

Shepherd's Bulletin



Minnesota Lamb & Wool Producers Association

MLWP Supports State Fair 4-H Sheep Show

Fall 2007

MLWPA is a strong supporter of many youth sheep activities, including the MN state fair 4-H sheep show. MLWPA sponsors several champion awards, and proudly supports the Miracle of Birth Center.

In addition, MLWPA volunteers assist with several important activities including the 4-H wool show, the 4-H sheep interview/skill-a-thon competition, and the shows themselves. It is a lot of work, but the gratitude from these young people is very rewarding.

Here is what a couple 4-H'ers who won MLWPA

sponsored awards had to say: "Thank you so much for sponsoring [my award]. I had worked with my yearling, Sunshine, at my farm so she would set up with only a little moving of the feet. I was so overwhelmed with excitement when the judge came and shook my hand! I am very grateful to have the plaque to remember my awesome experience at the MN State Fair.

Thank you," *Abby Mills*
[Editor's note: Abby was also a 4-H Sheep Interview/Skill-a-thon finalist.]



Abby Mills - Reserve Champion Int. Breeding Ewe Showperson

MLWPA also received a nice

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MLWP Officers & Directors

- *President—Jeremy Geske*
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- *1st VP—Dan Persons*
320-986-2336
- *2nd VP—Don Adelman*
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320-237-3577
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- *Past Presidents -*
Bob Padula 320-269-7973
Gene Holmquist
507-853-4409
- *NE Dir. - Warner Johnson*
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507-376-9665
- *WC Dir. - Mike Haubrich*
320-826-2526
- *Metro Dir. & Membership Chair - Patty Anderson*
952-447-4184
- *Satellite Reps are listed on the web site:*

www.mlwp.org

President's Message - Jeremy Geske

Last issue, I wrote a column about being sure to have enough ram power to get you through the breeding season. I must have jinxed myself, because after the Newell Ram Sale, I was down to one mature ram, who promptly came up lame on a back leg the morning I was flying out of state for a conference. While at the

conference, I spent most of the time worrying about my ewes not getting bred by my injured ram. A three-hour airport delay, two flat tires on my trailer, and five days later, I finally returned home with two additional rams to make sure the last of my ewes get bred. Fortunately, over half the ewes were already bred before the

first ram injured himself. I'll sleep a lot easier after the ewes are ultrasounded.

Even though it is still a long time before lambing, I can't help but be anxious for those first lambs to appear. The arrival of the lambs will be my first indication if I have made the improvements to my

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President's Message - cont.

flock that I hoped for. Then I can start figuring out where I need to go for my next ram.

This issue will be my last as President of MLWPA. It has been my honor to serve this organization, and I will continue to be an active member of the board. I hope to see many of you at the annual conference in Rochester, and I encourage you all to consider serving on the MLWP board of directors. Don't hesitate to ask me if you have any questions about what

it takes to serve on the board. New members and new ideas are always welcome!

If you have had difficulty contacting me, it may be because I have a new address and e-mail. I'm now at 901 Horizon Dr. SE New Prague, MN 56071. 952-758-7938 or jgeske@fbmn.org.



State Fair —Cont.

thank you from Brent Meshke. "Dear [MLWPA], Thank you for sponsoring [my plaque]. It will make great memories for years on. Thank you,"
Brent Meshke

Congratulations Abby Mills & Brent Meshke

Brent Meshke - Reserve Champion
Market Lamb Showperson



Lambassadors Excel in Sheep Interview/Skill-a-thon Contest

Congratulations to the two newest MLWPA Lambassadors, Ashley Schiefelbein and Mercedes Lee were both finalists in the state fair 4-H sheep interview/skill-a-thon competition (the top 20% are finalists). Ashley was also an interview winner (the top 2% win a director's chair).

MN Hampshire & Suffolk Youth Scholarships

The MN Hampshire Sheep Association will offer five \$100 scholarships to MN youth towards the purchase of a Hampshire bred ewe or ewe lamb at the MN Bred Ewe & Doe sale in Rochester. Minnesota residents ages 6-18 are eligible.

To apply, send in a one-page entry including: name, address, age, phone number, and answer three essay questions (why you want to raise Hampshires, how you will care for

your sheep, and how you will promote Hampshires/sheep industry).

Send entries to Dale Carter, 26708 Co Rd 10, Starbuck, MN 56381. Applications are due Nov. 1.

The MN Suffolk Sheep Association is offering three \$100 scholarships to MN youth (ages 8-18) towards the purchase of a registered Suffolk ewe at either the MN Bred Ewe & Doe sale in Rochester, or the MN State Suffolk Sale in Faribault.

To apply, write a one-page essay on why you should receive the award, and send it to Rick Manthei, 23054 US HWY 71, Sanborn, MN 56083. Essays are due Nov. 10. Winners are required to join MSSA as a Jr. member (\$5).



2007 BAA Booth a Smashing Success - Kirk & Jill Roe family

Jill, Kirk, J.T., Lizzie, & Lexie Roe would like to thank you for the opportunity to help educate the public about the sheep industry at the 2007 BAA Booth. When we reviewed the purpose of MLWP and the vision of the BAA Booth we felt very good about the outcome for 2007. We were able to make several changes that were positive for MLWP and the Minnesota State Fair. State Fair Board & staff were taking a lot of pictures of the booth throughout the 8 days of operation. Steve Pooch told us the booth looked very good.

