sheep & Lambs, January 1, 2017
(Percentage of National Flock by Region)



Source: Statistics Canada

2016 Western Canada Processed Lamb and Sheep



Source: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Industry sustainability depends on a fully functioning supply chain focused on high quality lamb and a year-round supply for the growing consumer markets. Flock size and efficiency, business productivity, carcass quality and market options are contributing to stability in Alberta's lamb sector. Alberta has abundant feed supplies, good land, and skilled producers.

- Flock size varies from micro-flocks less than 100 lambs /year to large-scale flocks greater than 2000 lambs /year.
- Four main production systems are based on: winter lambing; spring lambing; out-of-season or extended lambing; and accelerated lambing (multiple times/year).
- Lambs are fed and grown out to be market ready, either on-farm or in commercial feeding facilities.
- Most of Alberta's lamb processing is located in central and southern Alberta.

Feeding facilities are cost-effective, produce more uniform carcass quality and assure a year-round supply of lambs. Additions of electronic technology systems, skills training and new management systems contribute to improved animal welfare, nutrition and health of flocks. This also reduces waste and costs for Alberta's commercial feeding facilities. The sector can track every individual lamb, linking producers and feeders to the carcass at the processing level. Investment in state-of-the-art processing lines, individual carcass tracking, by-product capture and value-added product development has been made by the federally inspected processor. With this facility, Alberta is better situated to take advantage of market opportunities outside provincial and national borders.

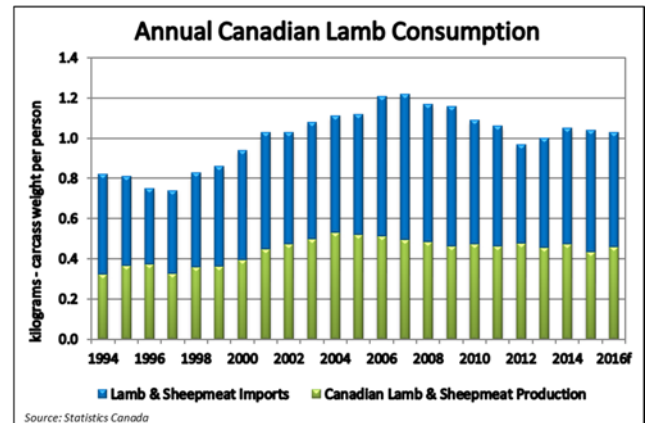
Quick Facts

- ◆ *Alberta has a sheep business group operating as an integrated value chain.*
- ◆ *Alberta lamb sector is focused on producing high quality meat.*
- ◆ *Alberta lamb industry also produces quality breeding stock and wool.*
- ◆ *A small number of flocks focus commercially on dairy or organic meat production.*
- ◆ *Alberta has the third largest ewe flock as well as the largest feeding sector in Canada.*
- ◆ *In Alberta 13% of producers produce 68% of Alberta's lambs.*
- ◆ *Alberta's Sun Gold Specialty Meats is the largest federally inspected lamb processor in Canada. The facility is fully halal and Kosher certified.*
- ◆ *Alberta has over 100 provincially licensed meat facilities, of which 32 have custom lamb processing.*
- ◆ *Link to [Abattoir map](#)*

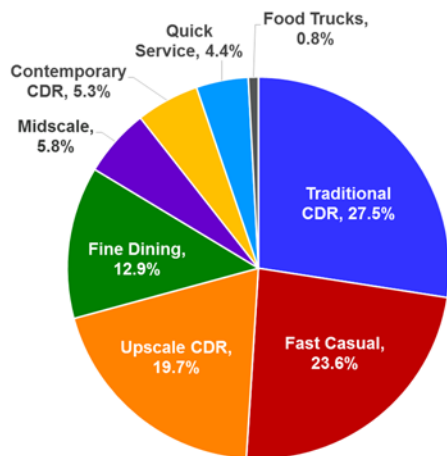


Market (Consumer) Channels

Provincially inspected lamb is used on-farm or sold locally through farm direct channels, local butchers or independent retail and food service outlets. Federally inspected lamb and lamb products are sold locally through branded programs with Sunterra Markets, Sobeys, Canada Safeway and Federated Co-op.



Lamb Food Service Distribution



Source: Technomic 2017

CDR= Casual Dining Restaurants

CDR Segments into Upscale CDR, Traditional CDR and Contemporary CDR

MDR: Midscale Dining Restaurants

As well federally processed fresh lamb is sold into large retail markets in Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia under “Canada’s Freshest” brand and as lamb cuts in store packaging. Fresh lamb is distributed to hotel and restaurant markets through Sysco and GFS. Lamb and lamb by-products are also sold as ingredients to the pet food manufacturing sector.

On occasion, products have been exported to the United States, Mexico, Hong Kong, the Middle East and China. Further market opportunities are being explored.

Research and National Programs

Alberta has key research expertise and facilities in Lacombe, Lethbridge and at the University of Alberta that contribute new information for improved production, health, animal care, processing, meat quality and marketing. The Alberta lamb sector is linked to the national industry through shared standards in lamb grading, livestock traceability, food safety, animal welfare and biosecurity programs.

Industry Opportunities

- Stakeholder collaboration and alliances focused on: improving product quality, year-round supply; and local and national brands.
- Innovation and research to improve nutrition, health, and meat quality.
- Improvements in flock performance for costs, productivity, waste/efficiencies.
- Adoption of business and production models, technology and skills of people to improve competitiveness.
- Aligning growth with sustainable strategies.

Web Links

[Alberta Lamb](#)

[Alberta Agriculture and Forestry](#)

[Agricultural Processing Industry Directory, Alberta](#)

[Sheep Central Alberta](#)

[Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada](#)

[Canadian Sheep Federation](#)

[Canadian Sheep Breeders](#)

For more information, contact :

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Alberta
Government