



Minnesota Lamb & Wool
Producers Association

Shepherds' Bulletin

Fall 2004

MLWPA Officers

President – Bob Padula (320) 269-7973
1st VP - Jeremy Geske (952) 758-7938
2nd VP – Todd Schmidt (507) 377-1045
Treasurer - Jean Stark (320) 251-4237
Secretary - Sherry Stirling (651) 257-0827

MLWPA Regional Directors

North East – Werner Johnson (651) 257-0827
North West – Charles Stark (320) 251-4237
West Central – Mike Haubrich (320) 826-2526
South West - Doug Mathias (507) 376-9665
South East - Robin Schmidt (507) 377-1045
Metro - Patricia Anderson (952) 447-4148

Satellite Association Contacts

Cannon Valley Sheep Producers

Karen Geske (952) 758-7938

Crow River Lamb & Wool Producers

George Mead (763) 682-4626

Des Moines Valley Lamb & Wool

Gene Holmquist (507) 853-4409

Minnesota Hampshire Association

Jim Hickman (763) 682-3519

Minnesota Suffolk Sheep Association

Jerry Baumgartner (507) 335- 7739

South East Minnesota Sheep Producers

Todd Schmidt (507) 377-1045

Upper Midwest Dynamic Dorsets

Deric Sievert (507) 834-6851

West Central Sheep Producers

Judy Johnston (320) 589-1243

Country Meadow Farms Cooperative

Charles Christians (651) 633-7598

MLWPA Web Address:

www.mlwp.org

President's Notes - Bob Padula

Still no word from the USDA on the sign up for the Ewe Lamb Retention Program. Now it's been delayed for a comment period. "Good things come to those who wait" – so we will need to be patient. The signup period will likely be short, so you will want to maintain contact with your local FSA office for details and not miss out on this program.

Recently, ASI submitted a proposal to the USDA for a pilot program for sheep in the Livestock Risk Protection program. It would be similar to the other programs currently available for cattle and swine. Fifteen US Senators sent a letter to the USDA in support of the pilot program. Unfortunately, Minnesota's two Senators did not sign onto the bi-partisan letter. The MLWPA sent a letter to the USDA in support of pilot program. More information will be available at the annual convention on this program.

There are several meetings in Minnesota concerning the delisting of the timber wolf in the Eastern part of the United States. MLWPA will continue to work on behalf of the sheep producers to help out with predation issues.

One thing this newsletter struggles with is information to include. As members of MLWPA, you get the ASI Sheep Industry News every month, which contains the national issues. ASI also has a weekly email to members keeping them abreast of issues. The American Lamb Board also sends out information to growers. For this reason, we try not to duplicate articles. If you have topics that you want addressed, please let me know.

Finally, but certainly not the least, this issue contains information on the upcoming annual convention and trade show. The "theme" this year is on nutrition and details can be found in the newsletter. I look forward to seeing you at the convention and having a good time.

Saturday, Nov. 20

- 8:30 a.m.** **Registration begins & Trade Show Opens**
- 9:00 a.m. - noon** **Make It Yourself With Wool contest**– Donna Geiser, Coordinator
- 9:00 – 9:45 a.m.** **Session 7a.** *Lamb Marketing in the Twin Cities & American Lamb Board Update, Bill Brennan, Iowa Lamb Corporation & ALB member*
- youth** **Session 7b.** *Youth Sheep Show Ethics, Shirley Doering, Regional Extension Educator (tentative)*
- 10:00 - 10:20 a.m.** **Session 8a.** *Scrapie Update, Dr. Dee Heezen, USDA*
- 10 – 10:45 youth** **Session 8b.** *(tentative – topic undecided), Sherry Polzin, Glenwood Farm Educator*
- 10:30 - 11:45 a.m.** **Session 9a.** *Cooking With Lamb, Chef John Schumacher*
- 11 – 11:45 youth** **Session 9b.** *Exhibiting Fleeces, Dick Boniface*
- 12:00 p.m.** **Silver Bell Luncheon** – presentations by *2003 winners, Foster Mooney, moderator*
Recognizing 2004 Silver Bell winners and other honorees.
Representative Elaine Harder – receiving a “Friend of the Industry” award
- 1:30 p.m.** **Make it Yourself With Wool Fashion Show**
2004 Make It Yourself With Wool Winners
- 1:50 p.m.** **Final Drawings – trade show closes**
- 2:00 – 4:30 p.m.** **Sheep Quality Assurance Certification (for youth and adults)** – Dr. Cindy Wolf, DVM, U of MN
- 4:30 p.m.** **Farewell** – Home in time for chores.