On behalf of MLWP, the Roe family would like to thank the following volunteers and donors:

Cindy & Kari Schneider (sheep for *I sheared a sheep*), Larry Swenson Family (*lambs on a stick* and display/petting sheep), Susan Gesh (spinning demo and merino wool info), Becky & Stan Utecht (display sheep and spinning demo), Todd & Robin Schmidt, Mercedes Lee, Krystle Lonning, Warner Johnson, Charles & Jean Stark (tanned hide), Ashley Schiefebein, Mary Rademaker, Stacie Busch (fitting demo), Jonathan Roe/Roe family (educational displays, meat cuts demo's, display sheep, slick shorn demo's), Sherry Stirling (fleece, video's and woolch), Shelina Nohner (American Lamb Board materials), Glenette Sperry (Make It With Wool display), and Bob Padula (wool shirt and wool processing videos). Our apologies if we forgot anyone!

More volunteers and demonstrators are always needed and we hope that there will be more interest in working the booth in 2008. We would like at

least one "meat" expert and one "wool" expert working each shift. Kirk & Jill will start recruiting volunteers and demonstrators later this year and early in 2008. If you already know that you can volunteer or demonstrate for the 2008 BAA Booth please call Kirk & Jill at (507)525-0970 or email them at kwroe@bevcomm.net.

The most common question received at the BAA Booth was, "Where can I buy a market to have slaughtered?" With this in mind, Kirk & Jill would like to secure names and contact information of MLWP members to hand out to interested people. If you are interested in being listed as a contact for possible individual market lamb sales please email the Roe family

Baa Booth Activities

This year we tried to have a wool section, (Pendleton sent DVD's and samples), by-products section and a meat section in the booth. The plan is to expand the wool section next year with a large display about the steps of making raw wool into fabric.

A kid's activity area will be expanded. A small table (Little Tykes picnic table) was available for kids to sit at and do activities while the adults sat on a bench by one display pen. We would like to have at least 3 small tables next year for the children's area. So if you have one or access to a table please let the Roe family know.

We also had daily drawings for \$35 towards lamb purchase, \$15 certificate for wool /yarn purchase and various donated items including meat

thermometers from ALB, two pair of wool socks (\$18), two cook books (\$10) and 2 spice kits (\$20).

Plans are being discussed to have a daily shearing demo. There were fitting demo's, market lamb shearing demo's, meat cuts presentation with lamb in meat blanket, spinning demo's. There were 12 foods demos using lamb done at the Moo Booth milking area.

Persons needed to complete an activity to receive a MLWP pencil, state fair button, novice/expert Shepherd ribbon and be entered in daily drawing. Candy, including lots of gum (sheep by-product), was given for attempting an activity or asking questions. There were over 10 different education things they could attempt including a wholesale/retail cuts matching, Match the parts to the sheep, word finds, breed ID, by-product identification, etc.

State Fair representatives and Gordon Toenges, Sheep superintendent are discussing the idea of developing a presentation area by the sheep barn similar to the Moo Booth. The 4-H sheep demonstrations could be done in this location as well as Baa Booth demonstrations.

The Pack-O-Rama is a yearly Agrilympics activity scheduled by the State Fair.

I sheared a sheep was an activity scheduled daily at 1 pm.

The Baa Booth participated in four media spots (2 with WCCO TV, 1 each with KTIS and KSTP radio).

We're looking forward to 2008!

Make It With Wool - 60th Anniversary

You could be the next winner in the "Make It With Wool" contest! A luxurious piece of Pendleton wool, sewing products or one of the many other prizes could be yours for participating. The State contest will be held December 8, 2007 in Rochester at the Ramada Hotel and Conference Center.

The purpose of the "Make It With Wool" contest is to focus attention on the beauty and versatility of wool, and encourage the use of wool fabric or yarn in sewing, knitting or crocheting fashionable garments by offering individuals the opportunity to compete for valuable prizes and gain

recognition for the talents.

Contestants must select, construct (sew, knit or crochet) and model their garments. The material must be made of a minimum of 60 percent wool. Preteens (ages 12 and under); may enter jumpers, skirts, pants, vests, jackets or shirts. Juniors (ages 13-16); Seniors (ages 17-24) and Adults (25+) may enter dresses, coats suits or other garments. Ages as of Dec.31, 2007

To request a brochure and entry form, contact Glenette Sperry at 651-257-6735 or email at gtsperry@peoplepc.com. Registration deadline is November 5, 2007.

Junior and Senior winners of the contest are eligible to go to the National "Make It With Wool" competition, which will be held January 24-26, 2008 in Las Vegas, NV. (Learn more about the MIWW at www.mlwp.org).



MLWPA Receives USDA Risk Management Grant

Acting Agriculture Secretary Chuck Conner announced awards of nearly \$21.2 million in agricultural risk management partnership agreements throughout the United States on September 27, 2007. The agreements will fund projects to develop new risk management tools for farmers and ranchers, as well as outreach and education opportunities to limited-resource and other traditionally underserved farmers and ranchers.

"These partnerships can provide producers with the information and resources to make informed decisions about crop insurance and other risk management strategies," said Conner. "Our goal is to improve revenue and reduce risks for the producers we serve."

The Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers will be receiving up to

\$10,450 in a Commodity Partnership Agreement as part of this program in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture "Minnesota Grown" program. The funds will be used to provide risk management education and assistance to Minnesota farmers with small flocks of sheep and to 4H and FFA youth producers who are not eligible for other USDA risk management programs such as AGR-Lite insurance or the new LRP-Lamb pilot program. There are approximately 2,500 sheep farms in Minnesota and about 94% of them have less than 100 ewes.

