Sheep Facts

1. There are approximately 2,664 farms in Canada that are classified as sheep farms.
2. Some of the most popular breeds of sheep in Canada include Suffolk, Dorset, and Rideau Arcott.
3. Ontario is a leading province in Canada's sheep industry, with the largest breeding flock.
4. Ontario has the most sheep out of the Canadian provinces with 329,100.
5. Ontario's 3,000 sheep farmers, representing the sheep, lamb and wool industries.
6. The terms "herd" and "flock" are often used interchangeably, "flock" is more commonly used to describe the group of sheep.
7. Sheep have a strong tendency to follow the movements of other sheep, especially the dominant members of the flock. This behavior is so ingrained that they will even follow a leader, even if it leads them into danger.
8. Herding provides safety in numbers, making it more difficult for predators to single out and attack individual sheep.
9. In Perth County, there are 59 sheep and goat farms.
10. The sheep milk industry is relatively new in Canada compared to other parts of the world. A sheep may give up to two litres of milk per day, which is mostly used to make specialty cheeses.
11. Most lambs in Ontario are raised for meat.
12. Sheep have natural oil on their wool called "lanolin. Lanolin makes the wool water repellent and prevents the cold rain and snow from penetrating to the sheep's skin.
13. Sheep have poor eyesight but an excellent sense of hearing.
14. Sheep can be used for producing meat, milk or fibre.
15. Most sheep breeds grow wool continuously, so shearing at least once a year is necessary for their health and comfort.
16. Sheep are ruminant herbivores, meaning that they eat plant matter (grazers that prefer grass), and digest it in a series of four stomach compartments.
17. A female sheep is called a ewe and a male horse is called a ram. Baby sheep are called lambs.
18. A full-grown sheep weighs between 70 and 125kg.
19. Sheep normally have between one and three lambs per lambing but can have up to five.
20. A ewe can identify her lamb by its bleat.

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