**MAKE SURE YOU LET THE BOARD MEMBERS KNOW WHAT YOU
WOULD LIKE TO SEE AT THE 2005 ANNUAL MEETING IN FERGUS
FALLS!**

\$100 Suffolk Awards Available

The Minnesota Suffolk Sheep Association is offering two \$100 awards for Minnesota residents between the ages of 8 and 18 to be used towards the purchase of a registered Suffolk ewe at the MN Bred Ewe Sale in Rochester on November 27, or at the MN State Suffolk Sale in Windom next August. To enter, youth should write a short essay on why they deserve the award (and explain a little about their sheep project). Essays should be sent to Jere Rambow, 22695 Hwy 22 S., Litchfield, MN 55355 by November 15. All applicants will be contacted.

Can't attend the MLWPA meeting, but still want to be an active member?

How is this possible? By sending in your membership dues and registration form! It's that simple.

In order to have the 2005 membership directory out in a timely fashion, the deadline to be included is December 31st, 2004. *Don't worry, if you forget – We'll send you another reminder in December!*

Silver Bell Award nominations needed

The Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers Silver Bell Awards are given annually to one or two top sheep producers who are examples of excellence in modern sheep production methods and production levels. Selection criteria include flock size, lambing and weaning rate, lamb and wool production and net return per ewe. In addition, the selection committee will look at less tangible factors such as adopting new technology and a contagious enthusiasm for sheep production. Adult applicants must be members of the Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers Association.

There are separate awards for the following categories: Commercial Flock, Lamb Feeder, Purebred Flock, Youth, and Distinguished Service. Explanations and the selection criteria are available on the MLWP website at: www.mlwp.org.

The Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers are currently taking applications for the 2003 Junior and Senior Silver Bell Awards. Applications are due by November 1, 2004; awards will be presented at the Shepherd's Conference November 19 - 20, 2004 held in Mankato. Winners will be honored at the Silver Bell Luncheon on Nov. 20. The 2003 winners will also give presentations at that luncheon.

If you have an interest in applying or know someone whom you believe should apply, we encourage you to obtain and complete the application, which is available by contacting Foster Mooney at (651) 257-5079. Applications should be returned to Foster Mooney, 9710 Jewel Lane, Chisago City, MN 55013 by November 1, 2004. Application forms are also available on the website: www.mlwp.org.

Managing ewes just prior to lambing

The key to winter lambing in Minnesota is to be prepared. I have depended on marking harness for the last 6 years to calculate due dates (almost all my lambs are born within 3 days of their due date). This way I make sure my barn is properly set-up, all the lambing supplies are on hand, lambs are not born outside in the snow, ewes are shorn and vaccinated with CD&T, and the rations are managed properly.

Proper nutrition and good sanitation are the keys to better health and performance of your ewes and lambs. Close up ewes should be switched from grass hay to alfalfa, and the amount of grain increased. You can't skimp on feed costs at this critical time or you'll have problems with pregnancy toxemia, ewes that don't milk, and lambs that don't grow as well as they should. In addition o protein and energy, make sure there is plenty of calcium and phosphorous in the ewe ration.

Keep the drop pen well bedded and try to clean the lambing jugs between each ewe. I clean my jugs down to the cement, cover with barn lime, add a layer of sawdust to soak up moisture, and top with straw. I started using the sawdust a couple of years ago and found that I have less scours and pneumonia in the lambs, but I have seen a slight increase in mastitis in my ewes.

Lambs need to be dry and get a belly full of colostrum shortly after birth. Keep a supply of old bath towels in the lambing barn to help the ewes dry off their lambs if needed. Tube feed any lambs if you have any doubt about whether of not they are getting enough milk.

Don't hesitate to assist ewes with delivery. Most ewes don't need help, but the quicker you get the lambs out, the quicker they can be dried off and start nursing. If you wait too long you can lose the ewe and her lambs.

