

# Showing Sheep

Sheep showing is the project that I picked because sheep are some of the nicest animals. Sheep sometimes only need grass, water and shelter. To improve your sheep you can feed them grain. It does not matter what brand as long as it has the nutrients that your sheep needs. I feed my sheep 16% protein feed.

Over all the shows are breeding sheep and market sheep. Breeding sheep are mostly ewes with one ram class. The market sheep are either ewes or wethers (castrated males). The type of sheep that you show is broken into two different groups, wool breeds and meat breeds. Wool breeds are divided up based on gender and age. The rams all show during the wool breed section of the show. The wool breed ewes are broken up based on age. Then they top two in each age group go onto the final breeding class. The top two meat breed ewes are also in this top class. They are also broken up based on age.

Though it is hard to teach the sheep how to lead at first, it gets easier as time goes on. It takes a lot of time and effort to get your sheep ready for showing. The reward of showing is one of my favorite things in the world.

~ Bob McCarthy



It seems to me that the one thing that I am good at is making my sheep big. Last year, at the fair I had the heaviest sheep. He weighed 170 pounds. He just ate a lot and I made sure he never ran out of food. The other thing that I do to make my sheep muscular and big is take them on long walks.

Everyday from the last week of school I start teaching my sheep how to lead, you need halters to do this. It takes along time. I also spend time with my sheep so that they can get to know me and not be afraid of me. After my sheep has learned to lead, I take them on a one-mile walk once to twice a day depending on the weather. I always make sure that my sheep have plenty of water on hot days.

Starting on the last week of June, I start teaching my sheep to walk by hand, like I would show them at fair. I also start teaching them how to brace, so that they look their best in the show ring. Bracing makes their muscles tighten up so that they don't appear to have lots of fat on them. You want your sheep to feel "solid". It takes along time but it is worth it in the end. Also don't get angry at your sheep they get tiered to and in the ring if your nervous just wing it!

~ Neil McCarthy

