



Minnesota Lamb & Wool
Producers Association

Shepherds' Bulletin

WINTER 2006

MLWPA Officers

President – Jeremy Geske (952) 758-7938
1st VP – Dan Persons (320) 986-2336
2nd VP – Don Adelman (952) 466-2451
Treasurer – Jean Stark (320) 251-4237
Secretary – Sheilina Sperry (320) 237-3577

MLWPA Regional Directors

North East – Warner Johnson (651) 257-0827
North West – Charles Stark (320) 251-4237
West Central – Mike Haubrich (320) 826-2526
South West - Doug Mathias (507) 376-9665
South East – Tim Perrizo (507) 854-3675
Metro - Patricia Anderson (952) 447-4148

Satellite Association Contacts

Cannon Valley Sheep Producers

Karen Geske (952) 758-7938

Crow River Lamb & Wool Producers

George Mead (763) 682-4626

Des Moines Valley Lamb & Wool

Gene Holmquist (507) 853-4409

Minnesota Hampshire Association

Jim Hickman (763) 682-3519

Minnesota Suffolk Sheep Association

Jere Rambow (320) 693-8367

South East Minnesota Sheep Producers

Todd Schmidt (507) 377-1045

Upper Midwest Dynamic Dorsets

Deric Sievert (507) 834-6851

West Central Sheep Producers

Judy Johnston (320) 589-1243

Country Meadow Farms Cooperative

Charles Christians (651) 633-7598

MLWPA Web Address:

www.mlwp.org

President's Message – Jeremy Geske

It's the most wonderful time of the year...lambing season! Each year I look forward to the first lambs being born. I get to find out if I mated each ewe to the correct ram. I'll find out very quickly if my new stud was worth the price I paid. By time the lambs are weaned, I'm already planning for the next breeding season and eagerly awaiting the next lamb crop. Maybe I took too many genetics classes in college?

The MLWPA Board of Directors is working hard to represent you, but we need your help. We need your help to build our membership. We need your input on how we can better serve the sheep producers in Minnesota.

There are almost 3,000 sheep producers in Minnesota; however, only a little over 300 pay dues to MLWPA. Yet, the majority have at one time or another taken advantage of programs such as the ewe lamb retention payments, wool LDPs, scrapie genotyping, and others that would not have existed without the efforts of ASI and the affiliate state associations. We all know sheep producers who aren't members. If we each signed one new member, our organization would double in size. I challenge each of you to recruit one new member.

As we work with the University of Minnesota, the state legislature, and provide input to ASI as they work on national issues, we need to hear from you, our members on what issues are most important to the success of your sheep business. As your president, I invite you to e-mail, call, or write to me any time to share your ideas on how to improve MLWPA.

WANTED: Person or persons with retail experience to help work in the MLWP booth at the MN State Fair. Qualifications include being people friendly, knowledge of cash register and usage of credit card machine. Complimentary tickets to state fair and compensation negotiable. Please contact Patty Anderson @ 952-447-4184 or patmeadow@integraonline.com for more information.

Wool Mulch

Wool blankets have been keeping humans warm for centuries. Now they may help build a better berry.

The Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers Association (MLWPA) is marketing wool mulch called Woolch for use in fruit and vegetable growing operations and other landscape applications.

The plush, gray blanket is made from carding waste (low value wool often discarded after raw wool has been cleaned and separated before being spun into thread). The Woolch is giving new life to waste wool and protecting plants to boot.

“We have a waste product that does an excellent job on weed control and moisture retention,” says Sherry Stirling, MLWPA Woolch project coordinator. “When you’re done with it, the Woolch can be plowed into the soil where it adds nitrogen, helps aerate the soil to prevent compaction, and is 100 percent biodegradable.”

The wool mulch was tested on strawberries at the West Central Research and Outreach Center in Morris the last two years. Results show the mulch was as effective at weed control as hand weeding, and possibly better than standard herbicides.

Information on Woolch is available at www.mlwp.org or by calling Sherry Stirling at 651-257-0827.

Adapted from AURI Ag Innovation Update, Jan. 2006

UM Extension Service Identifies Sheep Contact

At the request of the MLWPA, the University of Minnesota Extension Service has provided the following information for a sheep contact.

