**April 22, 2025**

Another in the series of Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom non-fiction text examples to be used in your classroom. Remember, these will be available every MONDAY afternoon that *FarmWeek* is published during the school year.

Questions about this can be directed to Kevin Daugherty, Education Director of Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom at kdaugherty@ilfb.org.

\*\*Reminder these questions are designed to use with the on-line version of *FarmWeek.*

 <https://www.farmweeknow.com/eedition/>

Note, by request of teachers we have included the answers to the questions immediately following the questions on a separate worksheet.

**NAME:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ CLASS PERIOD\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Directions:** Please use the online version of *FarmWeek.*  <https://www.farmweeknow.com/eedition/>

 Or use the article at: <https://iaitc.co/sheep>

Use the article titled: Sheep numbers grow as producers build on success

1. How many sheep and lambs does the USDA estimate are in inventory in Illinois now?
2. How did the COVID pandemic and restrictions impact the demand for more lamb or mutton?
3. What country lead the growth of lamb exports?
4. Why does Easter play a role in lamb markets?
5. What are several reasons that raising sheep are an alternative for farmers?
6. Do you think more IL farmers will be raising sheep in the near future? Why or why not?

Answers:

1. 58,000 head of sheep are estimated to be in Illinois now.
2. More consumers started trying new foods during the pandemic.
3. Mexico led the export market in lambs with a 133% increase.
4. The market for lamb meat increases around Easter each year. Planning has to be done to get the lambs to market weight to hit the Easter market, and Easter is not on a specific date each year like Christmas or Thanksgiving.
5. Answers will vary, but sheep can be used for regenerative grazing, sheep are easier to handle than much larger animals like cattle, and the current price of lamb meat is attractive to many farmers.
6. Answers will vary.