

## **1 FEBRUARY 2008**

### **Operations with Sheep Up 2 Percent**

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Services' (NASS) just-released Farms, Land in Farms and Livestock Operations Report, the number of operations with sheep totaled 70,590 during 2007, up 2 percent from 2006 and up 3 percent from 2005.

Total inventory as of Jan. 1, 2008, is 6.06 million head, down 2 percent from 2007, as reported in the NASS Sheep and Goats report, which was also released today. Among the states where sheep numbers increased, Colorado, Iowa, Oregon, Tennessee and Virginia led the way.

The value of the U.S. wool clip increased 23 percent last year over the previous year.

"Despite wool prices hitting a 15-year high and strong lamb prices for the last six years, farmers and ranchers are still experiencing difficulty with the availability of feed because of drought combined this year with record high feed and transportation costs," stated Peter Orwick, executive director for the American Sheep Industry Association (ASI). "Drought in parts of California was the worst they have seen in 50 years and being the number two sheep state in the country, inventory decrease could have been severe."

A link to the final reports is located on the Home page of the ASI Web site at [www.sheepusa.org](http://www.sheepusa.org).