



Minnesota Lamb & Wool Producers Association

Shepherds' Bulletin

Summer / Fall 2005

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MLWPA Web Address:

www.mlwp.org

President's Notes - Bob Padula

The 2005 Minnesota legislative session ended later than scheduled this year. I can assure you, the sheep industry is not to blame --- as very little legislation was directed towards our industry.

A bill with direct impact to some would have allowed counties the ability to have bounties on coyotes. Apparently, coyotes that eat pets or live near daycare centers are starting to cause concern. Surprisingly, it passed in the first round in the house and was defeated by the senate. At a time when local control was front and center during legislative debates, the DNR was again leading the charge to maintain their control over your land and property.

Personally, I was outraged by Ron Schara taking cheap shots at our industry in one of his columns. He asked what responsibility do sheep producer's have in stopping predation by coyotes? We aren't the ones pushing for increased habitat to harbor predators, he is. If coyotes killed his old black lab he might sing a different tune.

Would bounties on coyotes be the answer to our predation problems? Of course not, but there are no state programs for predator control for sheep producers – other than a small amount federal money for wolf predation. In fact, we can't even use artificial lights at night for hunting predators. No programs exist!

There is a direct conflict of interest with the DNR promoting coyote habitat and controlling predation. Maybe it's time the Department of Agriculture is put in charge of predator control programs in Minnesota. This would require legislation and funding to create new programs at a time when the state is trying to promote livestock expansion. Proactive programs for the protection of livestock would benefit all species.

The Genetics of Scrapie Susceptibility

Scrapie is an infectious disease; a susceptible animal must come in contact with the disease agent to become infected. Scrapie does not occur in any sheep of any genotype that has not been exposed to the infectious agent. However, once exposed to the agent, the genotype of the animal has a profound effect on which sheep may become infected and eventually die. The interaction between the scrapie agent and host genetics is not fully understood. The following is a summary of the current knowledge. It is possible that additional genes or sites on the prion gene will be identified that will also impact susceptibility.

General Background

To understand the genetic component of scrapie, it is necessary to review some of the basics of molecular genetics. In the 1950's Watson and Crick discovered that the genetic code was contained in the double helix molecule of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA). The basic unit of DNA consists of three chemical elements (a nitrogenous base, a phosphate group, and a deoxyribose sugar molecule). This unit is known as a nucleotide. DNA is present in all nucleated cells of the body and is passed to subsequent generations in the eggs and sperm of mammalian species. Subsequently, it was discovered that DNA encodes proteins. Proteins are composed of amino acid chains. Scientists have determined that DNA codes the amino acid sequence of proteins through sets of three nucleotide bases. Each set of three nucleotide bases is called a codon; each codon codes for one amino acid. Chromosomes are made up of DNA strands. Chromosomes always occur in pairs one from the sire and one from the dam. The two chromosomes that make up a chromosome pair code for the same proteins.

The amino acid sequence that makes up a specific protein usually remains constant from generation to generation and from animal to animal within a species. Rarely, a change occurs at a codon site resulting in a different amino acid sequence, this variability in amino acid sequence is known as polymorphism. In most instances, polymorphism is thought to have little effect on the resulting protein produced. However, in the case of the normal prion protein (PrP cellular), polymorphism can have a profound effect on scrapie susceptibility.

All animals that have been studied have a gene that codes for the normal prion protein. The function of normally occurring cellular prion protein is unknown.

Understanding the Scrapie Agent's Interaction with the Host Genotype

The current state of knowledge about what causes scrapie must be examined to understand how different codons influence susceptibility to scrapie. Various causes of scrapie have been theorized; however, a majority of scientists believe that the causative agent is an abnormal form of a normally occurring cellular prion protein known as PrP scrapie. PrP cellular, the normally occurring cellular prion protein, is found in all tissues that have been examined. Stanley Prusiner received the Nobel Prize in 1998 for his work supporting this theory. The basis of this theory is that an abnormally conformed prion protein, PrP scrapie, serves as a template to influence a geometrical conformation change in the normal PrP cellular produced by the exposed animal. This abnormal protein (PrP scrapie) accumulates. After a period of months and more often years, it causes nervous system dysfunction and, eventually, the death of the animal. The abnormal prion proteins (PrP scrapie) may be found in the nervous system, the spleen, lymph nodes, placenta, intestine, blood, pancreas, ovary, and liver of infected sheep.

The gene that encodes the normal prion protein has polymorphisms at codons 136, 154, and 171 that influence the ability of the prion cellular protein structure to be geometrically altered by the PrP scrapie template when the animal is exposed to it.

At this time, no such polymorphisms have been identified for goats. All goats, therefore, must be assumed to be susceptible.

Genetic Susceptibility to Scrapie

- Codon 136 codes for either the amino acid valine (V) or alanine (A);
- Codon 154 codes for either histidine (H) or arginine (R); and
 - Codon 154 plays a minor role in scrapie susceptibility and is not often used in the United States. Codon 154 is not a consideration in the US Scrapie Eradication Program at this time.
- Codon 171 codes for glutamine (Q), arginine (R), lysine (K), or histidine (H).
 - The presence of H at 171 is presently thought to be equivalent to Q for scrapie resistance. K at 171 has recently been found in a few Barbados sheep, its effect on scrapie resistance has not been studied.