Wayne Martin
University of Minnesota
Integrated Livestock Production Systems
385 AnSc/VetMed Bldg, 1988 Fitch Ave
St Paul, MN 55108
612-625-6224
Fax 612-625-1210
marti067@tc.umn.edu

Questions regarding sheep programming efforts and needs can now be directly sent to one person. This is very important to MLWPA members, as the roles and duties of Extension Educators within the UMES has changed and it was unclear to whom producers should contact for sheep related information.

New College Task Force Report Released

The process for creating a new, expanded college took another big step forward this week when Provost Thomas Sullivan released the final report of the Task Force for the new, expanded college. This new college will integrate the College of Natural Resources, the College of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences and the Department of Food Science and Nutrition.

The Task Force Report discusses a variety of topics including:

- The organization of departments and other units in the new college,
- A University-wide Institute of the Environment, and
- The name of the new college.

You can link to the report by going to:
http://www1.umn.edu/systemwide/strategic_positioning/

Agricultural Statistics

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

MINNESOTA'S SHEEP AND LAMB INVENTORY UP 7 PERCENT

Minnesota's January 1, 2006 sheep and lamb inventory was up 7 percent from last year to 155,000 head, according to USDA, NASS Minnesota Field Office.

Breeding stock numbers were up 10 percent at 110,000. The remaining inventory of 45,000 market lambs and sheep was unchanged from last year. Of the 45,000 total lambs and sheep for slaughter market, 1,000 were mature sheep (1 year old and older) and the remaining 44,000 were lambs under 1 year. Market lambs by weight group were estimated as follows: under 65 pounds: 11,000; 65-84 pounds: 9,000; 85-105 pounds: 14,000; over 105 pounds: 10,000.

Minnesota's 2005 lamb crop totaled 140,000 head, up 4 percent from the previous year. The 2005 lambing rate was 175 per 100 ewes one year old and older on hand January 1, 2006, compared with 169 per 100 ewes in 2005. Note – Minnesota continues to lead the nation in lambing rate per 100 ewes.

MINNESOTA WOOL PRODUCTION UP 7 PERCENT FROM 2004

Minnesota's 2005 wool output increased 7 percent with production totaling 970,000 pounds compared with 910,000 pounds in 2004. Minnesota is ranked 12th in 2005 U.S. wool production. The 150,000 sheep and lambs shorn in 2005 were up 7 percent from 2004. Fleece weight averaged 6.5 pounds, unchanged from the previous year. Value of the state's 2005 wool production was \$369,000, up 9 percent from the previous year's value of \$337,000. Average price per pound for 2005 was 38 cents, up 1 cent from the 2004 price.

MINNESOTA'S MEAT AND OTHER GOAT INVENTORY UP 6 PERCENT

Minnesota's January 1, 2006 meat and other goat inventory at 10,000 were up 6 percent from the revised January 1, 2005 figure. The milk goat inventory at 6,000 was up 3 percent from the revised 2005 figure, while angora goats, at 1,000 were unchanged from last year.

U.S. TOTAL SHEEP AND LAMB INVENTORY UP 2 PERCENT

All sheep and lamb inventory in the United States on January 1, 2006, totaled 6.23 million head, up 2 percent from both 2005 and 2004. The inventory began increasing in 2005 and has shown two consecutive year to year increases for the first time since 1987 and 1988.

Breeding sheep inventory increased to 4.64 million head on January 1, 2006, up 2 percent from 4.53 million head on January 1, 2005. Ewes one year old and older, at 3.66 million head, were 2 percent above last year.

Market sheep and lambs on January 1, 2006, totaled 1.59 million head, down 1 percent from January 1, 2005. Market lambs comprised 95 percent of the total marketings. Twenty-seven percent were lambs under 65 pounds, 14 percent were 65 - 84 pounds, 24 percent were 85 - 105 pounds, and 35 percent were over 105 pounds. Market sheep comprised the remaining 5 percent of total marketings.

The 2005 lamb crop of 4.13 million head, was up 1 percent from 2004. The 2005 lambing rate was 115 lambs per 100 ewes one year old and older on January 1, 2005, up 2 percent from 2004.