The funds will be used to conduct two major workshops – one in December 2007 and one in May 2008; to provide newsletter and website services containing information about preventative and emergency health

care for sheep, stress reduction techniques for shepherds, and direct marketing techniques; and to provide limited opportunities for local shepherds to directly access a nationally recognized veterinarian with sheep health care questions via an "Ask the Vet" column in the MLWP newsletter.

MLWPA members can e-mail their sheep health questions to Jeremy Geske at jgeske@fbmn.org. Those questions will be forwarded to the Pipestone Vet Clinic. Selected questions and answers will appear in future issues of the Shepherd's Bulletin. If your question does not appear in the newsletter, you can still get an e-mail response from the Pipestone Vet Clinic.

Silver Bell Award Nominees needed!

The Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers are currently seeking nominations for the 2007 Junior and Senior Silver Bell Awards. Applications are due by November 16, 2007. The Silver Bell Awards will be presented at the Shepherds Conference and Trade Show, December 8, 2007 in Rochester, Minnesota.

The Silver Bell has been 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:

Attitude toward the adoption of new technology; use of financial as well as flock production records; 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; 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; a contagious enthusiasm for sheep, coupled with a record of profitable production that encourages others to follow a similar program; and 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.

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.

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

- Paid current member of Minnesota Lamb & Wool Producers.
- Excelled in the PRODUCTION of sheep, lamb, or wool
- Excelled in the PROMOTION of sheep, lamb, or wool.
- 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 **November 16, 2007** to Selection Committee Chair: Foster Mooney, 9710 Jewel Lane, Chisago City, MN 55013



2007 MLWP Annual Conference Registration Form

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Street

City

State

Zip

County

Phone# _____ E-mail _____

Farm name _____ Flock description & size _____

Costs:	Registered (before 11/21)	At the Door
MLWP Membership Dues for 2008	\$35.00	\$35.00
(You can now save \$5 by paying dues for 3 years)	\$100.00	\$100.00
Friend of the Industry dues	\$25.00	\$25.00
Youth membership dues	\$10.00	\$10.00
*Household registration - Members	\$20.00	\$35.00
*Household registration – Non-members	\$45.00	\$60.00

*Household registration includes 2 adults + children. Members of SDSGA, ISIA & WSBC may register at the “Member” rates. “Make It With Wool” contestants are encouraged to join MLWP as “Youth” members if they have sheep or as “Friends of the Industry” if they do not have sheep. MIWW participants/families who pay for the Silver Bell Lunch are also encouraged to attend the after lunch “Cooking with Lamb” seminar.

Banquet (Friday) per person _____ x \$17.00 \$22.00

Silver Bell Lunch (Sat) per person _____ x \$7.00 \$13.00

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Completed registration forms and checks (payable to MLWP) should be sent to Glenette Sperry, 31460 Quinlan Ave, Center City, MN 55012 before November 21 to receive the pre-registration price. You can also pay with Visa/Mastercard credit card by providing the following information:

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Signature of cardholder: _____

Funding assistance for this conference provided through a cooperative agreement with USDA’s Risk Management Agency via “Minnesota Grown” grant.

Hotel accommodations: Ramada Hotel & Conference Center, 1517 16th Street SW, Rochester. The MLWP rate is \$61 + tax. To receive the special rate, reservations must be made before November 16. Call 507-289-8866 to make your reservations and be sure to ask for the MN Lamb & Wool rate.



2007 MLWP Annual Conference - Tentative Agenda

December 7 & 8, Ramada Hotel & Conference Center, Rochester, MN

- Thursday, Dec. 6** **Scrapie Board meeting**
- Friday, Dec. 7**
- 8:30 a.m. - noon** **Board or Directors Budget/Planning Meeting**
- 1:00 – 6:00 p.m.** **Registration open**
- 1:00 – 4:30 p.m.** **Trade Show Open – Sign up for door prize drawings**
- 1:40 p.m.** **Welcome** Jeremy Geske, MLWP President
- 1:45 – 4:30 p.m.** **Educational sessions Including:**
- Stress Management* - Dr. Ted Mathews, *LRP-Lamb* - Patty DeZeeuw, *Managed Grazing* - John Zinn
- New Sheep Nutrient Requirements* - Doug Pamp, *Scrapie / NAIS update* - Dr. Cindy Wolf
- 4:45 – 6:15 p.m.** **MLWP Annual Meeting**
- 6:30 p.m.** **Banquet /Entertainment** - Corrine Leiser - *Live Well, Laugh Often*
- 7:30 p.m.** **MLWP Auction** – John Goelz, auctioneer/story teller
- Saturday, Dec. 8**
- 8:00 – 8:45 a.m.** **Registration for MIWW & MLWP late arrivals**
- 8:00 – 8:30 a.m.** **BAA Booth Planning Session**
- 8:45 – 9:00 a.m.** **Make It With Wool (MIWW)** – Glenette Sperry, *Judges & Contestant Orientation*
- 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.** **MIWW Judging**
- 9:15 a.m. - noon** **Educational sessions Including:**
- Ask the Vet* - Dr. Larry Goelz, *Sheep Business Planning* - Peter Scheffert, *Future of the Sheep Industry* - Panel
- Small Flock Management* - Sherry Stirling/Patty Anderson, *Felting/Wool Fabrics* - Kathy Pususta/others
- 12:15 p.m.** **Silver Bell Luncheon** - Presentation by George & Jackie Mead
- 1:15 p.m.** **Make it With Wool Fashion Revue**
- 2:15 p.m.** **Final Drawings** – trade show closes
- 2:20 – 4:00 p.m.** **Final Session** – *Cooking with Lamb* Learn to prepare lamb from a top Chef



Legislative Update

Senate Farm Bill Consideration Postponed

Senate consideration of the farm bill is off, again. Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) postponed his committee's markup of the farm bill a day after he indicated he would schedule consideration of the measure to begin. The committee's top Republican, Georgia Sen. Saxby Chambliss, told reporters the markup of the farm bill won't happen now until senators return to Washington after next week's recess.