US sheep have 3 major forms (alleles) of the scrapie susceptibility gene: AQ, AR, and VQ and 2 minor forms AH and AK. The VQ allele occurs at a significantly lower frequency than AQ or AR. For the purpose of this discussion H or K at 171 will be considered equivalent to Q. Each sheep inherits two copies of each gene and thus two alleles (one from each parent). Codons 136 and 171 are close together on the same chromosome so the offspring will always receive one of the alleles of each parent and not a mixture of the two. In the United States, codon 171 appears to be the major determinant of relative scrapie susceptibility. In some flocks, codon 136 may also play a role.

Each gene has a pair of alleles, one on each chromosome of a chromosome pair. Alleles reside in the same site on each chromosome. When only codons 171 and 136 are considered and H or K at 171 is treated as a Q at 171, there are only four combinations that need to be considered in order to eliminate scrapie from a flock AARR, AAQR, AVQR, and QQ.

1. AA RR sheep are nearly completely resistance to scrapie. Only one case (in Japan) has ever been reported. These sheep are highly unlikely to carry or transmit scrapie;
2. AA QR sheep are rarely susceptible. In rare cases, AA QR sheep in Europe have become infected. Most but not all cases have been in flocks with high scrapie prevalence. It is unknown whether infected AA QR sheep can transmit the disease. The risk from exposed AA QR sheep is probably minor, since infected AA QR sheep are rare and it is unusual for PrP scrapie to be found outside the brain of these sheep;
3. AV QR sheep are somewhat susceptible to some scrapie strains. Two cases have been identified in the US. The risk from exposed AV QR sheep is probably minor, since infected AV QR sheep are rare and it is unusual for PrP scrapie to be found outside the brain of these sheep. AV QR sheep are significantly less susceptible to the scrapie strains that affect them than are the QQ sheep that are affected by these strains
4. QQ Sheep (AA QQ, AV QQ, and VV QQ) are susceptible to scrapie and can transmit the disease to susceptible flock mates.

**For a list of accredited labs for Scrapie Genotyping, go to:
<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/nahps/scrapie/app-labs-genotype-test.html>**

Genetics as a Tool for Eradicating Scrapie

Genetic selection is being used as the primary means of scrapie control in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. In the United States, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is using genetic testing to determine which exposed animals must be removed or restricted in affected flocks and which are free to move unrestricted. APHIS policy recognizes the importance of codon 171 and the potential importance of codon 136 in the transmission of scrapie in the United States.

The National Genetics Based Flock Clean-up Plan allows affected producers to retain or move RR sheep, AA QR sheep, and most AV QR sheep without restriction. It also calls for the removal or restriction of all exposed QQ ewes, exposed female goats, and the female offspring of scrapie positive female animals. In a minority of flocks where positive AV QR sheep are identified, exposed AV QR ewes will be removed or restricted. In other flocks when requested by the owner APHIS will remove exposed AV QR ewes for study. All scrapie positive and suspect animals must be removed. In the unlikely event that scrapie is found in a sheep that is neither QQ nor AV QR, additional animals may be required to be removed or restricted.

In a small percentage of flocks that are either heavily infected, that have cleaned up and then had a recurrence of scrapie in animals born on the premises, or where the epidemiology is different from that seen in most flocks additional animals may be purchased for study and/or additional restrictions may be placed on the flock.

Owners of affected flocks that comply with the requirements of the National Genetics Based Flock Clean-up Plan are eligible for indemnification of any animals that are removed as part of the flock plan in accordance with Title 9 Code of Federal Regulations, part 54. Flocks whose owners do not retain restricted female animals will not be considered exposed flocks once they have completed the flock cleanup plan. If an owner elects to retain restricted female animals, additional restrictions will be placed on the flock. These flocks will be considered exposed flocks until all such animals are removed or a five-year monitoring plan is completed.

Other Tools for Eradicating Scrapie

In addition to a genetics based flock clean up plan, USDA is using several tools to eradicate scrapie. These include (1) finding infected and source flocks through the testing of exposed animals traced out of known infected flocks and, beginning in April 2003, through slaughter surveillance, (2) identification of sheep and goats in commerce to allow for effective tracing of scrapie positive and exposed animals, (3) restricting the movement of genetically susceptible exposed animals, and (4) educating producers, veterinarians, and others about clinical signs of scrapie.

Farm Bureau: The Voice of Agriculture

Minnesota Farm Bureau is the state's largest general farm organization with more than 33,000 members belonging to 78 county Farm Bureaus. We give you a voice, by taking producer/member developed policy and using it to direct our legislative efforts. Programs for Young Farmers and Ranchers help develop leadership skills and improve farm management. Promotion and Education efforts involve members with programs such as Ag in the Classroom and safety camps for children.

For more information go to www.fbm.org



Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation ®

From the Minnesota Board of Animal Health

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT RULES WITHOUT A PUBLIC HEARING

The Minnesota Board of Animal Health intends to adopt rules without a public hearing following the procedures set forth in the rules of the Office of Administrative Hearings. You may submit written comments on the proposed rules and may also submit a written request that a hearing be held on the rules until October 12, 2005.