Shorn wool production in the United States during 2005 was 37.2 million pounds, down 1 percent from 2004. Sheep and lambs shorn totaled 5.07 million head, down slightly from 2004. The average price paid for wool sold in 2005 was \$0.71 per pound for a total value of 26.3 million dollars, down 12 percent from 29.9 million dollars in 2004.

Legislative Issues

Senator Mark Dayton

<http://dayton.senate.gov/>

Senator Norm Coleman

<http://coleman.senate.gov/>

Representative Collin Peterson

<http://collinpeterson.house.gov/>

Representative Gil Gutkneck

<http://www.gil.house.gov/>

Representative John Kline

<http://www.house.gov/kline/>

Representative Jim Ramstad

www.house.gov/ramstad/

Representative Betty McCollum

<http://www.mccollum.house.gov/>

Representative Martin Sabo

<http://sabo.house.gov/>

Representative Mark Kennedy

<http://markkennedy.house.gov/>

Representative James Oberstar

<http://oberstar.house.gov/>

Senators want to take USDA logo off imported beef

Several senators are proposing that the U.S. Department of Agriculture take its logo off certain cuts of imported meat, a move that could make the market more favorable for some U.S. ranchers.

Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., introduced legislation that would prohibit labels such as “USDA prime” or “USDA choice” on packages of imported beef and lamb.

The bill, which is co-sponsored by North Dakota Democrats Kent Conrad and Byron Dorgan, would prevent the Agricultural Marketing Service from grading those meats. Johnson’s bill is in response to several delays for a mandatory meat labeling law authorized in the 2002 farm bill. Originally scheduled to begin in 2004, the law was delayed until 2006 two years ago and then in October 2005, delayed until to 2008.

Reauthorize Mandatory Price Reporting

The American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) is asking the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture to promptly resolve the lamb price-reporting situation. A key issue of concern for the U.S. sheep industry is the lack of availability of some market reporting for lamb. This was the subject of a letter sent to Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-Ga.), chair, and the other members of the Senate Agriculture Committee including Minnesota Senators Dayton and Coleman.

ASI stressed two priorities in the correspondence:

The lamb industry needs reauthorization of Mandatory Price Reporting (MPR) as all provisions of lamb reporting are by Departmental rulemaking.

The continuation of the retail price series for lamb, which is also contained in the MPR reauthorization. It is imperative that reauthorization of lamb be accomplished now before there is no reporting of lamb price data at all.

Since MPR was not reauthorized prior to its expiration on Oct. 1, 2005, the process has become one of voluntary compliance. Lamb-import companies, which represent more than 40 percent of the total lamb in the U.S. market, immediately stopped reporting prices on imported lamb cuts. Also, the retail price series for lamb and other meats has not been available for months. Most recently, the lack of participation from a sufficient number of lamb processors has resulted in no lamb-carcass sales being reported for two weeks.

“A great deal of anxiousness was evident during the sheep industry convention regarding the lack of market information and also the downward trend of live slaughter lamb prices that has occurred since early November,” stated Peter Orwick, ASI executive director. “Transparency in the markets is extremely important to insure a level playing field for all involved.”

Report on Applied Research & Outreach Status for MN Agriculture Released (Minnesota Farm Bureau January 27, 2006)

A report analyzing the current applied research and outreach status for Minnesota production agriculture was released today. The report looked at: production practices for conditions in Minnesota, farm level regulatory compliance assistance, business model development and management, new uses and markets for agricultural products and farm level food safety and health issues.

The report was commissioned by a working group of 21 Minnesota agricultural organizations. The data utilized in the evaluation was provided by the University of Minnesota (U of M) College of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences (COAFES) and their resources.

The working group stated that the University of Minnesota is important to agriculture, and that they all share the same interest in the U of M's role in agriculture's future. The following key conclusions surfaced through the study.

Key Conclusions

*Budget pressures and the changing needs of commercial agriculture will force continued reorganization of the applied research and outreach programs to fit the available funds and needs of commercial production agriculture.

*The University of Minnesota and the agricultural units associated with COAFES have budget challenges that will not be alleviated over the next five years with either increased state or federal appropriated funding.

*The stakeholders in the programs of COAFES, the Experiment Station and the Extension Service can influence the future of the three units because most of their funding comes from the state legislature, tuition and contracts with public institutions and private groups.

*The continued specialization and increase in the size of farms should force applied research and outreach to be farm input decision driven rather than COAFES program driven.

