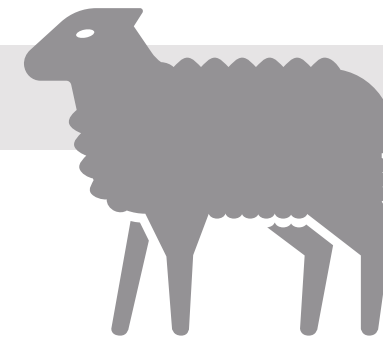


# Lamb life cycle



The following information is a basic timeline of lamb and sheep production. It is outlined on a month-by-month basis

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## September to November (Australian spring)

### Grass growth and young lambs available

In spring, the pasture in Australia is growing at its fastest.

Therefore, during the spring months of September to November, lambs are weaned and begin to put on weight. In Spring, lamb growth rates are at their highest.

In Spring, the supply of young lambs is at its highest.

### Spring shearing and crutching

Sheep that are not shorn in autumn are shorn in spring. Sheep that are shorn in autumn are crutched in spring. Crutching is the process of partially shearing a sheep to reduce the risk of flystrike.

## June to July (Australian winter)

### Lambs born and reared (period of low supply)

Lambs are born in June and July. During this period, very few lambs are sold as they are being born and have not been weaned yet. As a result, lamb supply is tightest in the Australian winter.

Similarly, not much mutton is sold in the Winter months as the ewes are rearing lambs in this period.



## January and February (Australian summer)

### Conception

In January and February ewes (female mother sheep) become pregnant. The gestational period for sheep is five months. Lambs conceived in January and February will be born in June and July of the same year.

In Australia, lamb is considered a summer dish.

## February and May (Australian summer and autumn)

### Lamb sales

Lambs born in the previous winter hit the market. These lambs are between 6–10 months old. These lambs have put on weight across spring and summer.

Mixed farms that also grow crops will sell their lambs in autumn to make space for the crops to be planted.

## March to May (Australian autumn)

### Autumn shearing

Merinos are a breed of sheep which are bred for their wool. Over 70% of all adult female sheep in Australia are Merinos. Merinos are either shorn in autumn or spring. Autumn shearing occurs between the months of March and May.