



## Preparation for sheep shearing

### Animals:

Your sheep need to be penned up and dry in an area ideally without bedding (or it will work its way into the fiber), and close to shearing area. If rain is called for, please put your animals inside before it starts. It is not possible to shear wet sheep. Please do whatever you know is best to keep them as little stressed as possible. **Please remove hay and feed and do not allow grazing at least 8-12 hours before shearing;** drinking water is fine. This greatly reduces the stress on the sheep; a full rumen can cause difficulties in breathing and lead to overheating and even heart problems.

Your sheep should be already in a small enclosed area where they are easy to lead out to the shearing area. Their heart rate increases when they feel they need to run. If animals are out in the field and need to be caught, there will be a surcharge.

### Shearing area:

I use the New Zealand method for shearing sheep, where they are turned on their rumps and sheared in a set pattern used by shearers worldwide. Ordinarily I use a downshaft machine, which requires either a beam from which I can hang the machine or a beam to which I can strap my hanging board. If you have a small flock, I may just use a hand shearing machine. The shearing area should be flat and dry, and well lit. I bring a rubber mat on which to work. In the event of inclement weather, please let me know if you do or do not have an area to shear that is protected from the rain.

### Manpower needed:

I do not need assistance in the actual shearing; however, I require that someone be available to bring the sheep out to the shearing area. When the fleece is off, one person is needed to collect it and, if desired, skirt it prior to bagging. The shearing area should be swept clean of any remaining bits of fleece before the next animal is brought out in order to keep the fleeces clean.

### Services performed:

In addition to the shearing, typically sheep owners want to have hooves trimmed and I will take care of this unless you let me know otherwise. Some owners wish to administer vaccines and/or deworming shots at the time of shearing. I discourage this practice, as I have seen some negative health results.

It's important for the owner to be present while the animals are being sheared. Sometimes physical conditions – scaly skin, bumps, lesions, lice, etc. – come to light when the fleece comes off and I want to be able to alert the owner to any such things found.

While I try to avoid nicking, it's not uncommon for small cuts to occur in the process of shearing a sheep. I bring a first aid kit, and can spray any nicks with an antiseptic that both soothes and helps keep flies off.

### The Fleece:

Please have bags ready and labeled for each animal and/or color.

## Biosecurity

I travel from farm to farm and in order to not transfer any diseases between flocks, I take the following precautions:

- (1) Wipe down my shearing mat and shoes with disinfectant
- (2) Use new shearing blades and wipe down shearing machine/handpiece
- (3) Disinfect hoof trimmers

If there are any conditions your animals have that I should know about, please tell me so that I can take extra cleaning steps before travelling to the next farm.

Please let us know if you have any questions or special requests, and thank you for working with Shroeder Shearing.

Anne Shroeder, Shroeder Shearing

*Kinder, Gentler Shearing & Care*

*A service of Star Gazing Farm*

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