*The "new" college of agriculture with a stated goal of being "one of the premier research institutions in the world dedicated to environmental research" will likely result in a dilution in applied research and outreach for production agriculture and exacerbate existing budget challenges for these programs.

The agricultural working group stated that traditionally, agriculture has been a strong stakeholder with the University, and it is imperative for this to continue. It has been and will continue to be important to the State of Minnesota and to farmers that the University of Minnesota has a strong agricultural outreach and research program.

The agricultural working group added that a good understanding of the current applied research and outreach status was needed before moving forward. The group believes this report does that and as a result, strengthens the ability for them to achieve a common goal of meeting the applied research and outreach needs of Minnesota farmers.

NEED WEB-SITE INFORMATION HERE.

The report was sponsored by a working group of Minnesota agricultural organizations through the Minnesota Farm Bureau Foundation. The agricultural groups include Broiler and Egg Association of Minnesota, Minnesota AgriGrowth Council, Minnesota Association of Cooperatives, Minnesota Association of Wheat Growers, Minnesota Barley Research & Promotion Council, Minnesota Canola Research and Promotion Council, Minnesota Corn Growers Association, Minnesota Crop Improvement Association, Minnesota Cultivated Wild Rice Council, Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation, Minnesota Lamb & Wool Producers Association, Minnesota Milk Producers Association, Minnesota Pork Producers Association, Minnesota Soybean Growers Association, Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council, Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association, Minnesota Turkey Growers Association, Minnesota Wheat Research and Promotion Council, Northern Minnesota Forage and Turf Seed Advisory Committee and RL Growers Cooperative.

Governor Appoints Geske to Minnesota Board of Veterinary Medicine

Governor Tim Pawlenty announced the appointment of Jeremy Geske to the Minnesota Board of Veterinary Medicine.

Geske, of New Prague, currently serves as President of the Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers Association and the local issues specialist for the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation. Geske previously served as an extension educator for the University of Minnesota Extension Service in Dakota County and is a sheep and goat producer. He received his bachelor's degree in Animal Science from North Dakota State University in Fargo and a master's degree in Animal Science and Industry from Kansas State University in Manhattan. Geske is appointed to the Board for a public member position and will serve a four-year term which ends January 5, 2009.

2006 Silver Bell Award Winners

Pine Lawn Farms, Mike and Carrie Caskey Family of Holland Minnesota

Mike and Carrie Caskey and family, Irene, Jason, Kelly and Kyle, are truly a model of a "family" sheep operation. Each plays an important role in contributing to the success of their purebred and commercial operation.

Mike was the backbone in the effort to organize the MN Lamb and Wool Producers Association over 25 years ago. He has been a member of and/or chaired more organizations and boards over the past 25 years or more than space permits, including a number of terms as president of the American Hampshire Sheep Assn. Mike is also recognized as one of the premier sheep judges in the country, having judged the National Hampshire show at Louisville a number of times and numerous major state fairs annually.

Carrie, Mike's wife of nearly 30 years, is truly the quarterback of the family operation. When Mike is away taking care of his many job and sheep related obligations, Carrie is the number one chore person and keeps things afloat at home. When the kids were still at home, she was the organizer and in recent years, she finds herself the one-man-gang taking care of the farm.

Their children have always played a big part in the total scene, dating back to their 4-H and FFA careers and that has continued into their adulthood.

Irene was always, in her dad's description, the meticulous washer of the show sheep. Although she is now busy with her own family, she still finds time to be on hand to help the show the family's flock at some of the fairs and sales.

Kelly, the younger of the daughters also still finds time from her busy schedule to be at many of the sheep functions to assist.

Along with their sisters, Jason and Kyle, after brilliant 4-H and FFA careers, have also developed a love for the sheep and are a driving force in their operation. They are home most weekends to help ease the work load and are major players in the selection process of the breeding and show flock. They are both accomplished fitters and professional showmen as well.

I strongly feel that Pine Lawn Farms- Mike and Carrie Caskey Family – is a model candidate for the Silver Bell Award. Submitted by Chuck Bobendrier.

