

## **Oregon 4-H Tail Docking Policy**

We recognize many 4-H members do not dock the tails on their project lambs since they are often purchased from other breeders. There is some scientific correlation (up to 10%) between the length of dock and incidence of prolapse in lambs. We support the current American Veterinary Medicine Association official policy for tail docking of lambs below:

*Lambs' tails are docked for cleanliness and to minimize fly strike, but cosmetic, excessively short tail docking can lead to an increased incidence of rectal prolapses and is unacceptable for the welfare of the lamb. We recommend that lambs' tails be docked at the level of the distal end of the caudal tail fold.*

Judges should be informed that we support the welfare of lambs and this recommendation. Under no circumstances should comments be made such as “I could have moved this lamb higher in the class if it had a shorter dock”.

The following language appears in the state fair exhibitor book and serves as a guideline for allowing or disqualifying animals from competition:

*We support and encourage the humane treatment of all animals. Animals showing any evidence of prolapse or mechanical repair will not be allowed. Exhibitors are expected to treat their animals with respect and provide for their continuous well-being through proper feeding, handling, disease prevention, sanitation and attention to their safety.*