



Minnesota Lamb & Wool Producers Association

Shepherds' Bulletin

Summer 2003

MLWPA Officers

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1st VP - Jeremy Geske (952) 758-7938
2nd VP - Foster Mooney (651) 257-5079
Treasurer - Jean Stark (320) 251-4237
Secretary - Julie Sievert (507) 834-6851

MLWPA Regional Directors

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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
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Karen Geske (952) 758-7938

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George Mead (763) 682-4626

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Gene Holmquist (507) 853-4409

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Jim Hickman (763) 682-3519

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

MLWPA Web Address:

www.mlwp.org

Editor's Notes— by Bob Padula

The *Great Minnesota Get Together* – better known as the Minnesota State Fair is fast approaching. For many, it is an annual event to meet with other sheep producers and catch up on the times and reminisce about the past.

It is also a time for the sheep producers to promote the sheep industry to the public. Promotion isn't limited to the Baa Booth and the Commercial Booth, but includes discussing the sheep industry with fairgoers looking at the sheep on exhibition. Most fair goers are generations removed from Agriculture and even if they still have agrarian roots – they do not have sheep. It's time to show and tell them the positive aspects of the sheep industry, not dwell on the negative or past problems.

When people ask about eating lamb (and you know they will) – tell them how you like to cook lamb and how easy it is to prepare. If they can grill other meats, they can grill a lamb leg steak or lamb chop! If they mention not being able to find lamb in the local grocery store – explain how they can contact a sheep producer and have a lamb “custom processed” to their specifications. Remind them that a lamb doesn't take up the entire freezer like a steer or hog. Explain the positive side of lamb.

And be positive about wool. Most of the non-sheep public equates sheep with wool, not always lamb meat. If you complain about low wool prices and say, “Wool is not worth anything” – what kind of message are you sending to the consumer? If you don't care about your product – why should they?

Be positive about the sheep industry – the public is watching.

Lamb Meat Adjustment Assistance Program LMAAP (Feeder Lamb, Slaughter Lamb and Ewe Lamb Retention Payments)

Year 4 of the Lamb Meat Adjustment Assistance Program (LMAAP) ends July 31, 2003. You have until August 15, 2003 to sign up at your local FSA office.

FSA offices are not able to issue checks at this time, and are waiting to determine the total amount eligible for payment and will pro-rate the payments based on funds remaining.

Will there be an extension?

This is a question many sheep producers are asking. ASI and your State Association are asking Congress to extend the program for another year – it's in the works, but we need your help.

If you would like an extension of the LMAAP for another year, you need to contact your Congressman and Senators. A simple note, telephone call, email or fax encouraging them to support the extension of the Lamb Meat Adjustment Assistance Program for another year is all it takes.

One of the goals of the LMAAP was to increase the population of the national sheep flock in the US to help stabilize the infrastructure. Minnesota sheep producers depend on the commercial infrastructure for marketing our lamb and wool.

Unfortunately, the ewe retention program coincided with major drought in much of the United States, which forced sheep producers to reduce flock sizes. Now that the drought has moderated in much of the US, flock rebuilding and expansion can occur. The LMAAP will help increase the numbers of sheep in the US and strengthen our infrastructure.

ASI and the MLWPA have been in contact with congressional staff. It's your turn to help yourself. If you don't write or call them – it won't happen, it's that simple.

ATTENTION DIRECT MARKETERS !!

Do you want to have State Fair visitors know you have lamb, wool, or dairy sheep products for sale?

Well, here is your chance to get the word out!
As yet another benefit of MLWPA membership, a Free Direct Market Listing to the Minnesota Sheep Industry will be handed out at the State Fair Commercial Booth.

