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Basic Sheep Info

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Icelandic Leadersheep

Photo courtesy of [Lavender Fleece](#)



Katahdin flock

- **Wait for me**

Sheep have a strong instinct to follow the sheep in front of them. When one sheep decides to go somewhere, the rest of the flock usually follows, even if it is not a good "decision." For example, sheep will follow each other to slaughter. If one sheep jumps over a cliff, the others are likely to follow. Even from birth, lambs are conditioned to follow the older members of the flock. This instinct is "hard-wired" into sheep. It's not something they "think" about.

- **Leadersheep**

There is a certain strain of sheep in Iceland known as leadersheep. Leadersheep are highly intelligent animals that have the ability and instinct to lead a flock home during difficult conditions. They have an exceptional ability to sense danger. There are many stories in Iceland of leadersheep saving many lives during the fall roundups when blizzards threatened shepherds and flocks alike.

[Learn more about Leadersheep=>](#)

- **Safety in numbers**

Sheep are gregarious. They will usually stay together in a group while grazing. A sheep will become highly agitated if it is separated from the group. It is the banding together in large groups which protects sheep from predators which will go after the outliers in the flock.

- **Social animals**

Sheep are a very social animal. Animal behaviorists note that sheep require the presence of at least 4 or 5 sheep which when grazing together maintain a visual link to each other.

- **Flocking together**

Flocking instinct is strongest in the fine wool breeds, but exists in all sheep breeds, to some extent. It is the sheep's flocking instinct that allows sheep herders to look after and move large numbers of sheep and lambs.

[Learn more about sheep behavior=>](#)

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