

# LIVESTOCK GUARDING DOGS IN EXTENSIVE MOUNTAIN PRODUCTION

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The main objective of this project is to demonstrate that **livestock guarding dogs** are an **effective tool to prevent sheep predation** in the Catalan Pyrenees.



By: Xavi Ros Gaspà

**LIVESTOCK GUARDING DOGS HELP TO PROTECT SHEEP**

**... BUT SOME ISSUES MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT:**



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Their **PARENTS** must be **livestock guarding dogs**, so as they can inherit the abilities that make them good to protect the sheep (1).

They must have a good **SOCIALIZATION** with **sheep** starting at 8 weeks of life and also with **humans**. It will make them **trustworthy, attentive and protective** to the flock and it will prevent social problems due to human approach to the sheep.

The number of dogs needed to achieve good results depends on many factors. Having **at least TWO DOGS** is highly recommended, these way they can organize and one of them can remain with the flock while the other can chase the predator.

To increase the dog's effectiveness **OTHER MEASURES** like the presence of a **shepherd or sheep confinement** can be applied (2).

The predators of the Catalan Pyrenees can be difficult to fight, so as they are mainly **brown bears** (*Ursus arctos*), **wild dogs** (*Canis familiaris*) and **wolves** (*Canis lupus*). Therefore, applying all the measures mentioned will be needed to succeed.

(1): Coppinger R. 2002. Dogs: a new understanding of canine origin, behavior, and evolution / Raymond Coppinger and Lorna Coppinger. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

(2): Gehring TM, VerCauteren KC, Landry J-M. 2010. Livestock Protection Dogs in the 21st Century: Is an Ancient Tool Relevant to Modern Conservation Challenges? BioScience. 60(4):299-308. doi:10.1525/bio.2010.60.4.8.