Senate Finance Committee Passes Tax Measure

On Oct. 4, the Senate Finance Committee passed a tax bill – The Heartland, Habitat, Harvest and Horticulture Act – that deals with funding for everything from cellulosic ethanol and other alternative fuels to agricultural conservation programs. The measure also provides some momentum for the Senate Ag Committee to take up the farm bill during the week of Oct. 22.

Under the tax measure, conservation programs will receive \$3 billion in funding, which is approximately \$1 billion less than previously estimated. The bill also added \$5 billion for a disaster trust fund for agricultural disaster assistance, but did not address commodity funding, according to reports.

Senate Ag Committee Chairman Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) said the funding measure came "at an opportune time." He said, however, that senators "are still facing an extremely tight budget on this farm bill and we welcome the help from these added funds."

Ethanol and Food Costs

Acting Agriculture Secretary Chuck Connor said Tuesday that there are bigger forces than ethanol impacting the increases in food prices, those being oil prices and weather. In regard to ethanol's role in increased food prices he states, "I don't think that's (ethanol's involvement) something we can deny at this point. But, the data that has been presented to me shows that it (ethanol) has been assigned far more than its fair share of blame for what is happening in our grocery store aisles."

For more information, go to:

<http://www.startribune.com/484/story/1460874.html>

Animal Welfare Update

CKE Restaurants, the parent company of the Hardee's and Carl's Jr. fast-food chains, announced last week that it will give preferential purchasing to pork from suppliers that do not use gestation stalls. It also said it would favor cage-free eggs and poultry suppliers that use gas, or "controlled-atmospheric stunning," rather than electric shock to render chickens unconscious prior to processing. A company spokesman acknowledged that the decision was made after animal welfare conversations with the animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).

Horse Slaughter Ban Means Gruesome Deaths in Mexico

About 30,000 American horses, a 370-percent increase from this time last year, will be shipped to slaughter houses in Mexico. The increase in the number of U.S. horses being shipped to these plants appears to be a direct result of the closure of the last processing plants in Texas and Illinois.

Horses sent to a plant in Ciudad Juarez are stabbed in the back with a



small knife multiple times, leaving them bloodied and paralyzed for several minutes before they are hoisted into the air so their throats may be slit, allowing them to bleed to death. While the Juarez plant has captive bolt guns, they are often inoperable. When they do work, they are used by individuals with poor training.

Even some of those who want Congress to approve a federal ban on horse slaughter now acknowledge the irony of the situation: their efforts to shut down the U.S. plants means horses die in primitive conditions.

For more information, go to:<http://www.chron.com/dispatch/story.mpl/ap/tx/5185579.html>

Congress Seeks to Expand the Federal Clean Water Act

Rep. Oberstar (D-Minn.), Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, introduced the Clean Water Restoration Act of 2007, H.R. 2421 which would delete the word "navigable" from the Clean Water Act (CWA). Senator Feingold (D-Wis.) introduced the companion bill, S. 1870, on July 27.

The legislation would greatly expand the regulatory reach of the Clean Water Act to the detriment of U.S. economic growth and agricultural operations.

This proposal would move the CWA beyond protecting wetlands and waterways, and create legislation that would regulate nearly every wet area

Legislative Update - cont.

in the nation. This could include everything from ditches to farm ponds and possibly groundwater.

Under this proposal, the regulatory reach of the CWA would undergo its greatest expansion since the law took effect in 1972 and grant the Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers federal regulatory authority over all "intrastate waters." The new definition of "waters of the United States" would include farm and stock ponds to an estimated 55 million acres of prior converted cropland.

Contact your members of Congress and urge them to OPPOSE this legislation.

Senator Coleman: 800-642-6041
 Senator Klobuchar: 612-727-5220
 Congressman/Congresswomen
 Walz: 507-388-2149

Kline: 952-808-1213

Ramstad: 952-738-8200

McCollum: 651-224-9191

Ellison: 612-664-8000

Bachmann: 651-731-5400

Peterson: 218-847-5056

Oberstar: 651-277-1234

Support of State-Inspected Meat

Twenty-eight states currently have meat and poultry inspection programs that serve more than 2,000 state-inspected meat processors. These processors, mostly smaller businesses, are prevented from competing in the national marketplace.

A law from the 1960s prohibits the sale of state-inspected meat products (sheep, goat, beef, poultry and pork) across state lines, even though these products must meet or exceed federal inspection standards. Meat and poultry products from 34 foreign countries can

be freely shipped and sold anywhere in the US, as long as that country's inspection program is equivalent to federal standards - essentially the same standards that state meat-inspection programs must meet.

No other food commodities inspected by state authorities are prohibited from being shipped across state lines. Other state-inspected food products, including perishable items such as milk, dairy products, fruit, vegetables, fish and shellfish, are marketed freely across the country. The current ban on interstate sales does not apply to 'non-amenable' meats such as venison, pheasant, quail, rabbit etc.

The American Sheep Industry Association is one of the nearly 70 agricultural organizations urging the passage of this legislation.