Proposed Rules Governing Scrapie Eradication in Sheep and Goats, including associated Proposed Rules for Importation of Sheep and Goats, Proposed Amendments to the Rules Governing the Exhibition of Sheep or Goats Proposed Amendments to Rules Governing the Public Exhibition of Livestock and Poultry in Minnesota, and the Proposed Repeal of Minnesota Rules.

Agency Contact Person. Comment or questions on the rules and written requests for a public hearing on the rules must be submitted to the agency contact person. The agency contact person is: Kris Petrini at the Minnesota Board of Animal Health, 90 W Plato Blvd, St. Paul, MN 55107, (651) 296-2942 x 31, fax: (651) 296-7417, kris.petrini@bah.state.mn.us. TTY users may call the Board at (800) 627-3529.

A complete copy of this notice and the proposed rules changes can be accessed on the MLWPA web-site at www.mlwp.org

Free genotyping available for MN ewes and rams!

Genetic testing can help producers develop flocks that are more resistant to Scrapie. Minnesota's sheep genotype project* now offers genotype testing for up to 20 ewes or rams per farm.

The project will pay for the following:

- blood sample collection by our field staff
- shipping charges
- reimbursement for test fees of up to \$15 per test

The results are for your own management purposes only. Our field staff can help you interpret the results and make recommendations, but no regulatory action is required.

** funding for this project has been made available through a cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture and are available for a limited time. Please refer to map on page 6 for contact information.*

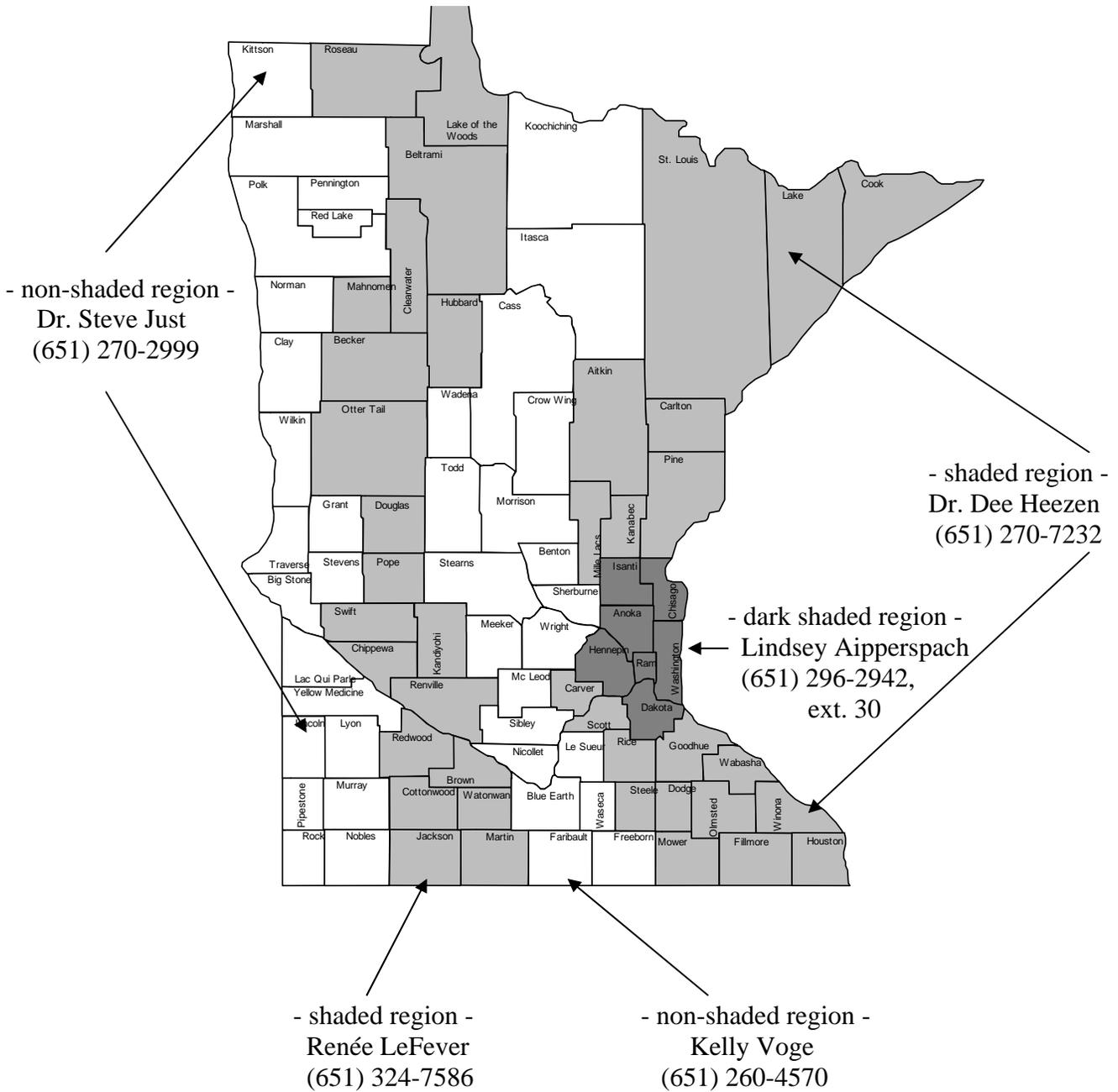
The Minnesota Project started September 20, 2004 and has conducted 288 farm visits testing 3,142 sheep as of August 5, 2005.

