
About the DeTail Device

The DeTail Device is made from an injection molded plastic material. There are two recessed lines on the barrel or trough of the device. The lines are located 0.7 inch and 1.4 inches from the end of the barrel.

The line closer to the end of the barrel (0.7 inch) is the minimum standard for the tail length of appropriately docked lambs, as determined by a 2004 five-state tail-docking study using 782 lambs.

The second line (1.4 inches) is used in selection of lambs at weaning time. Based on data from the five-state study, if a lamb's tail measures 1.4 inches at weaning, the tail should measure at least 0.7 inch at market (99% confidence). The purpose of the 1.4-inch line is to encourage exhibitors and breeders to focus on an area closer to the average tail length of a lamb docked at the distal end of the caudal fold, and not push the envelope of the 0.7-inch line, which is the minimum standard.

This device should not be used as a guide for docking location.

It is still advised to dock all lambs at the distal end of the caudal fold (American Veterinary Medical Association AVMA, American Sheep Industry ASI, etc.).

Proper Use of the DeTail Device

With the lamb standing, place the DeTail Device under the tail, with the tail contained in the trough. Ensure that the flange is in firm contact with the pin bones, the trough is firmly against the base of the tail, and the barrel of the device is held level. Use disinfectant on the device after measuring each sheep. If the end of the tail meets at least the edge of the 0.7-inch recessed line closest to the lamb, it is deemed to have met the minimum standard.

Rule Enforcement Protocol

It is recommended that enforcement of the 0.7-inch minimum standard be done at the weigh-in of animals at the show by a three-person committee. One person should be designated to measure all lambs. If the initial measurement identifies a lamb as below the standard, the two other show officials will each make one measurement of the suspect animal. All three measurement officials must agree that the lamb is below the 0.7-inch minimum before the lamb is disqualified from exhibition.

Use of the DeTail Device Before the Show

It is recommended that exhibitors use the DeTail Device as they search for prospective show animals. If a lamb's tail does not measure 0.7 inch at weaning, purchasing the lamb for exhibition is not recommended. For lambs that measure between 0.7 and 1.4 inches at weaning, the closer the lamb is to the 1.4-inch mark, the more likely the lamb will measure at or greater than the 0.7-inch minimum standard at show time.

Using the DeTail Device at initial weigh-in at the start of the project can identify animals that might have problems meeting the 0.7-inch minimum standard at show time. However, making the final official measurement at this time is not recommended because lambs could experience re-docking before show time.

For more information, check the Web site
(www.wvu.edu/~agexten/youth/index.htm).

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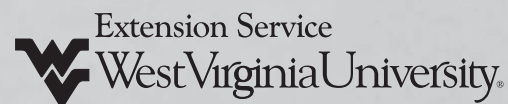
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Using the DeTail Device to Address Tail-docking in Show Lambs

For more information, contact:

Dr. Jean Woloshuk
WVU Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Agriculture
PO Box 6108, Morgantown, W.Va. 26506-6108
(304) 293-6131, ext. 4238
Jean.Woloshuk@mail.wvu.edu