Junior Silver Bell Award Winners

Laura Drewry, Farmington Minnesota

Laura has been an exceptional junior sheep producer and top candidate for the Junior Silver Bell Award. As the present time, she has developed a flock of 41 club-type ewes and uses two rams to produce market lambs for junior members. She also has a flock of polypay sheep that she has shown locally and in the state and national competitions.

Laura has been in 4-H for 13 years and served as the 4-H County President, and she has shown at county fairs and the Minnesota State Fair. She has been on the County 4-H livestock judging team for several years and represented Minnesota and Dakota County at the American Royal 4-H Livestock Judging Contest this past November. Laura has give three State Fair 4-H demonstrations and has given county fair demonstrations for the past 13 years.

She has been an active FFA member and served as FFA President this past year. She has shown her Polypay sheep at the State Fair for the past four years and has won many purple ribbons. Laura has also competed in the FFA Livestock Judging Contests. She has advised many junior sheep producers on feeding, selection and show ring practices.

This past year, Laura was selected as a Minnesota Lamb Ambassador and gave demonstrations at the Shepherd's Harvest Festival, several Twin Cities retail food stores, and the Minnesota State Fair Baa Booth. She assisted in helping set up and organized the Baa Booth on Sunday prior to the Minnesota State Fair and helped in the booth for several days during the State Fair. She represented the MLWPA at the Minnesota Youth Ambassador Conference this past summer.

On a national level, she has shown Polypay sheep at seven national junior Polypay shows. In addition, she helped the Polypay Sheep Association calculate NSIP EPD's this past year. Laura also showed Montadale wether lambs at the National Montadale Junior Sheep Show this year.

Laura has demonstrated a strong interest in the sheep industry by developing her own flock and has been a spokesperson for the sheep industry to both urban and rural consumers. She is presently a freshman at Hamline University and then plans to attend the University of Minnesota. Submitted by Dr. Charles J. Christians.

Dylan Nohner, Watkins Minnesota

Dylan has been active with sheep since being in 4-H, showing at that time commercial sheep and was easily identified as a young man who loved sheep and enjoyed the 4-H sheep project. He has won several state fair trips with sheep he purchased from other MLWPA members and has proved to be a dedicated person, always trying to do better. Since his 4-H days, he now has a great set of Dorsets, which he shows at the FFA shows and many open shows including the Minnesota State Fair. The awards and titles he has won are too are many.

Dylan has decided to make a career out of being a sheep producer and has purchased almost 500 ewes with a USDA Young Farmer Loan. These kind of young people are few and hard to find and the sheep industry needs these type of dedicated young people to survive as an industry.

Still not 21 years of age and starting from being on the lower end of a show class in 4-H to making a caereer out of the sheep industry is an inspiration to all of us sheep producers.
Submitted by Roger Karstens.

Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers Annual Membership Meeting – November 18, 2005 Best Western, Fergus Falls, MN

President Bob Padula called the 2005 Annual Membership meeting of the Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers to order at 4:15 pm on November 18th, 2005 at the Best Western in Fergus Falls, MN.

Secretary's report of the 2004 Annual Meeting was distributed and read. Motion to approve as printed was made by Don Adelman and seconded by Dan Persons; motion carried.

Treasurer's report for 2005 was presented via overhead slides. For the year Nov 1, 2003 through Oct 31, 2005, income was \$76,949.91 and expenses were \$70,138.01. Ending balances were checking: \$7,046.32, savings: \$35,160.16, and certificates of deposit: ~\$19,400.00. Motion to accept as presented was made by Don Adelman and seconded by Doug Mathias; motion carried.

Old Business:

- Report about changes at the University of Minnesota College of Agriculture was presented.
- Gross income from State Fair commercial booth was \$43,700.62. Expenses were \$38,735.20.
- Shepherd's Holiday conference for 2006 will be December 1 & 2 in Pipestone at the Minnesota West Community and Technical College.
- MN State Fair sheep barn is scheduled for new roof before next fair. Birthing Center is being expanded in current parking ramp area near University Avenue.
- Starter flocks for youth grant program – two satellite groups participated in 2005.
- MLWP has received a grant of \$10,200 via the Minnesota Grown program from USDA Risk Management Agency. Grant will be used to present three workshops for shepherds designed to promote economic viability and reduce the risks – Youth Spring Workshop (March), class at Shepherd's Harvest (May) and class at Shepherd's Holiday (Dec) as well as promoting Best Practices in upcoming newsletters.
- Baa Booth and the need to have more MLWP participation was covered by Bob Padula. He will undertake an effort in 2006 to have new displays promoting the wool industry, highlighting MN woolen mills, and showcasing products available via the Commercial Booth.