Genetic Summary: QQ: 839 = 27% QR: 1472 = 47% RR: 831 = 26%

At \$15 per test, this represents over \$47,000 worth of testing to help MN producers. This does not include staff time or expenses! Your \$35 MLWPA dues help lobby for funding to continue this and other government programs.

What do I, the producer, need to do in order to participate in this project?

- apply Scrapie tags in the ears of all animals you wish to test (call our office to place your order)
- have help available and make any adjustments needed for handling the animals at testing
- write a check for the test fees on the test day. You will be reimbursed within 30 days



Call today to schedule an appointment. For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact the designated field person in your county.

State Fair 4-H Sheep Show Highlights

The Grand Champion market lamb was exhibited by Jessica Oelke of Douglas County. Jessica’s lamb was purchased in the Purple Ribbon Auction for a new record price of \$4,350 by Northern Starr Livestock. The Reserve Champion market lamb was shown by April Myers of Renville County. A Suffolk yearling ewe exhibited by Dustin Vieths of Goodhue County was named Supreme Champion breeding ewe.

More state fair results can be found at <http://www.fourh.umn.edu/fairresults/newsreleases.html>

Lamb & Wool Industry Youth take part in Agricultural Event

Minnesota youth with an interest in agriculture took part in the two-day Minnesota Ag Ambassador Institute (MAAI) last month in St. Paul. This year, 32 individuals representing lamb & wool, pork, dairy, beef, and FFA took part in this agricultural leadership program. Event co-sponsors are the Minnesota Pork Board (MPB) and Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation.

Representing the Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers Association were Sheilina Sperry of Center City and Laura Drewry of Farmington.

Sperry and Drewry took part in workshops by WCCO television newscaster Dennis Douda, who gave tips on doing media interviews, and Minnesota Department of Agriculture Commissioner Gene Hugoson, who spoke on fuel production from Minnesota-grown crops. Keith Soltwedel from John Deere's marketing department shared the high standards the company has for its employees and its products, and Susan Anderson, University of Minnesota Ag Literacy Instructor, taught the group various ag education projects to incorporate into elementary classroom visits.

The participants also visited Twin Cities' businesses, government agencies, and civic clubs where they gave team presentations on Minnesota agriculture.

An agricultural leaders' panel, consisting of Fairmont pork producer Julie Becker, Minnesota Agri-Growth Council Executive Director Daryn McBeth, and New Prague soybean producer Susan Meyer, discussed the challenges and opportunities within agriculture.

This is the ninth year of the Minnesota Agriculture Ambassador Institute. The Minnesota Livestock Breeders Association, Minnesota Corn Research and Promotion Council, Minnesota Soybean Research and Promotion Council, Midwest Dairy Association, AgStar Financial Service and Minnesota Lamb and Wool Growers also provided support.



Attendees of the 2005 Minnesota Ag Ambassador Institute included representatives from the sheep, beef, dairy, and swine industries.



Karen Richter, Minnesota Pork Board Education Committee Co-chair (left) and Kevin Paap, Minnesota Farm Bureau Vice President, congratulate Laura Drewry of Farmington and Sheilina Sperry of Center City, on their participation in the Minnesota Ag Ambassador Institute.

ASI Contracted by Natick to Develop a New Wool/Aramid Fabric

DENVER, Colo. – The American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) was notified on July 18 that it had been awarded a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) contract from the U.S. Army Natick Soldier Systems Center (NSC) in Natick, Mass., for the development of a knitted flame-retardant fabric.

The specific objective of this project is to develop a fabric for next-to-skin wear that enhances flame protection for the wearer. The fabric will consist of an intimate blend of 50-percent wool and 50 percent aramid fibers. The addition of the wool in the blend will give the wearer comfort without sacrificing the desired thermal protection offered by the currently used 100-percent aramid fabric and will also provide the military a less expensive alternative.

The mission of NSC is to assure maximum survivability, supportability, sustainability and combat-effectiveness of individual soldiers and crews on the battlefield under world-wide environmental extremes. Natick is deeply committed to making soldiers, and all service members, the best clothed, equipped, sheltered and fed in the world.

The development of this new wool/aramid fabric has captured the attention of the U.S. military. This is the second contract that ASI has received through Natick for the research and development of a family of new woolen products. The first resulted in the development of a woven wool/aramid fabric, while this product will be created using a knit construction.

This fabric will have widespread application possibilities for the military, as well as for commercial users. ASI understands that it is the intent of the military to trial this fabric as an under-layer garment for its soldiers.



Mitch Driggers, government procurement consultant for the American Sheep Industry Association, is shown wearing a military flight suit constructed from the woven wool / aramid fabric.

State 4-H Livestock Judging Contest Results

Katie Mack of Goodhue County was high individual of the contest, leading her team to a first place finish over the teams from Jackson County and Dakota County. All of the top 10 individuals came from either Goodhue, Jackson, or Dakota County.

Goodhue County will represent Minnesota at the national contest in Louisville. Jackson County will travel to Denver, while Dakota County will compete in Kansas City.

The top 3 individuals in sheep judging were: Greg Hovel of Goodhue County, Brad Lanoue of Lyon County, and Dan Fox of Dakota County.