Anyone interested in taking advantage of this great opportunity should send in pertinent information by Friday, August 8th to:

Patty Anderson, 4145 200th St. E. Prior Lake, MN. 55372

2003 MN State Fair Sheep Show information

Open Class Schedule

Thursday, August 21

NO Open Class Wool Show this year

Friday, August 22

8:00 a.m. Superintendent's Special
(White-face Breeds)
9:00 a.m. Rambouillet
12:00 noon Columbia
3:00 p.m. Montadale

Saturday, August 23

9:00 a.m. Weigh Quality Lambs
2:00 p.m. Quality Lambs
2:30 p.m. Market Lambs (White-face)
3:00 p.m. Border Cheviot
5:00 p.m. All other breeds

Sunday, August 24

10:30 a.m. Exhibitors Meeting
11:30 a.m. Lamb Lead

Tuesday, August 26

8:00 a.m. Superintendent's Special
(Black-face Breeds)
8:30 a.m. P.A. Anderson Challenge
Trophy
9:00 a.m. Hampshire
1:00 p.m. Suffolk

Wednesday, August 27

8:30 a.m. Market Lambs (Black-face)
9:30 a.m. Southdown
1:00 p.m. Dorset

Thursday, August 29

10:00 a.m. Exhibitor Meeting

4-H Sheep Program

Wednesday, August 20

8:00 a.m. Barns ready for Livestock

Thursday, August 21

8:00 a.m.-12:00 noon Lamb Lead Interview Sign-up
10:00 a.m.- 12:00 noon Market Lamb Weigh-In
10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon Breeding Ewe Verification
11:00 a.m. All Livestock in Place
Noon Wool Show Check-in
1:00 p.m. Exhibitor meeting
2:00 p.m. Wool Show Judging
3:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m. Sheep Interviews and Call-backs

Friday, August 22

9:00 a.m.-3:00p.m. Lamb Lead Interviews
10:00 a.m. Make-up Interviews
4:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m. Market Lamb Show
4:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m. Breeding Ewe Show

Saturday, August 23

8:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Lamb Lead Show
11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Showmanship
2:00 p.m. Fun Showmanship Activity
6:00 p.m. Purple Ribbon Auction
8:30 p.m. Market Lamb Load Out

Sunday, August 24

2:00 p.m. Herdsmanship Awards
3:00 p.m. Livestock Released

MLWPA T-Shirts

New for 2003, the MLWPA will have available T-shirts embroidered with the MLWPA logo at the Minnesota State Fair for \$12 each for members. The high quality red T-shirts will be embroidered with black lettering this year. Let the other sheep producers know you are a member of the organization.

Plan to attend the MLWPA annual conference in Hutchinson

Keeping sheep healthy will be the theme for the 2003 Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers Association annual conference. Although the agenda is still tentative, a number of speakers and topics have been confirmed. Sheep specialists from SDSU, NDSU, and the University of Minnesota, as well as veterinarians and sheep producers will be on the program.

Topics that will be offered include: *Ewe Flock Vaccination Programs, Sheep Wasting Diseases (CL, OPP, & Johne's), The Effects of Lung Lesions on Lamb Performance, Stress Management in the Sheep Operation, Understanding the Genetics of Scrapie Resistance, How Sheep Health Affects Wool Quality, and NDSU Scrapie Research Update.* Other topics yet to be confirmed include: *Ventilation and Temperature Control in the Lambing Barn, Ram Management, Cooking with Lamb, Lamb Check-off Update,* and a producer panel on *Raising Lambs for a Specific Market.*

Saturday will include an entire day of youth programming with sessions on *Sheep Judging, Showmanship, Lamb Lead,* and more. We will also be offering some hands-on classes for adults on *Using Ultrasounds, Drawing Blood, and Determining Forage Quality.*

We are also looking into the possibility of offering two full days of fiber classes. As always, the conference will include a trade show, auction, banquet, and MLWPA annual meeting.

The 2003 MLWPA annual conference will be held November 21 and 22 at the Best Western Victorian Inn in Hutchinson. The Saturday afternoon hands-on program will be held at the McLeod County Fairgrounds. More information on costs, room reservations and a complete agenda (as it becomes finalized) will be posted on the MLWPA website (www.mlwp.org). Your MLWPA board feels that this is shaping up to be one of the best conferences in years, and we hope to see you there. Questions or comments about the conference can be directed to your MLWPA vice-presidents Jeremy Geske (952-758-7938 or geskesheep@aol.com) and Foster Mooney (651-257-5079).