New Business:

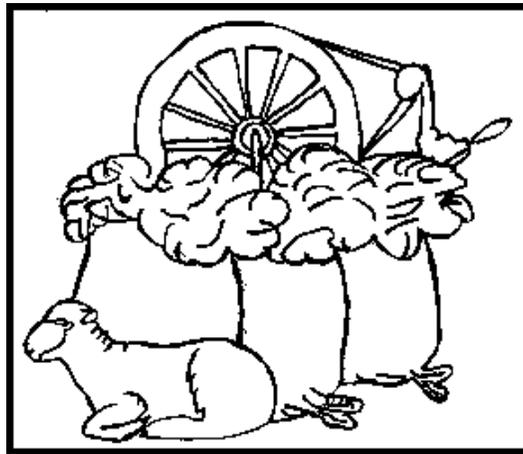
- Plans for Youth membership category were presented by Sheilina Sperry. Designed for those under age 21 participating in sheep activities via 4H or FFA and being from farms not otherwise actively engaged in the sheep industry. Members would not be listed in directory, but their names would be submitted to ASI for newsletter. Cost to be \$10/year for 2006.
- Budget for November 1, 2005 through October 31, 2006 was presented via overhead slides. Motion to approve was made by Warner Johnson and seconded by Don Adelman; motion carried. Income was set at \$80,930 and expenses at \$77,530.
- Three resolutions were presented via overhead slides:
 - Request the MN Scapie Board and the MN Board of Animal Health work to have Minnesota declared a consistent state under the USDA Scapie program.
 - Encourage the American Lamb Board to make direct funding available to state sheep associations for local promotion of lamb.

- Supporting the retention of agriculture related applied research and outreach programs at the University of Minnesota and encouraging that “Agriculture” be retained in the redesigned College name.
- Motion was made by Warner Johnson and seconded by Don Adelman to approve all three as presented; motion carried.

Election of Officers (results):

President - Jeremy Geske
 First Vice President – Dan Persons
 Second Vice President - Don Adelman
 Secretary – Sheilina Sperry
 South East Director - Tim Perrizo

Meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.



Shepherds Harvest Sheep & Wool Festival

Mother's Day weekend May13 & 14, 2006

Washington County Fairgrounds

Lake Elmo, Minnesota

Classes, vendors, demonstrations, entertainment, fleece competition, stock dogs, food, and more.

<http://www.shepherdsharvestfestival.org>

The Farm and Food Coalition of Minnesota is receiving applications for an Animal Agriculture Specialist to work with livestock and poultry producers who would like to expand their production facilities. This is a full-time position which will require considerable in state travel. Interested parties should request a position description (contact info below). Applications will be received until March 20, 2006.

Applications should be sent to Bob Shepard, Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation, P.O. Box 64370, St. Paul MN 55164 or email to bshepard@fbmn.org. If you have any questions, please call Bob Shepard at 651/905-2109 or Daryn McBeth, Minnesota AgriGrowth at 763/424-7545.



Woolch!™

It is what's happening in the green and growing world!

From commercial growing fields to home gardens, Woolch™ is the answer for those looking for herbicide-free and pesticide-free weed control, moisture retaining mulch with no hassle disposal.

Woolch™ is a blend of wool fibers and wood toothpick shavings. The wool fibers used for wool mulch are a scoured and carded byproduct of the textile manufacturing process. The mulch is created via a roller and heat process; no chemicals are used during the process.

Woolch™ provides effective cover for two years. Wool mulch helps to increase yields, stabilize ground temperature, and retain moisture around plants. Additional Woolch™ can be added for longer use. When no longer needed for weed control, the product can be tilled in to the soil where it will biodegrade and release nitrogen.

Produced by the Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers as a value added crop this product has been field tested on strawberry fields and in apple orchards by the West Central Research and Outreach Center at the University of Minnesota in Morris with support provided by the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute.