Jackson County won the intermediate division, followed by Dakota and Pipestone. Garrett Weber of Lincoln County was high individual. The top 3 in sheep were Weber, Kate Rentschler of Jackson County, and Trevon Bargfrede of Jackson County.

Promotional Items Available From the American Lamb Board

American Lamb Metal Sign

American Lamb Metal Sign The Fresh American Lamb seal is becoming widely recognized by consumers, chefs, and retailers. This 12” by 18” metal sign is the perfect way to promote Fresh American Lamb on your ranch or at your local farmers market. (Each sign is \$20.00 and includes shipping.)

American Lamb Retail Cuts Poster

American Lamb Retail Cuts Poster The 24” x 36” poster lists the most common lamb cuts along with recommended preparation techniques. (The first poster is \$10.00 and each additional poster is \$5.00, includes shipping.)

American Lamb Cuts Flyer

This 8.5” by 11” flyer features the most common foodservice cuts of American Lamb and how to prepare them. The back of the flyer has the nutritional information for each cut. (Up to 100 copies are available at no charge. Additional copies may be obtained by calling the office. Shipping charges will apply.)

These and other items are available through the American Lamb Board (866-327-LAMB) or www.americanlambboard.org.

Sheep and Goat Death Loss

<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/reports/nassr/livestock/pgg-bbsg/predan05.pdf>

Every 5 years, the USDA reports sheep and lamb losses from animal predators and non-predator causes in the United States. In 2004 predator losses totaled 224,200 nationally and represented 37.3% of all the total losses and represented a loss of \$18.3 million to farmers and ranchers. Coyotes and dogs caused the majority of losses - with coyotes alone accounting for more than 60% of the total sheep losses from predators.

Minnesota lost 3,100 sheep and lambs to predators in 2004 with a value of \$163,000 and ***Coyotes alone accounted for 200 mature sheep and 400 lamb losses in Minnesota.*** These figures are misleading - the USDA used a market weight of 60 lbs and market prices to determine the financial losses and only losses attributed to coyotes were used in that 600 head loss figure. Income lost to Minnesota producers is actually much higher – we depend upon the total value of a market lamb to help pay for the expenses related to our sheep operations. We don't just lose a 60 pound feeder lamb when predators take our stock – we lose the income from the lamb we would sell or keep for a replacement. We also suffer non-death loss financial burdens because of predators – such as reduced rate of gain and repairs and maintenance to fencing.

The report also details other losses of sheep and lambs, not predator related. In the past, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and animal rights groups have used this information to convince people that predation is not a problem for the sheep industry. On more than one occasion, I've heard them quote the reports and then say “Dogs kill more sheep than coyotes – it's not a big problem for the sheep industry.” So what? Legally we can hold the dog owner responsible for the killing and losses. No one pays us for our losses from coyotes which the DNR and state both promote and protect. We lose enough sheep and lambs without predators – we don't need additional burdens.

WOOL ENCAPSULATION PROCESS SUCCESSFUL

Denver, Colo. - As part of its continued efforts to develop additional uses for and new products from American wool, the American Sheep Industry Association's (ASI) Wool Council has been instrumental in adapting the encapsulation process for use on wool and wool-blend fabrics.

Encapsulation is the process developed by Nextec, which uses a polymer resin applied to fabrics under extreme tension and pressure. The resin completely bonds with the fibers within the treated fabric to produce new, desirable characteristics. For example, water repellency is greatly enhanced without completely eliminating breath-ability.

"Wool products which have undergone the encapsulation process are most appropriately used in the outerwear and outdoor-sports markets; markets such as hiking, fishing, hunting and skiing," commented Parvez Mehta, Ph.D., ASI product development consultant. "The product offers protection against rain and wind, dust and dirt, and hazardous liquid spills while continuing to allow body moisture to pass through, providing comfort to the wearer."

ASI has selected and supplied the first wool and wool-blend fabrics to be treated with encapsulation, all with complete success.

As with the other products and processes, encapsulated-wool fabrics have come to the attention of the U.S. Army. Combat uniform designers are always looking for fabrics or finishes that can help keep the soldier dry and warm, while being quiet. The rustle of a crisp fabric is a very dangerous noise in many combat situations.

"Silence, mobility, moisture permeability and comfort are some of the added characteristics applied to wool fabrics that have been introduced to the encapsulation process," stated Mehta.

Presently, the army is beginning a large-scale test of a variety of encapsulated-wool fabrics, all ASI designed and supplied by contract to the Army. Initial, limited testing of encapsulated-wool fabrics suggests another successful product.

Improved Shearer Database on ASI Web Site

As many are aware, the American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) has been collecting contact information for shearers who indicated an interest in being a part of the industry-wide shearer directory.

Producers searching the database for a shearer in their state can now click on the state and get a list of those shearers. Since many shearers also travel to surrounding states, it is advised that producers also check neighboring states for shearers who might be available to travel. The list of shearers can still be accessed by downloading the Acrobat version of the directory.

To find the state interactive listing of shearers, go to: www.sheepusa.org >> Industry Affiliates >> Wool Contacts >> Shearer Directory >> Click on the state of your choice.