Strong lamb prices illustrate the value of using high quality rams ***By Jeremy Geske, Extension Educator, University of Minnesota Extension Service***

For a change, sheep producers have enjoyed strong lamb prices throughout the spring and into early summer. Hopefully many of you were able to take advantage of \$0.90 - \$1.10 lamb prices. You've probably heard me explain time and again how using rams with superior growth will add pounds to your lamb crop and dollars to your pocket book.

Lets compare using a ram that gained 1.5 pounds per day vs. a ram that gained 1.2 pounds per day. Take half of the difference ($.3/2 = .15$ as the ram contributes half of the genetics to the lambs) multiplied by the heritability if ADG (.4) to get .06 pounds per day per lamb advantage by using the better ram. If your lambs are on feed for 60 days, the lambs out the ram that gained 1.5 pounds per day will be 3.6 pounds heavier than the lambs out of the other ram. If the ram is mated to 30 ewes, with a 150% lamb crop, that is 45 lambs (x 3.6 lbs.) or 162 pounds of lamb. If you got a dollar a pound for your lambs this year, that's an extra \$162 in the bank. You should be able to use a ram for 3 years, so do the math and think about that next time you need to purchase a ram.

Never underestimate the importance of using high quality rams. Remember the old adage, "a cheap ram is the most expensive animal you'll ever own."

MLWPA COMMERCIAL BOOTH AT THE MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

What Is The MLWPA Commercial Booth?

The Minnesota Lamb & Wool Producers Association sponsors the commercial booth. It is the only source of income for our organization besides our membership dues and sponsorships. Through Mary Lue's in St. Peter and private sheep producer vendors, this booth provides fair visitors with more complete information about sheep; explaining how they are cared for and also displays many by-products of our industry. Fair visitors are educated on our products by receiving cutting charts on lambs, instructions on how to prepare the different cuts, recipes, wool care cards, and the Sheep Reporter; which is an excellent source for children to learn more about sheep.

We exist to educate and inform the public about the different sources of our products and how they relate to sheep, the producers and the potential customers. As a producer we are at an advantage of having quite a few woolen mills in our state and we need to work with them because their products are advertising our raw products.

What Can You Do?

Volunteer!! People like you are needed to assist in staffing the Commercial Booth. Work shifts are 9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. and 3:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M. If you can't work a whole shift, even working a couple of hours during meal times would be most helpful. The booth is open all 12 days of the State Fair, August 21 - Sept. 1, 2003. If you enjoy talking to the public and sharing your knowledge, this can be a very gratifying experience for you.

To volunteer, please call Patty Anderson at 952-447-4189 or e-mail PATMEADOW@prodigy.net

Silver Bell Award Nominations needed

The Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers Association 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 MLWPA website at: www.mlwp.org.

The Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers Association are currently taking applications for the 2003 Junior and Senior Silver Bell Awards. Applications are due by October 15, 2003; awards will be presented at the Shepherd's Conference November 21 - 22, 2003. Winners will be honored at the Silver Bell Luncheon on Nov. 22. The 2002 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 Jeremy Geske at (651) 480-7704 or geske002@umn.edu. Applications should be returned to Jeremy Geske, Dakota County Extension Office, 4100 220th ST W, Farmington, MN 55024 by October 15, 2003. Application forms are also available on the website: www.mlwp.org.

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR STOCK DOG TRIAL

Monday, August 25, 2003
Coliseum --- 8 am to Noon

This is the 7th year that the Minnesota State Fair has held a stock dog trial. This competitive event is meant to demonstrate the correct handling of livestock by the dog. The event is open to all breeds of herding dogs and has 3 levels of competition.