Montana Sheep Quarantine Lifted

The sheep quarantine that the state livestock department imposed in 16 eastern Montana counties due to the presence of bluetongue is over. Sheep producers can move their animals to sale yards or elsewhere now that the quarantine is lifted.

Marty Zaluski, DVM, state veterinarian, said frosty nights have reduced the risk of gnats further spreading bluetongue. In September, he imposed a quarantine until October 9 but said he was able to lift the restriction early because of the cooler weather.

Flood/Drought Disaster Assistance

USDA announced sign-up dates for the new Livestock Compensation Program (LCP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and Crop Disaster Program (CDP). The three ad hoc disaster programs provide benefits to farmers and ranchers who suffered

losses caused by natural disasters in recent years.

LCP compensates livestock producers for feed losses occurring between Jan. 1, 2005, and Feb. 28, 2007, due to a natural disaster. This can include producers who suffered losses resulting from blizzards that started in 2006 and continued into January 2007. Producers in primary counties declared secretarial disaster areas or certain counties declared presidential disaster areas between Jan. 1, 2005, and Feb. 28, 2007, are eligible as are producers located in contiguous counties. Also, producers in a primary (or contiguous) county that received an Administrator's Physical Loss Notice directly associated with a disaster declaration made by President Bush may also be eligible. Producers incurring a loss in more than one of the 2005, 2006 or 2007 calendar years must choose only one year for which they want to apply for benefits.

LIP compensates livestock producers for livestock losses between Jan. 1, 2005, and Feb. 28, 2007, that resulted from natural disasters. Eligibility rules are the same for LIP as for LCP (see above).

CDP provides benefits to farmers who suffered quantity and quality losses to 2005, 2006, or 2007 crops from natural disasters if the crop was planted before Feb. 28, 2007, or, in the case of prevented plantings, for crops that would have been planted before Feb. 28, 2007. Producers who incurred qualifying losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007 must choose only one year to apply for benefits. Producers may apply for benefits for losses to multiple commodities as long as the losses occurred in the same crop year. Only producers who obtained crop insurance

Disaster Assistance - cont.

coverage or coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits. Producers must have suffered quantity losses in excess of 35 percent to be eligible for CDP.

More information about LCP, LIP and CDP is available in a fact sheet titled, Agricultural Assistance Act of 2007, found on FSA's Web site, <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>; click on Disaster Assistance Programs. USDA is developing individual fact sheets about these programs that will be posted online.

State Flood/Drought Assistance

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is now accepting applications for financial assistance from livestock producers in the MN counties classified by the US Drought Monitor as D3 during the calendar year

of 2007. Eligible counties include: AITKIN, BENTON, CASS, CHIPPEWA, COOK, CROW WING, KANABEC, KANDIYOHI, LAKE, MEEKER, MILLE LACS, MORRISON, OTTER TAIL, PINE, POPE, ST. LOUIS, STEARNS, STEVENS, SWIFT, TODD, and WADENA.

To be eligible for assistance, the applicant must be a MN resident who owns forage-fed livestock. To target funding and provide meaningful assistance to those most dependent upon agricultural income for their livelihoods, only those farms and ranches that received at least 50 percent of their gross income from agriculture in the tax year 2006 are eligible to apply for this assistance package.

Applications must be postmarked by December 31, 2007. Required application information includes:

Number/specie/age of animals, owned/rented acres for grazing/hay/silage, purchased forage since July 1, receipts and official FSA farm serial number.

MDA is now accepting applications for Flood Assistance from agricultural producers southeastern Minnesota counties severely impacted by the record rainfall in mid August. Eligible counties include: DODGE, FILLMORE, HOUSTON, OLMSTED, STEELE, WABASHA, and WINONA.

The program will offer forage assistance for all livestock species, and a livestock investment grant to help reimburse producers for the loss of fencing, agricultural buildings, grain bins or equipment. Contact an MDA representative if you are an organic or specialty crop producer. Only those farms and ranches that received at least 50 percent of their gross income from agriculture in the tax year 2006 are eligible. **For more information go to:** www.mda.state.mn.us.

ASI to conduct shearing schools

The American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) will be conducting four-day advanced sheep shearer training in Greeley, CO, Jan. 7-10, and in Vicksburg, MI, March 3-6.

The American Wool Council and Shearing Task Force have put together a long-term program for training new, professional sheep shearers. The ASI shearing schools are designed for experienced shearing students that would like to advance their training and become professional shearers. Shearing training is a step-by-step process and this second-level training

program is designed to prepare shearers for a career in shearing.

Both sessions are being designed for participants that have the skill and stamina to currently shear a minimum of 25 sheep per day. Participants will be required to bring their own equipment to the training session.

Both session will be taught by internationally recognized shearing instructor Doug Rathke. Classes will focus on improvement in shearing skills and the important role of a professional sheep shearer in the wool

industry. Class time will also be devoted to business and career development skills and the importance of wool quality improvement practices.

Enrollment will be limited. Those interested should contact ASI (303-771-3500 or info@sheepusa.org) for registration information and material. A \$250 registration fee will be required at the time of registration to reserve a place. **Contact Jeremy Geske about scholarships for MLWPA members to attend the shearing school. (jgeske@fbmn.org or 952-758-7938)**

The Importance of a Post-Mortem Exam

J.L. Goelz, DVM

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When investigating flock health problems the Veterinarians at the Pipestone Veterinary Clinic often find that a post-mortem exam is more revealing than examining a live lamb. Flock problems can usually be ruled-in or out depending on the findings. Often the Veterinarian can determine the organ system involved which will give us clues to which diseases are possible and likely. Generally the Veterinarian can also get a sense of the length of the disease such as acute (sudden) or chronic (prolonged).