Shearers, who wish to be added to this directory, can contact Bob Padula or Wendy at the ASI office.
Staff contact: Wendy Jenkins, 303-771-3500 ext. 31

MLWPA Silver Bell Award

The Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers are currently seeking nominations for the 2005 Junior and Senior Silver Bell Awards. Applications are due by October 31st, 2005. The Silver Bell Awards will be presented at the Shepherds Conference and Trade Show, November 18 & 19, 2005 in Fergus Falls, Minnesota.

Silver Bell Award History

The Silver Bell Award has awarded annually to one or two Minnesota shepherds who have excelled in modern sheep, lamb, or wool production for over 25 years.

Over the years, the selection criteria has included flock size, lambing and weaning rate, lamb and wool production per ewe, sale price of lamb and wool, gross return per ewe, and the following less tangible but equally important factors:

1. Attitude toward the adoption of new technology.
2. Use of financial as well as flock production records.
3. Willingness to commit labor, feed, capital, and managerial effort toward the profitable production of a quality product from their flocks that reflects well upon the entire sheep industry.
4. An apparent faith and confidence in the "old ewe" and in their efforts to consistently generate a substantial part of their farm income with a ewe flock.
5. A contagious enthusiasm for sheep, coupled with a record of profitable production that encourages others to follow a similar program.
6. Civic contributions to their community.

The selection of the state's most profitable flock, the largest lamb crop, the heaviest shearing ewes, or the best appearing flock was not the goal. Rather, we have chosen sheep producers who are exemplary of what all shepherds should strive to be.

General Rules and Guidelines

A shepherd can receive the award only once in a lifetime. If there is no individual worthy of receiving the award, one will not be presented. The individual should show longevity in the sheep business. All aspects of the sheep industry will be considered equal, including commercial, purebred, dairy, and hand-spinning operations.

There shall be a Junior Silver Bell award based on the same criteria as the adult Silver Bell award, except that the nominee must be less than 21 years of age and a current FFA or 4H sheep program participant. Selection emphasis for this category will focus on how they have gone out of their way to promote the sheep industry in Minnesota.

Selection of individuals to receive the award will be done by a committee of the Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers with at least one previous award member on the committee. It will be the responsibility of the committee to determine the degree of excellence of each nomination and to select the winner based on the collective subjective judgment of the committee.

The Silver Bell Award will be presented at the annual MLWP conference. All winners will be notified prior to the MLWP annual conference. Winners will be asked to give a short presentation at the following year's annual conference.

**We need you to nominate deserving adult and youth
shepherds for the 2005 Silver Bell Award!**

Criteria for the Award

Individual must meet the following criteria to be nominated for the Silver Bell Award:

1. Individual must be a paid current member of Minnesota Lamb & Wool Producers.
2. Individual must have excelled in the PRODUCTION of sheep, lamb, or wool.
3. Individual must have excelled in the PROMOTION of sheep, lamb, or wool.
4. Individual must have excelled in the production and promotion of sheep, lamb, or wool over an extended period of time.

Letter of Nomination

Individuals do not need to be notified that they are being nominated for this award. Nomination letters may be kept on file for future years if there are more nominees than awardees in a given year.

The letter of nomination should not be verbose. There is no set format. Try to limit your letter to one page. Focus on how the person being nominated meets the criteria for the award and what they have done to distinguish themselves from other shepherds. Each letter of nomination must stand on its own merit.

Letters of Nomination for this year's Silver Bell awards must be submitted not later than October 31st, 2005 to Selection Committee Chair:

Foster Mooney, 9710 Jewel Lane, Chisago City, MN 55013

Past Winners of the Silver Bell Award

- 1976 DuWayne Swenson and John Larick
- 1977 John Wichern and Milo Mastny
- 1978 Curtis Roos and Orin G. Green
- 1979 Doug Ness and Arne Stoen
- 1980 Ernest Haehnel
- 1981 Lee McEvelly
- 1983 Jim Perkins and Paul M. Westerberg
- 1984 John Schrier and LeRoy Christianson
- 1985 Joel Rehm and LaVerne Martin
- 1986 Wayne & Betty Geppert and Richard & Mary Wishart
- 1987 Roger O. Green and Robert J. Burns and Peter & Charles Bobendrier
- 1988 Ian Tamara Cunningham
- 1989 Rodney Eldevik family and Dale Billberg family
- 1990 Randy Dombek
- 1991 Chris Aubart and John & Dorie Bailey
- 1992 Susan Zenk and Roger Karstens and Jim & Linda Hove and Brad Meyers
- 1993 Wayne Busch and R & K Shepherds and Shane Wishart
- 1994 Ryan Dostal and Pat Anderson and Foster Mooney
- 1995 Randy & Jewel Noble
- 1996 Kelley O'Neill and Dr. Cindy Wolf
- 1997 Paul & Dr. Holly Neaton
- 1998 Janet McNally
- 2000 Paul & Jan Anderson and Joel & Pat Friedrich
- 2002 Gene & Gail Christians
- 2003 Bob Padula
- 2004 Mike Haubrich Family & Dale Carter Family