Jeremy Geske, MLWPA Vice-President

USDA ANNOUNCES LOAN DEFICIENCY PAYMENT SERVICE AVAILABLE ONLINE NATIONWIDE

Sept. 21, 2004 -- Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has launched a nationwide Electronic Loan Deficiency Payment (eLDP) service. The service will now enable producers across the country to request and receive LDP payments online.

"Expanding electronic government or "eGov" is a major element of the President Bush's management agenda to better serve individuals and businesses across the country," said Veneman. "The eLDP program allows producers to apply for and receive Loan Deficiency Payments online from remote locations such as their homes or offices."

In January, USDA launched its eGov initiative by unveiling a new website, which was the first phase in efforts to make the website more powerful and accessible to USDA information and science. Features are continually being added such as the Customer Statement in March, which puts a whole range of USDA services and programs into a single report at the fingertips of agricultural producers. Farmers are able to view their contracts in various conservation programs, payments under commodity programs and information on loans and crop insurance.

Farmers participating in the eLDP service will no longer have to travel to USDA Service Centers to receive their benefits. Payments are automatically deposited in the producer's bank account, reducing paperwork while speeding up payment processing.

To participate with the wool marketing loan program, sheep producers must meet all eligibility requirements for marketing assistance loans and LDPs for wool, mohair and unshorn pelts.

When local market prices are less than the marketing assistance loan rate, producers can choose to receive LDPs for their crops in lieu of marketing assistance loans. An LDP is based upon the quantity of the commodity pledged as collateral for a loan multiplied by the difference between the local marketing assistance loan rate and the posted county price for the commodity.

The voluntary eLDP service has stringent security measures to protect participants' private information. As with traditional LDPs, only authorized federal employees have access to information that is submitted electronically. All participating producers must have an e-mail address and set up a customer profile through their local USDA Service Center that validates their farming and crop information.

To register, producers can go to: www.sc.egov.usda.gov and complete form CCC-634-E, "Request for Electronic Loan Deficiency Payment Services" or they can obtain the form at USDA Service Centers. Eligible producers must also have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/> followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification.

MINNESOTA LAMB AND WOOL PRODUCERS, INC.

Board of Directors meeting

September 25, 2004 Highlights

Vice President Jeremy Geske called the meeting to order.

Board members present were: Karen Geske, Warner Johnson, Sherry Stirling, George Mead, Gene Holmquist, Todd Schmidt, Robin Schmidt, Jerry Baumgartner, Doug Mathias, Chuck Stark, Jean Stark, Mike Haubrich, Roger Karstens, and Jim Hickman.

Approved Secretary's minutes for Board of Directors meeting on June 12, 2004.

Treasurer's report was distributed and approved. Current balance in checking - \$3,258.82.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Newsletter – deadline for next newsletter is October 1st; November conference information included.

Membership – Consensus was that a “renewal” notice mailing should be done in addition to conference announcement. Notice should go to former members who might rejoin.

MN State Fair Reports

Commercial Booth - Patty Anderson submitted a written report. This year's sales with tax were \$41,511.17. All vendors were charged 20% across the board. Price on Lamb Country cookbooks was changed from \$14.95 to \$9.95. Patty has all the booth materials stored at her house. There was a shoplifting incident - \$300 hand-knit poncho.

Action taken by board related to State Fair included:

Approved motion to reimburse vendor for stolen poncho at wholesale price.

Approved motion to reimburse Gene Holmquist for the use of his trailer for storage.

Approved motion to pay the Commercial Booth carpet bill.

Board commended Patty Anderson for her efforts in regard to the State Fair Commercial Booth and approved a stipend.

Sheep barn rules enforcement and cleanliness were discussed again.

Baa Booth written report listing individuals to be paid in conjunction with Baa Booth was provided by Doris Mold. One lamb died while at the booth. There was no report concerning number of volunteers who participated. Motion approved to reimburse Cindy Schneider lamb at Baa Booth. Plans are to revamp the booth before next fair. Roger to contact barn superintendent (Steve Pooch) about repainting the booth, status of wool display boxes, and moving MLWP display board currently in superintendents office to booth. Sherry will work with Roger to repaint booth.

Directory-Jean Stark, Jeremy Geske and Sheryl Hoffman will coordinate. Ads should go to Jeremy who will scan them into directory pages. Judy Johnston has relocated; need new West Central Sheep Association representative.