A basic post-mortem exam includes examining each accessible organ system for the presence or absence of lesions. A lesion is simply areas of the organs that are considered abnormal. Just as in examining a live animal, observing that something is abnormal is the first step to arriving at a diagnosis. While most producers turn up their nose at dissecting a dead lamb there is tremendous value in the carcass. The difficulty becomes determining what is normal post-mortem change and what is abnormal.

This is the part where your Veterinarian can bring value. Your Veterinarian is trained to determine abnormalities in the carcass of dead sheep. If your Veterinarian cannot determine the actual cause of death or disease he/she will often submit samples to a veterinary diagnostic lab for further testing.

Many diseases can be rapidly confirmed with a quick post-mortem exam. The list includes: starvation/hypothermia, parasitism, Clostridia enterotoxemia (Type C and D), Caseous Lymphadenitis, bloat, grain overload, copper toxicity, pneumonia, white muscle disease, ovine progressive pneumonia, salmonellosis, and many others.

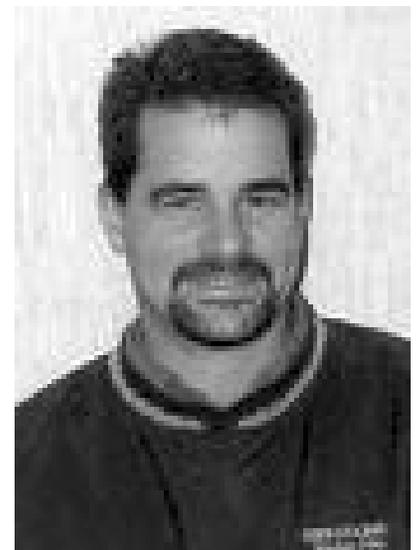
Generally a preliminary diagnosis can be made in a matter of minutes and flock treatment, if necessary, can begin immediately. If a diagnosis cannot immediately be made or if further testing is necessary at least the

“If you can get the carcass to Veterinarian in reasonably good condition you may find out that in terms of flock health information, a dead sheep can be worth a lot.”

flock owner can have an idea of diseases that are ruled-out. In other words the absence of lesions can identify diseases that are unlikely and thus should not be a concern.

What can you do to help? First of all, inform your Veterinarian of the history of the sheep. Did it act sick prior to death? If you have had multiple sheep die is this animal similar or representative of the others? How much time elapsed between when you noticed the sheep as sick and when it died? How long has the sheep been dead? Next, having the carcass as fresh as possible

is the most important aspect of having good results on the exam. Carcasses begin to decay immediately after death and the speed of decay is proportional to the outside temperature. A carcass that is two days old but in a 35 degree environment has good diagnostic value. Alternatively, a carcass that is 6 hours old in 90 degree weather is often too decomposed to draw much information. If the carcass cannot be examined immediately find a way to keep it cool until it can be examined. During lambing season this may be throwing the dead lambs outside of the barn to keep them cool. During summer placing ice on the carcass and keeping it in the shade will slow the rate of decomposition of the carcass. If you can get the carcass to Veterinarian in reasonably good condition you may find out that in terms of flock health information, a dead sheep can be worth a lot.



Dr. Goelz, Pipestone Vet Clinic

Why Poisonous Plants are only Lethal Sometimes

Adapted from Sheep & Goat Health Report, Summer 2007

Sheep and goats love green plants, but not all plants love them. Sometimes this can be deadly.

Research shows that numerous factors influence the actions of poisons, and the severity of a sheep's or goat's reaction to them. Factors include: amount eaten and over what period of time, chemical nature of the poison, the part of and condition of the plant consumed, amount of rumen fill prior to eating the plant, species of animal, general health of the animal, as well as size, age, and sex.

"We must remember that the dose makes the poison," Sweetlix nutritionist Jackie Nix states. "The amount eaten is critical." For some plants, a few mouthfuls can be deadly, and for others, large amounts must be eaten before symptoms appear. Some plants even need to be ingested over a long period of time before they are dangerous.

Common poisonous compounds found in plants include glycosides, alkaloids, oxalates, oils, minerals,

resins, and nitrates. Some of these chemicals affect the nervous system, while others may affect the blood, intestinal tract or the heart.

Sheep and goats do not innately know which plants might be poisonous.

In a pasture filled with sheep, why do some get sick while others don't? One possible explanation is rumen fill. A rumen with more fill acts to dilute the poison and slow down absorption, lessening the effect. Obviously the size of the animal is important as smaller/younger sheep would likely be affected by a smaller dose of the poisonous material.

Contrary to popular belief, sheep and goats do not innately know which plants might be poisonous. They learn by experience and through social interaction with the herd or flock.

Symptoms are variable, and generally not specific for a particular

plant. "Unfortunately, the first symptom noticed may often be a dead goat," says Nix. Other symptoms include: frothing at the mouth, vomiting, staggering, trembling, bleating, rapid/labored breathing, convulsions and sudden death. If you notice symptoms like this, remove your animals from the area, try to ID the plant, and call your vet.

Nix urges producers to remove poison from the animals by placing two tablespoons of salt on the back of the tongue to induce vomiting. Another method is to administer charcoal tablets along with re-hydration fluids and mineral oil. The charcoal may bind with the toxins, the fluid prevents dehydration, and the oil coats the GI tract.

Dr. Joseph DiTomaso of Cornell University has compiled a list of plants reported to be poisonous among animals in the US. Go to: <http://wric.ucdavis.edu/information/poisonous.pdf>.

