

## **2 FEBRUARY 2007**

### **Sheep Numbers Slightly Less as a Result of Drought**

The sheep and lamb inventory in the United States as of Jan. 1, 2007, totaled 6.19 million head, down 1 percent from 2006, but still 1 percent above 2005. After two consecutive year to year increases in numbers, inventory growth was hampered by extremely dry weather in the Southwestern part of the United States.

This information was received today in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service Sheep and Goats report.

The most noticeable decrease in inventory was reported in New Mexico and Texas where sheep numbers dropped from 2006 to 2007 by 25,000 and 20,000, respectively. However, over the same period of time, other states had substantial increases in the breeding flock area; California and Utah reported increases of 15,000 and 10,000, respectively.

"The findings in this report were expected due to severe weather problems," commented Burdell Johnson, American Sheep Industry Association president. "There is plenty of optimism in the industry, and growth will return with better feed conditions."

The complete report can be viewed at  
<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/current/SheeGoat/SheeGoat-02-02-2007.txt>.