(MLWPA September 25, 2004 Board meeting Highlights Continued)

Lamb Ambassadors-need to be paid their stipends. George Mead and Chuck Christians to get break out of funds to Jean Stark. Warner Johnson passed around news article about Sheilana Sperry – one of the lamb ambassadors.

Annual meeting/Convention-Jeremy reviewed tentative schedule. Foster Mooney coordinating Silver Bell awards and lunch. Gene H. reported about 15 vendors expected at \$55/booth. Rooms are \$74.00 each and need to be reserved by Oct 19th, phone: 507-625-9333.

Awards-Retiring State Representative Elaine Harder to receive “Friend of Industry” award. Any other nomination – get information to Jeremy.

Legislative-issues include ram testing; ewe replacement incentives; and timber wolf delisting. It was the consensus of the group that members of the Governors Blue Ribbon panel on Agriculture should be invited to our conference. Jeremy to follow-up with invitations once conference is finalized.

Spring Sheep Workshop – locations to be considered are McLeod and Lac qui Parle county fairgrounds.

MnFRAC-Jeremy Geske has been attending meetings in Farm Bureau capacity. Sandy Strokesberry had not been attending meetings-do we need a different appointment?

MLBA-written reports of previous meetings were passed around by Gene Holmquist.

OLD BUSINESS:

Board Responsibilities-Written lists of board duties and any bylaw, policy manual, or timeline changes should be forwarded to Jeremy. Two year term limits for President and Vice Presidents were discussed. Bylaws in regard to this were reviewed. Consensus of the group was that Bylaws should not be changed but rather that this should be a “Policy Manual” item. Jeremy to write up for next Board meeting.

Farm Bureau Sheep Tour was held in July and included a tour of the Faribault Woolen Mill. Approximately 60 people attended.

Farm Fest – Mike and Gene reported that MLWP participation was positive and should be continued in future years. New wool mulch product done by Floodwood Company and provided by AURI was favorably received. Booth expenses were covered by AURI.

Budget for 2005:

Budget for next year to be finalized at next Board meeting.

Motion to pay ASI dues of \$4,034.00 prior to October 31, 2004 was approved. Early payment results in 2% savings.

Consensus was to increase Commercial Booth budget expenses for 2005 to \$5,000; to set Wool Mulch budget expenses at \$500 and to set Starter Flock budget expenses at \$700-\$100 for each satellite.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ag Ambassador Conference: Approved motion to require Silver Bell awardee to attend Ag Ambassador Conference in 2005 and provide \$250 toward costs approved.

Shearing School/ Pools: There was discussion about “shearing school” or shearing pools for small flocks. Consensus was that it is too difficult to organize and is not viewed as a positive event by shearers.

ASI Predator Management Committee. There was discussion of nominating MLWP member to serve on ASI predator management committee specifically relating to timber wolf delisting. It was approved to add \$600 to Legislative line in 2005 budget for travel expenses to committee meetings.

Wool Mulch Project: Sherry reported that based on discussion with AURI (Al Doering) is not economically feasible to purchase Minnesota produced wool (about 40¢/lb), ship and scour it either at Faribault or Texas (an additional \$1.50/lb), and then ship and needle-punched it either in Ohio or Texas (an additional \$2.00/lb) and have a product that is reasonably priced for mass marketing (results in product costing over \$1.00/sq ft). Alternative is to pursue using carding waste wool and have it blended with wood fiber shavings at Floodwood, MN – this will produce a mulch product (which can also be spray-dyed) for about 10¢ square foot.

Motion approved to allow Sherry to submit a wool mulch marketing grant on behalf of MLWP to National Sheep Industry Improvement Center. Jeremy volunteered to assist with writing grant proposal.

Promotional Items: Mike presented three new promotional items from the ASI – meat thermometer, refrigerator thermometer, and squeezable toy sheep - all which could be stamped with MLWP logo. Motion approved to purchase 150 meat thermometers at \$2.19 each and 150 toy sheep at \$2.00 each.

2006 Shepherds Holiday Conference: There was discussion about potential sites for 2006 conference. Consensus was to look at hotels in both Rochester and Marshall. Gene Holmquist will follow-up.