Numbers Confirm Interest in Eradicating Scrapie

Adapted from Sheep & Goat Health Report, Summer 2007

The National Scrapie Eradication Program is making progress. There are now 2,019 flocks participating in the voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program (up 58 from 2005). Certified flocks have doubled since 2005 (now at 376). Since 1990, there have been 18 reported scrapie cases in goats.

Regulatory Scrapie Slaughter Surveillance RSSS has been in effect

for four years, collecting samples on 126,084 head. Statistics for 2007 include:

- 22,394 samples (11 goats)
- 26 confirmed scrapie-positive
- Positives included black-face, speckle-face, and white-face

The percentage of positive animals is decreasing.

In addition to RSSS, 2,625 animals have been tested by regulatory field cases, necropsies, and third eyelid biopsies.

The percentage of scrapie-positive black-face cull sheep at slaughter is now less than 0.2% (this is 80% less than three years ago).

Letter to the Editor - Why Join MLWPA?

Our current sheep business started out as a 4-H project in 1951. Since then, we have earned our black belts in the martial art of sheep wrestling. More recently, our bodies have informed our brains that this is a sport best left to a younger age group.

Thus, for the past several years, we have been making an annual trek to the Sydell display at the Shepherd's Harvest Festival in Lake Elmo or the MN Lamb & Wool Producers annual conference in December to pick up some additional human body saving sheep equipment. As members of MLWPA, Sydell gives us a discount

on our purchases. So for the past several years, Sydell has in essence, been paying our MLWPA membership dues for us.

We would like to publicly thank Sydell for building such durable, labor saving equipment, and for all their efforts in supporting MLWPA and the sheep industry.

Also, thank you to the MN Lamb & Wool Producers Association for the numerous education programs they offer, as well as their efforts to promote our industry. Any Minnesota sheep producer who thinks membership to MLWPA is not worth

the money, is simply not paying attention to the numerous membership benefits available.

Respectfully submitted,
Foster and Karen Mooney
Jewel Lane Farm
Chisago City, MN

[Editor's note: Thank you Foster & Karen for all you do for MLWPA! MLWPA members get a 10% discount on equipment orders over \$100, and 15% discount on orders over \$1,000.]

Join us for the 2007 MLWPA Annual Conference

The theme for the 2007 Minnesota Lamb & Wool Producers (MLWP) annual conference and trade is Planning for the Future. The program includes two days of quality educational sessions on sheep management topics, including nationally known speakers, the annual banquet, the MLWP annual business meeting, the Silver Bell luncheon honoring some top sheep producers, the Make it With Wool Contest, and a trade show with vendors of sheep-related equipment, supplies, and consumer products. The trade show is free to the public.

There will be sessions for beginning and experienced shepherds. Topics include: Stress Management, New Nutrient Requirements for Sheep, LRP-Lamb and AGR-Lite Insurance, Managed Grazing, Scrapie/Animal IS Update, Ask the Vet, Sheep Farm

Business Planning, Future of the Sheep Industry Panel, Working with Wool Fabrics, Felting, Cooking with Lamb, and Beginning Shepherds/Small Flock classes.

Registration on day one starts at 1 p.m., includes several educational sessions, the MLWP business meeting, and concludes with the MLWPA annual banquet and auction. Day two features the Make it With Wool Contest and Fashion Revue, more classes, the Silver Bell Luncheon, and concludes with a lamb cooking class. We are pleased to announce that Dr. Larry Goelz (Pipestone Veterinary Clinic), Dr. Cindy Wolf (UofM), Dr. Ted Mathews (Mathews Mental Health), Peter Scheffert (Riverland Community College), and Bo Donegan (American Lamb Board) are among the many speakers invited to share their knowledge with us. You won't

want to miss these excellent programs.

The annual banquet will feature comedienne Corrine Leiser. That will be followed by the always entertaining fundraiser auction. The conference is a great time to socialize with other sheep producers, and you might even learn a thing or two to help your sheep business.



Lee and Schiefelbein represent MLWPA at MAAI

MLWPA Lambassadors, Mercedes Lee of Perley and Ashley Schiefelbein of Kimball, took part at a three-day youth leadership development program in Marshall. Lee and Schiefelbein were among 21 individuals representing lamb, pork, beef, FFA and AgStar Financial Services at the annual Minnesota Agricultural Ambassador Institute. The institute's primary organizers and sponsors are the Minnesota Pork Board and the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation. Additional funding for the event comes from many other Minnesota commodity and agricultural groups.

This year's MAAI theme, Energizing Minnesota Agriculture, looked at converting raw agricultural products into fuel. The institute combined hands-on activities, speakers, and tours to enhance young agriculturalists communication and leadership skills, and increase their knowledge of Minnesota livestock, crop and energy production.

The institute included tours and speakers from Schwan's Foods in Marshall, the Northland Choice Biodiesel plant in Redwood Falls, and the Christensen Farms headquarters



Ashley Schiefelbein, Mercedes Lee (Lambassadors), & Tara Sammon

and feed mill near Sleepy Eye.

Speakers included Susan Anderson, an educational specialist with the University of Minnesota, who provided participants with hands-on activities to use when teaching others about livestock and crop production. Presentations by Jennifer Schmidt, communication specialist with the National Pork Board, and Beth Lauwagie, recruiting manager for Partners Advantage, offered tips on doing successful media interviews and

giving presentations. Joel Mathiowetz, a loan officer with Farm Credit Services of Minnesota Valley, spoke on personal and business finance.