For further information contact the competition department of the fair: 651-642-2217 or email: competition@mnstatefair.org or JoAnna Yund, Superintendent (612) 922-1114 or email: JoAnnaY@aol.com



Help your operation and all of Minnesota's sheep industry and become a member of the Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers Association

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE MLWPA

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Fax _____
E-Mail _____ County _____
Farm Name _____
Description of Flock & Breed(s) _____

**Make \$35 check payable to MLWPA & Mail to:
MLWPA c/o Patty Anderson
4145 200th St. E.
Prior Lake, MN 55372**

Note – Membership fees are for one calendar year. To be included in the next membership directory – you must sign up no later than December 31 of the previous year. Membership fees increase to \$40 if paid after January 1. New members signing up at the state fair will become current members for the remainder of the calendar year and members for the following year.

FRIEND OF THE MINNESOTA SHEEP INDUSTRY

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Fax _____
E-Mail _____ Web-site Address _____

**Make \$25 check payable to MLWPA & Mail to:
MLWPA c/o Patty Anderson
4145 200th St. E.
Prior Lake, MN 55372**

The Baa Booth™ at the Minnesota State Fair

Sponsored by the Minnesota Lamb & Wool Producers Association in cooperation with the Minnesota State Fair

The Baa Booth™

Is a lamb and wool industry educational booth, which provides fair visitors with more complete information about sheep, their products and how producers care for sheep. The booth will provide fair visitors the opportunity to view assorted displays and participate in various activities while visiting the booth.

The Mission

The Baa Booth™ exists to educate and inform the public about the lamb and wool industry. Informing the consumer about how the animals are cared for; how the animals contribute to their lives; how the lamb and wool industry contributes to the economic, social and environmental well being of society; and how producers and other people play an integral role in making all of this happen.

The Baa Booth™ Needs You!

Volunteers

Every day, during the first 8 days, of the fair the Baa Booth features regular demonstrations and activities throughout the day.

Volunteers are needed to help in staffing the booth and running the activities.

Dates: August 21 through the 28th, 2003, the first 8 days of the Fair.

The Booth is open:

9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Weekdays**
8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Weekends**

(**Exceptions: the Booth closes at 3 pm Sunday, August 24 and 2 pm Thursday, August 28 due to animal changeover)

Volunteers are asked to volunteer for a three-hour shift in return for a free gate ticket and parking pass in the volunteer lot. Extra people are needed to assist with the Wool Pack-O-Rama that will be held, Wednesday, August 27 at 5:00 pm.

Sponsors

Sponsors are still needed to provide educational materials. Prizes and/or cash donations to assist with the operation of the 2003 Baa Booth™ and for the long-term success of the Baa Booth™ are welcome. Please contact the coordinator with any questions.

Questions? About the Baa Booth may be directed to the booth coordinator: Doris Mold, phone: 651-645-3275, fax: 651-917-9637 or e-mail: doris@sunriseag.net

Please return this response form by August 15, 2003 to aid us in mailing your tickets in a timely manner

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____

I would like to work at the booth (check all that apply and please specify times, below)

8/21 8/22 8/23 8/24 (opens at 8, closes at 3)
 8/25 8/26 8/27 8/28 (closes at 2)

(Please sign up for a minimum of three hours to receive a free ticket)

Return forms to: Doris Mold, 1778 Eustis St., Lauderdale, MN 55113

Calendar of Events Year 2003

Aug 21 - Sept 1 Minnesota State Fair

August 25 Minnesota State Fair Stock Dog
Trial
8 a.m. - Noon - State Fair Coliseum

September 11 Montana Ram Sale
Miles City, Montana

Sept 12-13 East Central Minnesota Sheep &
Wool Festival, Mora Civic Center
Kanabec County Fairgrounds -
Mora, MN

September 13 MLWPA Board Meeting 10 am
Pizza Ranch, Glencoe

October 16 Boss's Day

November 4 Election Day

Nov 21-22 MLWPA Annual Conference and
Trade Show - Victorian Inn;
Hutchinson

December 5-6 Montana Wool Growers Association
Annual Meeting - Billings, MT

January 21-24 American Sheep Industry
Association
Annual Meeting in Sacramento, CA

Future Newsletter Schedule:

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

*MLWPA Newsletter
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