Next meeting will be Thursday evening at 6:30 pm - November 18th at the Best Western in Mankato.

Just for Fun

"Mr. Clark, I have reviewed this case very carefully," the divorce court Judge said, "And I've decided to give your wife \$775 a week."

"That's very fair, your honor," the husband said. "And every now and then I'll try to send her a few bucks myself."

A little boy went up to his mother and asked: "Mom, where did all of my intelligence come from?"

The mother replied. "Well son, you must have got it from your father, because I still have mine."

Moe: "My wife got me to believe in religion."

Joe: "Really?"

Moe: "Yeah. Until I married her I didn't believe in hell."

Two guys were discussing popular family trends on sex, marriage, and values. Stu said, *"I didn't sleep with my wife before we got married, did you?"*

LeRoy replied, *"I'm not sure, what was her maiden name?"*

From the MN Board of Animal Health

Dear sheep producer,

Minnesota has recently received additional funding from the United States Department of Agriculture to accelerate Scrapie eradication in the State. Since rams directly influence Scrapie resistance in replacement stock, the funding will be used to reimburse flock owners for the cost to genotype their sire rams. The goal is for more flocks to use rams with resistant genotypes. Producers that use genetically resistant rams improve their flock’s overall resistance to Scrapie. A ram’s genotype can be determined from a blood sample.

This project will pay for the laboratory test fees and shipping costs to genotype up to 10 rams per flock on a first come first serve basis until funding runs out or through May 2005, whichever comes first. Their fees for running the test range from \$11-\$35 per sample. Producers will be reimbursed up to \$15 per sample. For this project, the blood samples will be collected by USDA-APHIS or Minnesota Board of Animal Health field personnel. Please note that all rams tested must have official Scrapie ID tags in place on the day of your appointment. If you need more tags, contact Lindsey Aipperspach at (651)296-2942 ext. 30, or toll free within Minnesota at 1-866-873-2824.

If you choose to participate, please contact the field person in your area to schedule an appointment. Samples will be shipped to an accredited laboratory and the results will be forwarded in 2-3 weeks. Your field contact will help you interpret your results so that you may use them in your breeding program.

Sincerely,

Kristine Petrini, DVM
 Minnesota Board of Animal Health
 Assistant Director
 Ruminant Division

How is genetic resistance to Scrapie determined?

Genetic testing, also referred to as DNA testing or genotyping, can be done to determine a sheep’s genetic resistance to Scrapie. Genetic resistance is determined by gene factors called codons. We will be testing for 2 of the most important codons relating to Scrapie resistance, codons 171 and 136. All that is required in order to run the test is a blood sample. The test indicates an animal’s *susceptibility* to Scrapie should it become exposed to the disease. **It does not indicate the presence or absence of the actual Scrapie disease agent.**

In general, codon 171 yields ‘Q’ or ‘R’ factors and codon 136 yields ‘A’ or ‘V’ factors. The Scrapie gene is made up of 2 of each of these codons in any one of the combinations listed below. It is desired to breed with rams that have at least 1 ‘R’ factor. Selecting and retaining rams with ‘RR’ in their genetic code will have the most impact on developing a Scrapie resistant flock.

RRAA – Scrapie resistant genotype	QQAA – highly susceptible to Scrapie
QRAA – rarely susceptible to Scrapie	QQAV – highly susceptible to Scrapie
QRAV – susceptible to some strains of Scrapie	QQVV – highly susceptible to Scrapie

