Hoop Structures for other livestock - webpage adaptation

Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture

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Recommended Citation
Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, "Hoop Structures for other livestock - webpage adaptation" (2017). Leopold Center Pubs and Papers. 217.
http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/leopold_pubspapers/217

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Hoop barns can be used successfully for raising sheep, horses, ostriches and other ratites, though they have traditionally been used for swine. The basics of hoop structure design for other livestock is similar to the structures for swine. Refer to the “Hoop Structures for Swine” article for details. Different animals have different requirements for their living environments. The following information is aimed at directing attention and consideration for these animals in order to help distinguish their hoop structure needs from those of more traditionally hoop-housed livestock.

**Sheep**

Sheep tend to thrive in cool but dry environments which hoop barns can provide when they are well-ventilated. Sidewall curtains and end wall openings help to promote good ventilation, thereby keeping the humidity and ammonia to minimum levels, which is important for animal comfort and health.

Table 1. Design data for sheep.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production Stage</th>
<th>Building Floor Space (sq. ft./head)</th>
<th>Feeder Space (in./head)</th>
<th>Water (head/bowl)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rams (180-300 lbs)</td>
<td>20 to 30</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Ewes (150-200 lbs)</td>
<td>12 to 16</td>
<td>16 to 20</td>
<td>4 to 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ewes with lambs</td>
<td>15 to 20</td>
<td>16 to 20</td>
<td>6 to 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeder lambs (30-110 lbs)</td>
<td>8 to 15</td>
<td>9 to 12</td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Be sure to maintain a suitably cool, dry environment.

The interior of sheep barns can be changed depending on your production needs.
Horses

Hoop barns work well as horse stables or even riding arenas. Stalls are generally 10x10 ft. for small animals and 12x12 ft. for larger livestock. Tie stalls or other arrangements will work admirably as well. Many hoop barns are available in excess of 100 ft. wide and will work for many competitive and indoor riding activities.

Available for purchase through MidWest Plan Service:

**Hoop Barns for Horses, Sheep, Ratites, and Multiple Utilization** (AED-52)
**Horse Facilities Handbook** (MWPS-60)

[https://www-mwps.sws.iastate.edu/catalog/livestock-operations/equine-horse](https://www-mwps.sws.iastate.edu/catalog/livestock-operations/equine-horse)
Ostriches

Ostriches and other ratites can be raised successfully in hoop barns. Outdoor runs allow birds space for exercise while the hoop structure gives them a sheltered area for feeding and nesting. Special considerations pertain to areas where birds might kick or get their heads caught in small openings.

Hoop barns for ostriches are used in tandem with outdoor pens to provide the best combination of movement and shelter.

The sheltered design of a hoop barn allows ostriches the comfort of feeding and nesting in safety.

The birds have plenty of room to exercise and move about outdoors.