Woolch™ comes in rolls 5 ft wide by 80 ft long - providing 320 linear feet of row cover mulch. Cost is \$79.95 per roll. The rolls are currently stored in Lindstrom, MN. To purchase contact: Sherry Stirling at 651-257-0827 or email: stirling@tc.umn.edu

Sample: 15 inches X 60 inches available for \$2.00

DEADLINE for the 2006 MLWPA Directory

You must pay your 2006 dues before March 1 to be included in the membership directory (contact Patty Anderson to find out if you are current on your dues – PatMeadow@integraonline.com)

Directory Ad space (and MLWP web ad space) is available.

Contact Jeremy Geske (geskesheep@aol.com) for prices. Directory deadline = 03/01.

Sheep Industry Leadership School returns to Greeley Colorado in 2006

Dr. Steve LeValley, Colorado State University 's Extension Sheep Specialist, will direct the next hands-on Howard Wyman Sheep Industry Leadership School set for July 9-12, 2006 in Greeley , Colorado . The Leadership School , which has not been held in Greeley since 2002, offers attendees an intensive program of lectures, facility tours, farm visits, group discussion and problem-solving sessions designed to help each student develop and improve the productivity and profitability of their own sheep operation, regardless of size or type.

There is no cost to apply, however, once accepted there is a registration fee of \$100, which includes all meals, lodging, tour-related expenses and supplies. Attendance is limited to 25 students who must be 20 years of age or older.

Applications are available from the National Lamb Feeders Administrative Office at 1270 Chemeketa St., NE , Salem , OR 97301-4145 or online www.nlfa-sheep.org . Applications must be submitted by May 1, 2006.

2006 Wool LDP Sign-up Underway from ASI WEEKLY News

Producers will find it easier this year to apply for loans and loan deficiency payments (LDP) for wool and unshorn pelts. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is getting ready to release the new CCC-633 EZ form, which will accommodate requests for these payments. This new form is designed to help streamline the LDP process.

The CCC-633 EZ form will take the place of the older CCC-633 PELT and CCC-709 PELT forms. This form has been used by other commodities and is now being revised to include both wool and unshorn pelt payments.

Using the new form, the producer will complete the portion of the form which indicates his/her intention to receive an LDP benefit later in the year. It is still important that producers complete this portion of the form before losing beneficial interest in the commodity.

"In the past, some producers have been unable to collect LDPs because they lost beneficial interest before completing the required paperwork," commented Peter Orwick, executive director for the American Sheep Industry Association. "Now, at the beginning of each year, producers will be able to work with their local FSA office to complete the portion of the new form that indicates their intent to receive an LDP payment for specific crops."

FSA is recommending that producers contact their local office to begin the process for the 2006 wool season.

MN Board of Animal Health offers Scrapie Genotyping funds

Minnesota has recently received funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to accelerate Scrapie eradication in the State. A portion of this money will fund the following testing programs. You may choose to participate in one or both of the following options:

1. Ram genotyping - to determine genetic resistance to scrapie

You may genotype up to 10 rams per farm, any breed, codon 171.

2. Ewe genotyping – for the purpose of flock Scrapie surveillance

You may genotype up to 20 ewes over 14 months of age, for the following breeds: black or mottled face sheep, Southdown, Montadale, or East Friesian. Any QQ ewe must be sent to slaughter or 3rd eyelid tested for Scrapie by a USDA veterinarian.

Testing will occur on a first come first serve basis through June 30, 2006, or until the funding runs out.

This project will pay for sample collection, shipping costs, and laboratory test fees. You will not be required to pay anything upfront! The samples will be run at Biogenetic Services in Brookings, South Dakota. The lab will forward your results via mail in approximately 2-3 weeks.

The blood samples will be collected by USDA or Minnesota Board of Animal Health field personnel. If you wish to have your veterinarian collect the blood, have him/her contact our office to obtain the necessary forms and receive further instruction. Please note that you will be responsible for the associated veterinarian fees.

If you wish to have other codons tested or have other tests performed (ex: Spider testing), you will be responsible for the cost of those additional tests.

Please note that all animals tested must have official Scrapie Identification ear tags in place on the day of your appointment.

To schedule an appointment or to order more ear tags, please contact Courtney Sutton at **651-201-6829**.

How is genetic susceptibility to Scrapie determined?

