

Tips to Increase Profit Margins in Sheep Farming

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Abstract

Sheep farming requires a lot of labor, so keeping production costs in check is essential if a person wants to make a healthy financial profit. Sheep are mostly valued for the production of their wool, milk, skin and excrement. Its meat is delicious, extremely nutritious, and well-liked by people all over the world.

Introduction

India is leading in both the number of cattle and milk production. According to the 20th livestock census, which was carried out in 2019, there are currently 535.78 million animals in the country, an increase of 4.6% from the previous livestock census in 2012. India ranks third in the world with 6.4% of the global sheep population. According to the 20th livestock census, the country's total sheep population is 74.26 million, increased by 14.13% over the previous census (2012). Sheep, with their numerous uses for wool, meat, milk, skins, and manure, are a significant part of the agricultural economy, particularly in the country's arid, semi-arid, and mountainous regions. Sheep farming makes up around 8.5 percent of the overall value of animal agriculture's production, particularly in mountainous, desert, and semi-arid regions where cereals and dairy farming are unprofitable (Gupta *et al.* 2011). Through the selling of wool and livestock, it offers the farmers a steady source of income. They are crucial to the livelihood of a significant portion of small and marginal farmers as well as landless labors that breed sheep. Five million households in India



raise sheep, goats, and rabbits, among other small ruminants, as well as engage in related activities (Singh *et al.* 2020).

Why sheep farming?

- ✓ Sheep can be reared on farms alongside other animals in smaller spaces and do not need expensive homes to live.
- ✓ Starting a business does not involve high costs associated with sheep husbandry.
- ✓ The sheep farming business uses less labor and generates a considerable amount of profit.
- ✓ Low-quality grass is sufficient for sheep to survive. They produce milk, meat, and wool, all of which have diverse uses.
- ✓ By using competent management, this business can be a reliable source of income from sheep farming and employment.
- ✓ In India, those who are unemployed can still make a solid living and obtain financing for sheep farming.

How to Begin a Sheep Farming Enterprise

- ✓ Create a sheep and goat farming business plan that fits budget. Additionally, a financial analysis, a marketing plan, and income revenue are required in sheep farming business plan.
- ✓ To start sheep farming, pick a suitable place. Sheep need access to clean, freshwater sources, plenty of green food, competent medical care, and transportation. For the purpose of launching a sheep farming enterprise in India, one must take sufficient care and offer the necessary amenities.
- ✓ One of the most important factors for the sheep farming industry is the quality of breeds, which can increase output. There are numerous sheep breeds in the globe, however not every breed is ideal for every farming region. As a result, you will need to prepare the breeds in accordance with the local agricultural climate.
- ✓ Choose the sheep breed that is appropriate for your business plan e.g. Chokla, Magra, Sonadi, Marwari, Hassan etc.
- ✓ Construct a shelter for sheep that will shield them from harmful weather conditions and protect them from various diseases. Their home should be tidy, spotless, dry, and have enough light and



air. Additionally, the house should have a suitable drainage system for them so as to avoid dirtiness and odor.

Marketing strategies before starting sheep farming business

Before beginning a business plan for a sheep farm, determine the marketing plans and methods.

- ✓ For better and more effective marketing, a person should focus on local markets and neighbourhoods. If a person has the necessary infrastructure and sheep farming expertise, selling sheep farming or sheep goods on the global market would be the best option.
- ✓ Small-scale households or individuals can benefit greatly from the sheep farming industry, with a few creative ideas and can even turn a profit from sheep farming on its own.

Management practices for reducing production cost

1. When compared to cattle, buffalo, and pigs, sheep are simpler to handle.
2. Perfect pasture land is not necessary for sheep. They are content to eat shrubs, grass, and bushes that grow in unfavorable soil.
3. The term "**golden footed animal**" refers to sheep. The soil will receive fertilisation from sheep excrement. A former sheep pasture is a good place to grow crops. Its manure is of higher quality than that of other animals due to higher percentages of N, P, and K.
4. Purchase the sheep directly from the person who raised them. Look at the herd the lambs come from and talk to the person about animal and its parentage history.
5. Sheep are ruminant animals that primarily consume hay and new grass. However, if given nothing but good pasture, salts, vitamins, and mineral supplements, along with fresh water, they can survive and even thrive. Combine grass, bushes, and trees. A good pasture can typically support 5–6 sheep per acre.
6. Decide how many sheep you'll buy; the number of sheep you can raise will depend on your location and the productivity of your land. Additionally, market prices and potential returns must be taken into account if you want to make money from sheep.



7. Simple wooden logs are the best type of sheep fence because they are inexpensive and readily available. The temporary paddocks can be enclosed with electric mesh fencing. To keep the sheep on new pasture, rotate them among different paddocks.
8. Provide enough food (hay, silage or pasture). During the final trimester of pregnancy and until weaning, give adequate nutrition (pasture, high-quality grain).
9. Give growing lambs enough pasture and forage.
10. Start a low-investment, high-yielding semi-intensive sheep farming system in which a sheep spends half of each day in the field and the other half in the sheep shed.

Key rules for increasing sheep production

1. Do not underfeed sheep.
2. Maximize the number of extra lambs produced
3. Think about selling first
4. Think about supplemental bedding options
5. Prepare your flock for the winter.
6. Keep accurate records.

Conclusion

Many small and marginal farmers as well as landless laborers depend heavily on sheep farming for their living. Wool and sheep skins are used as the primary raw materials in a variety of agricultural businesses. Three more streams of income are generated each year through the production of manure, wool, and meat. Modern technology has been steadily introduced into sheep farming. The cost-benefit analysis of sheep farming has gained significance in light of this and the requirement for the establishment of policies for the development of sheep.

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