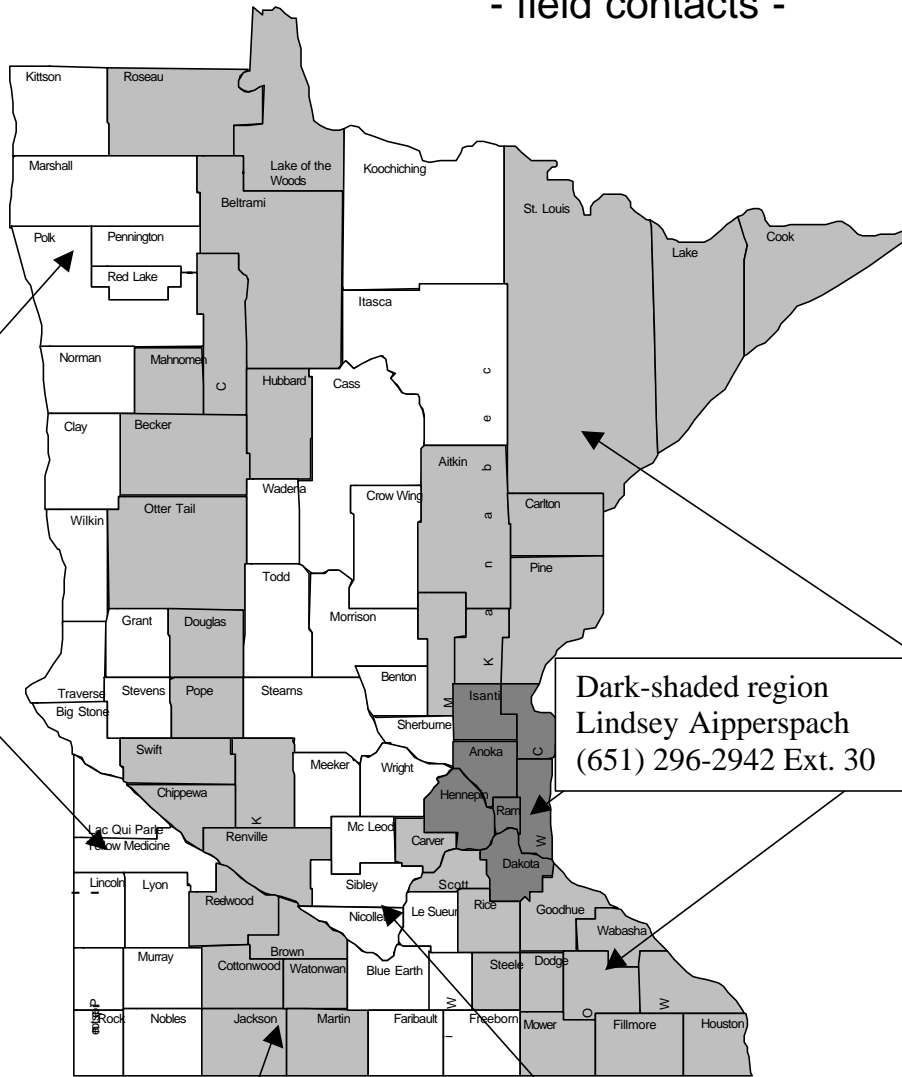
What do I do with the test results?

The laboratory will forward results to you and the MN Board of Animal Health office.

Based on the test results, you can make decisions on a particular ram’s value in your breeding program based on the level of genetic resistance that it will pass on to its offspring. Ideally, retaining rams with ‘RR’ in their genetic code will have the most impact on developing a Scrapie resistant flock. Ideally, ‘QQ’ rams will not be used or phased out during the next season.

Your field contact can help you interpret the results.

MN Ram Testing Project - field contacts -



Non-shaded region
Dr. Steve Just
(651) 270-2999

Light shaded region
Dr. Dee Heezen
(651) 270-7232

Dark-shaded region
Lindsey Aipperspach
(651) 296-2942 Ext. 30

Shaded Region
Renée LeFever
(651) 324-7586

Non-shaded region
Kelly Voge
(651) 260-4570

Calendar of Events Year 2004

- October 31 Halloween - a "scary day" for many Kids
- November 2 Election day - a scary day for most Adults
- Nov 19-20 2004 MLWPA Convention & Trade Show
Best Western Inn --- Mankato, MN
- Nov. 27 Minnesota Bred Ewe Sale,
Olmsted Co. Fairgrounds
Rochester, MN. Show at 9:00 a.m.
Sale at 1:00 p.m.

Year 2005

- January 6-23 National Western Stock Show
National Western Complex
Denver, Colorado
See www.NationalWestern.com
For details of events
- January 26 - 29 ASI Annual Convention - Reno, NV
- Nov 18 - 19 2005 MLWPA Convention & Trade Show
Fergus Falls, MN

Future Newsletter Schedule:

- Dec/Jan Conference Highlights and Upcoming
Legislative Issues
- March/April Spring Issue
- June/July State Fair Issue
- Sept/Oct Conference and Trade Show

*MLWPA Newsletter
1507 7th St NE
New Prague, MN 56071*