

# STRATEGIC PLAN

# American Lamb Board



2023 – 2028

## INTRODUCTION

Strategic plans set organizations on a forward-thinking, proactive, prioritized path. For the American Lamb Board (ALB), that means creating consumer demand and profit opportunities for the entire US lamb industry through promotion, information and research funded by the Mandatory Lamb Checkoff.

The ALB's Strategic Plan helps the board prioritize programs and align resources with actionable tactics that can help achieve its strategic goals. It is another way that the ALB remains accountable to its stakeholders.

The process of strategic planning is straightforward. Evaluate progress made during the past few years. Analyze data, trends and forecasts. Assess industry strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). Develop a plan to establish ALB's vision, mission (how ALB will contribute to the vision), goals, objectives, and metrics to track progress.

In 2018, when ALB launched its previous strategic plan, it was built on the Lamb Industry Roadmap, a collaborative and extensive effort to improve productivity and product quality, become more competitive, and grow the US flock to fulfill supply needs built by consumer demand.

While some exceptional groundwork has been accomplished, there remains much to achieve, challenges to overcome and opportunities to pursue that will build demand for American Lamb products and increase the American sheep industry's market share.

### *Situation Assessment*

This 2023-28 American Lamb Board Strategic Plan acknowledges and addresses these industry challenges and opportunities:

- The Covid pandemic caused huge losses within lamb's fundamental fine dining market but created opportunities for retail sales and at-home consumption.
- While US consumers are buying lamb, the domestic flock is dwindling and more product is coming from imports, usually with a significant price advantage.
- The non-traditional market, with demand for smaller carcasses, has grown and cultural preferences are creating new opportunities.
- The loss of a major lamb processor caused short-term strife, yet smaller processors are emerging and being embraced by a society seeking a more local supply structure.
- Consumer interest in sustainability has become more mainstream and part of the purchase decision process.
- Overall price inflation, labor challenges and economic downturn created more pressure on the US Lamb industry.



# Vision For The Future

A unified, thriving American Lamb industry that concentrates its resources around priorities and a measurable plan that fosters profit opportunities for all stakeholders

## MISSION TO ACHIEVE OUR VISION

Increase the value of American Lamb for all segments contributing to the American Lamb Checkoff

## TARGET

By the end of 2028, show a 5% increase in demand and take 5% market share from imports

## KEY METRICS

- Retail Demand Index for Lamb<sup>1</sup>
- Sheep Industry Review Yearly Report<sup>2</sup>
- Return on Investment in the American Lamb Checkoff Program<sup>3</sup>

## Goals



**Marketing:**  
Grow consumer demand for American Lamb



**Research, Education and Innovation:**  
Optimize/prioritize research and education efforts to improve product quality and consistency, increase productivity and grow the year-round supply of American Lamb



**Industry Services:**  
Expand awareness, understanding, engagement and involvement of stakeholders in the American Lamb Checkoff

<sup>1</sup> 2017 Index = 113.9 (2002 as base year of 100); 5% increase = 119.6  
Source: Retail Demand Index for Lamb 2017 Update p. 6 (Knob Economics & Juniper Economic Consulting)

<sup>2</sup> Imports accounted for more than 70% of total U.S. lamb and mutton disappearance in 2021; 5% reduction = 66.5% Source: 2021 Sheep Industry Review p. 47 (American Sheep Industry Assn.)

<sup>3</sup> Conducted every 5 years; latest report issued in 2019



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# Strategies

## MARKETING

- Increase usage of American Lamb through new US markets and channels
- Increase consumer awareness and familiarity with American Lamb as a healthy and sustainably produced protein
- Develop export market opportunities for American Lamb
- Increase programming to consumer segments who desire lamb and suppliers to these markets (Hispanic, Islamic, etc.)

### Metrics

- Retail Demand Index for Lamb
- Retail sales data
- Menu penetration studies
- Consumer and influencer usage and attitude studies
- Consumer and trade (foodservice and retail) media coverage



### LAMB PURCHASERS

**52%**  
are aware of  
the source of  
their lamb

**42%**  
prefer to buy  
American  
Lamb

## RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND INNOVATION (REI)

- Identify and support attainable research, educational opportunities and benchmarking tools that improve quality and productivity, and increase the US flock
- Invest in research and education programs that enhance the sustainability of lamb production
- Engage key industry stakeholders for input on research needs and distribution of findings
- Communicate outcomes of completed research and widely distribute educational materials
- Support and promote resources, industry events, and production practices that encourage increased productivity and domestic production
- Increase the impact of research by leveraging ALB funding with federal or private resources
- Encourage new product development that will address consumer needs

### Metrics

- Industry engagement in research and educational recommendations
- USDA data on US flock numbers
- Benchmarking tools (to be developed through above strategy)

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## INDUSTRY SERVICES

- Utilize appropriate and effective channels to communicate with the industry, including board member training and outreach
- Continue to facilitate the lamb industry roundtable to improve communication and collaboration across sectors and industry organizations
- Support and create programs that encourage young producers to stay engaged in the industry and serve in leadership roles
- Attain participation in producer education and quality assurance programs that encourage the use of best practices, enhance consumer trust, and reflect the industry's ethical principles
- Collect and provide factual information on market analysis and other issues, and proactively address adverse topics that could impact the industry
- Offer resources and funding to support local promotional programs that extend Lamb Checkoff efforts

### Metrics

- Industry attitude surveys about the American Lamb Checkoff
- Industry engagement in American Lamb programs, such as Enews subscribers
- Industry media usage of ALB news and resources






## *About The American Lamb Board*

The American Lamb Board (ALB) is an industry-funded national research, promotion and information checkoff program that works on behalf of all American commercial and seedstock producers, feeders, direct marketers and processors to build awareness and demand for American Lamb. Funding is through mandatory assessments paid by all industry segments. The board is appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture and represents all industry sectors, geographic regions and sizes of production. The work of the ALB is overseen by USDA and supported by staff in Denver, Colorado.

ALB's annual budget averages about \$2.5 million. Almost two-thirds of funds are devoted to American Lamb promotion. By law, the Board's expenditures for administration are limited to 10% or less of projected revenues. The board was established in 2002.



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