Minnesota Pork Board Executive Director David Preisler, Minnesota Farm Bureau President Kevin Paap, Minnesota Department of Agriculture Livestock and Marketing Director Ralph Groschen, and Minnesota Food and Farm Coalition Livestock Specialist Tara Sammon, addressed current state and federal topics.

Stormo Participates in NLFA Leadership School

I had the opportunity to go to the Howard Wyman Sheep Industry Leadership School. I had wanted to go ever since I had first read about it, and finally it was held within reasonable driving distance, so I applied, and with help from the MLWP, I was able to afford to go! HURRAY! It was very interesting, and also fun. I went hoping to learn some new ways of becoming more profitable.

Pictured to the right is my group at the sheep school.



On-line Sheep Management Classes Offered

Continuing with providing various delivery methods of educational information, the Pipestone Lamb and Wool Program offers 3 online sheep management courses that sheep producers can take in the comfort of their own home or office. The courses allow sheep enthusiasts to keep current with sheep management practices without traveling and attending a workshop or seminar. The courses provide fundamental sheep management information designed for any size or type of sheep operation. These courses would be an excellent

opportunity for youth and adults to learn more about sheep production within their own home or community. Several high school youth have taken one or more of these online courses as part of their Post Secondary Education Option (PSEO). The three courses offered online include:

- Introduction to Sheep Management (LWMP 1001)
- Introduction to Sheep Health (LWMP 1300)
- Ewe Ration Formulation (LWMP 1502).

For more information on these and other programs offered, visit the Pipestone Lamb and Wool Program web page www.pipestonesheep.com or contact one of the Lamb and Wool instructors, Philip Berg, (507) 825-6799, philip.berg@mnwest.edu, or Mike Caskey, (507) 825-6808, mike.caskey@mnwest.edu.



Stern Tannery Destroyed by Fire

The Stern's Tannery building in Sheboygan Falls, WI was destroyed in a fire on June 7, 2007. The fire started about 1 a.m. on Wednesday morning and destroyed the 40,000 square foot three-story building which housed the operations for the Stern Tanning Company. More than 100 firefighters from 11 area department battled the fire. No one was injured in the fire.

The tannery was recognized throughout the country for the reliability and quality of the leather that it produced. It was the only custom tannery in Wisconsin and used

by many local sheep farm to process their pelts.

The first tannery in Sheboygan Falls was built in 1855. In 1880, the first three-story tannery building at 334 Broadway was built. That building was destroyed by a disastrous fire in 1919 and was quickly rebuilt using the same design. Current zoning regulations prohibit industrial buildings in the downtown area so it is very unlikely that Stern Tanning Company will be able to rebuild in the same location. The equipment inside the building was insured but not the

building.

The cause of the fire is unknown. Jeff Stern was a fourth generation owner of the company which had 25 employees at the time of the fire. The company processed about 5,000 hides a month into drum heads, parchment, artwork and clothing. It had about 15,000 skins on hand at the time of the fire. The company is hoping to retrieve some of the skins in the building demolition process and to set up again in a new location.

Flood Relief Web-site

The state of Minnesota has established a website to assist residents, farmers and businesses in SE Minnesota who suffered damage during the August floods. The website is <http://www.minnesotarecovers.org>.

The website is a one-stop shop for residents, farmers and businesses to access the various relief and assistance programs available.



16 **Calendar of Events**

2007		
Oct. 27	Northstar Bred Ewe Sale	Pipestone, MN
Nov. 1	Entry deadline - MN Hampshire youth scholarships	
Nov. 5	Entry deadline for MN MIWW Contest	
Nov. 10	Entry deadline - MN Suffolk youth scholarships	
Nov. 16	Deadline for reduced room rate for MLWP conference	
Nov. 16	Silver Bell Award nominations due	
Nov. 17-19	MN Farm Bureau Annual Mtg	Bloomington, MN

MN Bred Ewe & Doe Sale

Sat. Nov. 24 - 8:30 a.m. show, 1:00 p.m. sale

Selling bred & open females of these breeds:
Dorsets, Hampshires, Montadales, South-downs, Suffolks, Wether dams, & Boer Goats.

Contact: Todd & Robin Schmidt - 507-377-1045
 or www.sheepsales.com for a catalog.

Refer to p. 2 for information on **\$100 youth scholarships** towards the **purchase of Suffolk or Hampshire ewes** at this sale!

Nov. 21	Pre-registration deadline for MLWP Conference	
Nov. 24	Minnesota Bred Ewe & Doe Sale Olmsted County Fairgrounds	Rochester, MN
	Details to the right >	
Dec. 7-8	MLWP Annual Conference Ramada Hotel & Conference Center	Rochester, MN
Dec. 8	Make It With Wool contest Ramada Hotel & Conference Center	Rochester, MN



2008		
Jan. 24-26	ASI Annual Mtg. Make it With Wool Contest	Las Vegas, NV Las Vegas, NV
May 10-11	Shepherd's Harvest Festival	Lake Elmo, MN
May 10	Spring Sheep Workshop	Lake Elmo, MN

Bill Head, Bob Padula, Rex Quam, & Jeremy Geske represent MLWP at the Minnesota Farm Bureau Foundation Golf Outing.

Believe it or not, there were teams worse than us!

Future Newsletter Schedule:

Winter	Conference Highlights / Legislative Issues
Spring	Events & Issues
Summer	State Fair Issue
Fall	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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Join us in Rochester for the
 MLWPA Annual Conference!

*We're on the
 web!
www.mlwp.org*