

Montana Ag Safety Program



Shearing Safety

- Remember, sheep respond differently when under stress. Utilize appropriate handling techniques. Sheep are unpredictable and will charge or jump as a means of escape.
- Well-designed facilities can vastly improve safety and efficiency. Carefully design work areas to keep all necessary equipment within reach, neat, and orderly.
 - Identify all escape routes.
 - Identify and ensure access to electrical outlets.
- Inspect all tools and equipment prior to use and regularly during use.
- Establish a workflow and a chain of command. Shearing (and crutching) are highly skilled and physically demanding jobs that depend on the utilization of proper technique.
 - Outline all standard procedures for each task with the crew that will be performing them.
- Limit helpers to those that are working - define a separate area for those that are not.
- ALWAYS be aware of your surroundings.
- Due to their size and strength advantage, a second person should be available to assist with shearing rams.
- Avoid lifting sheep. If unavoidable, use proper technique.
- Utilize proper technique when catching and dragging. The preferred method for doing so is:
 1. Grasp firmly, avoiding pulling/holding on the wool.
 2. Hold the sheep against braced knees with one hand under the chin and one on the rump.
 3. Turn the sheep's head to the rear while simultaneously pressing the sheep's rear to the ground.
 4. When the sheep is no longer standing on its feet, lift the front leg while walking backwards to sit the sheep on its rump.
- Take frequent breaks to rest, hydrate, and nourish properly.
- Ensure the wool press is in good working order and all safety features are functional. The wool press should be in a location that is both safe and convenient.
- Wear all appropriate PPE.

These safety rules have been written and provided to you for your safety. Your signature below indicates you have read and understand these rules, and further, that you accept the responsibility of always using good judgment to make workplace safety your number one priority.

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