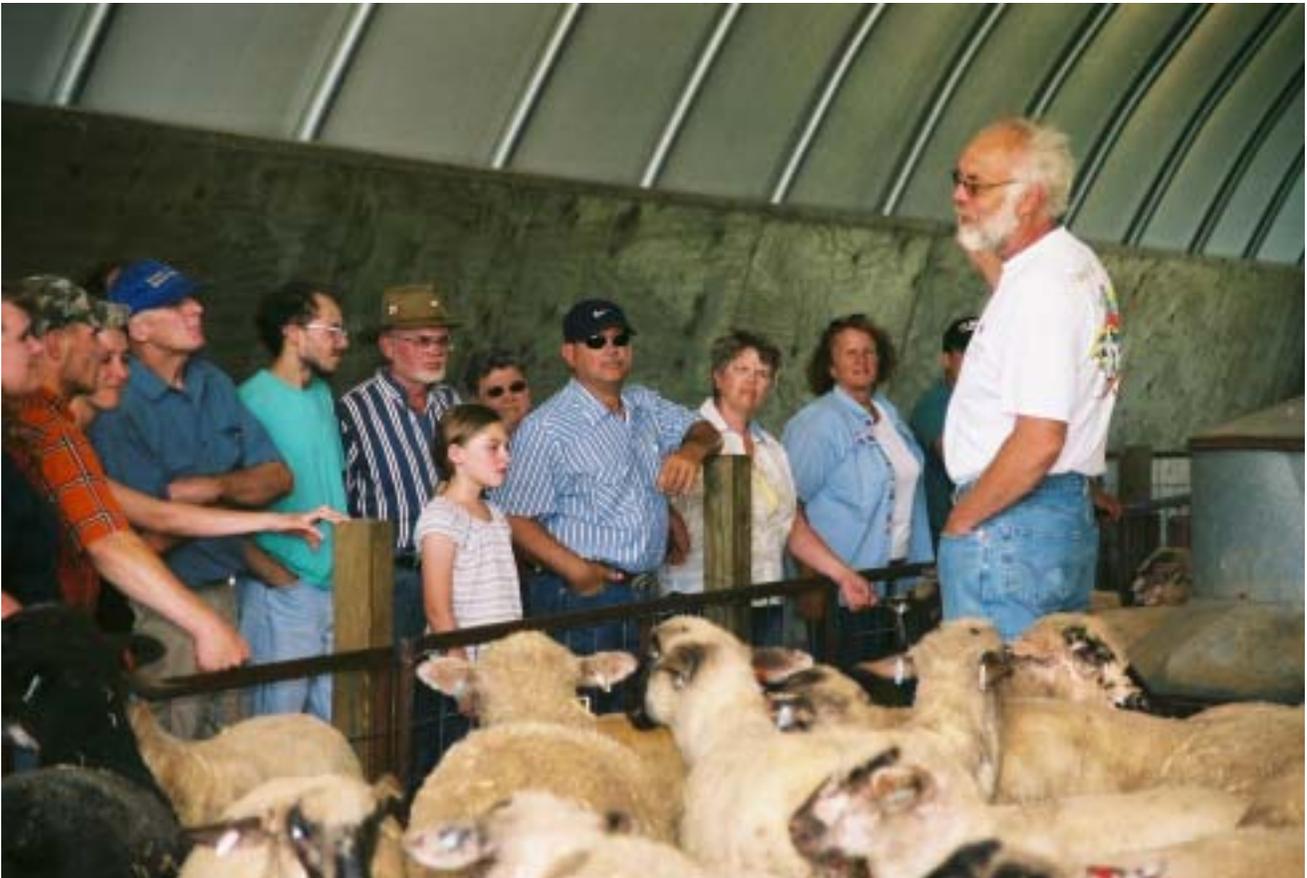
Farm Bureau Sheep Tour draws large crowd

About 60 producers gathered at the Pipestone Veterinary Clinic on July 9 for education seminars followed by a farm tour. Dr. Goelz, from the clinic, delivered sessions on “Breeding Time Management” and “Scrapie Genotyping.” University of Minnesota Regional Extension Educator, Bob Koehler spoke on “Preventing Pollution from Sheep Farms.” Rob Rule from Iowa Lamb discussed “Why Your Lambs get Discounted by the Packer.”

Following a leg-of-lamb lunch, participants headed out for a tour of the Gail and Gary Boeve farm near Woodstock. The farm featured a state of the art lambing facility and two hoop barns for finishing lambs. The Boeves described the management system they use in an attempt to reach their goal of marketing a 200 percent lamb crop, with all lambs reaching market weight by four months of age.

The tour was planned and implemented by the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) Sheep Commodity Advisory Committee. MFBF and the Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers Association sponsored the event.

Special thanks to the Pipestone County Farm Bureau for preparing lunch and the Pipestone Veterinary Clinic for hosting the seminars.



GARY BOEVE OF Pipestone County explains his lamb feeding system to the Sheep Tour participants on July 9, 2005. (Photo by Dave Van Loh)

Fergus Falls to Host Lamb and Wool Producer Annual Conference

The 2005 Minnesota Lamb & Wool Producers (MLWP) annual conference and trade show will focus on grazing and housing. The program includes two days of quality educational sessions on sheep management topics, including producer panels, nationally known speakers, the annual banquet, the MLWP annual business meeting, the Silver Bell luncheon honoring some top sheep producers, the Make it Yourself With Wool Contest, and a trade show with vendors of sheep-related equipment, supplies, and products.

There will be sessions for beginning and experienced shepherds. Topics include: *Health Problems Associated with Grazing, Parasite Control Basics, Pasture Watering Systems, Programs and Assistance for Sheep Producers, Controlling Leafy Spurge, Sheep Facilities*, a producer panel for *Beginning Shepherds*, a producer panel on *Housing Options, Scrapie Update, Cooking with Lamb*, and more.

Day one concludes with the MLWPA annual meeting, followed by the banquet, and auction. Day two features the Make it Yourself With Wool Contest, and the Silver Bell Luncheon. We are pleased to announce that Dr. Larry Goelz (Pipestone Veterinary Clinic), Jim Bristol and Burdell Johnson (American Sheep Industry), Tony Cortillet (Department of Ag.), and Chef Heath Stocks (Jazzy Fox Bistro) will be among the speakers joining us to share their knowledge. You won't want to miss these excellent programs.

The 2005 MLWP annual conference will be held **November 18 and 19 at the Best Western Inn & Big Woods Events Center in Fergus Falls.** Registration fee information, a complete agenda, a description of speakers and topics, and information on hotel reservations will be available on the web soon at www.mlwp.org. To receive the lowest rates, reserve your hotel room by November 4, and register by November 11. If you have any questions about the conference, contact Jeremy Geske, MLWP 1st Vice-President at (952) 758-7938 or geskesheep@aol.com.

Sheep and Lambs – Minnesota Production by County

The Minnesota Ag Statistics released information on June 2, 2005 regarding the number of breeding sheep and lambs by county on January 1, 2005. The Minnesota figures are broken down by county and into 9 different regions. Overall, the figures indicate 100,000 breeding sheep in Minnesota. This ranks Minnesota as 13th in the USA for breeding sheep population. We are also ranked 6th in number of sheep operations and combined with lamb feeding – Minnesota is one of the top 10 ten states in the USA for sheep production.

To view this and other reports on the sheep industry statistics, please log on to:

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/mn/>

<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/reports/nassr/livestock/pgg-bb/>

**Would you like FREE registration
to the MLWPA Annual Conference & Trade Show?**

MLWPA is looking for six volunteers to help with the registration table at the annual conference and trade show in Fergus Falls, Nov. 18 and 19. Volunteers will work in teams of two (so you can switch off and attend some of the sessions). There will be a total of three shifts: Friday a.m. (starting at 8:00), Friday p.m. (starting at 1:00), and Saturday a.m. (starting at 8:00). Work one shift and MLWP will waive your conference registration fee (you will still have to pay for meals and hotel accommodations). To sign up for a shift at the registration table, contact Jeremy Geske at geskesheep@aol.com or (952) 758-7938.

2005 MLWP Annual Conference registration
form

Nov. 18 & 19, 2005 - Fergus Falls

Name(s) _____ Farm name _____

Address _____
Street
City
State
Zip
County

Phone# _____ E-mail _____

Flock description & size _____

Costs:	Pre-registered	At the Door
MLWP Membership Dues	\$35.00 _____	\$35.00 _____
Friend of the Industry dues	\$25.00 _____	\$25.00 _____
*Family registration - Members (2 days)	\$35.00 _____	\$45.00 _____
*Family registration - Non-members (2 days)	\$55.00 _____	\$65.00 _____
*Family registration - Members (1 day only)	\$20.00 _____	\$25.00 _____
*Family registration - Non-members (1 day only)	\$30.00 _____	\$35.00 _____
Banquet (Friday) per person _____ x	\$18.00 _____	\$23.00 _____
Silver Bell Lunch (Sat.) per person _____ x	\$10.00 _____	\$15.00 _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

* Family registration includes husband, wife, & children.

Reserve your hotel room at the **Best Western Inn & Big Woods Events Center** (1-800-293-2216) by **November 4**. Ask for the MLWP conference rate (\$62+tax - \$99+tax for suite). The Best Western Inn is located at 925 Western Ave., just off of I 94. (Take I 94 to Fergus Falls, exit 210 going West, turn left/North on Western Ave).

Completed registration forms and checks (payable to MLWP) should be sent to Jean Stark, 2015 65th Ave NE, Sauk Rapids, MN 56379 by **November 11** to receive the pre-registration price.

Calendar of Events Year 2005

Year 2005

- September 15 Montana Ram Sale - Miles City, MT
- September 16 Newell Ram Sale – Newell, SD
- October 29 North Star Bred Ewe Sale
Pipestone, MN
- November 4 Room reservations for MLWPA
Conference and Trade Show
- November 11 Pre-registration due for MLWPA
Conference and Trade Show
- Nov 18 – 19 2005 MLWPA Convention & Trade Show
Fergus Falls, MN
- Nov. 19 – 21 MN Farm Bureau Annual Meeting
Bloomington, MN
- November 26 Minnesota Bred Ewe Sale
Rochester, MN

2006 Tentative Dates

- March 6 Spring Sheep Workshop – location tba
- May 6 – 7 Shepherd's Harvest Festival
Lake Elmo, MN
- July 22 MN State Suffolk Show & Sale – Rice
County Fair, Faribault, MN

Future Newsletter Schedule:

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

If you have a calendar item or news releases that you would like included, please send information to:

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