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

In general, codon 171 yields 'Q' or 'R' factors. It is desired to breed with rams that have at least 1 'R' factor. Selecting and retaining rams with 'RR' in their genetic code will have the most impact on developing a Scrapie resistant flock.

RR – scrapie resistant genotype
QR – rarely susceptible to Scrapie
QQ – highly susceptible to Scrapie



LAMB & WOOL PRODUCERS

Join the Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers Association – only \$35/yr
Contact our membership chair, Patty Anderson at (952) 447-4184, or any board member to join. Learn more about the benefits of belonging to MLWP at our website: www.mlwp.org

Youth membership only \$10

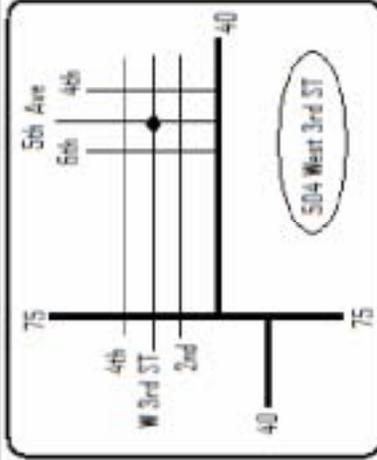
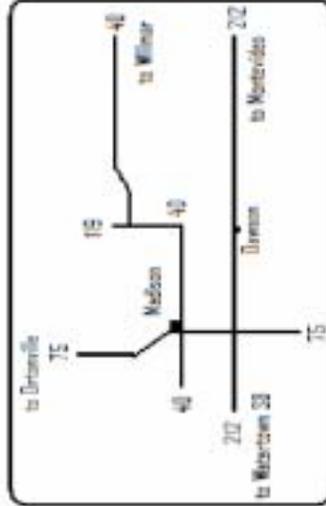
Why you should be a member:

- Membership Directory
- Producer Education
- Quarterly Newsletter
- Discounted Prices at Sydehl, Livestock Concepts, and more
- Public Relations (Baa Booth)
- Supports Youth Programs
- Legislative Activity
- Supports ASI – Lobbying
 - Limiting Imports; Wool, Lamb & Replacement Ewe Payments; and much more.

Place an ad on the MLWP website for only \$25 per year!

**MLWP Annual Meeting
Dec. 1&2 - Pipestone, MN**

MAP



The Madison Armory is located at 504 W 3rd St. For more directions, contact Tracey Schacherer at (320) 598-3679. There is no alternate date. In case of inclement weather, call Jeremy Geske at (952) 758-7938.

Shepherd's Harvest Festival
Washington Co. Fairgrounds, Lake Elmo
Mark your calendar for **May 13 & 14**

Check out the MLWP web site:
www.mlwp.org



Spring Sheep Workshop

**Saturday, March 4, 2006
9:15 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Madison Armory**



Sponsored by:

**Minnesota Lamb & Wool Producers
Minnesota Grown Promotion Group, RMA**
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Spring Sheep Workshop



This is an educational program for sheep producers of all ages and experience levels including 4-H & FFA sheep project members.

The registration fee covers lunch, refreshments, postage, and speaker costs. MLWP members and youth (4-H & FFA) receive a discounted price. Please pre-register so we can plan for lunch, seating, and materials.

If you have any questions, contact Jeremy Geske at (952) 758-7938 (h), (651) 905-2107 (w) or geskesheep@aol.com.

Schedule

9:15 a.m. – Registration
With coffee, juice, & cookies

9:45 – A) Animal ID & Scrapie
The latest on NAIS & scrapie
MN Board of Animal Health or USDA Vet

9:45 – B) Feeding 4-H Lambs
Tips for feeding your project lambs
Land O Lakes representative

10:30 – A) Feeding Sheep

Options from Purina
Land O-Lakes representative

10:30 – B) Managing Market Lambs

Feeding and care from May 15 until county fair
Dave Resch, Regional Extension Director

11:15 p.m. – Q&A with the Vet

Ask the sheep health questions you want answered
Dr. Jay Bobb, Pipestone Vet Clinic

12:00 – Lunch

Pizza, soda & water

12:45 – A) Alternative Feeds

Feeding non-traditional feeds to sheep
Rob Zefirsky, SDSU Sheep Unit

12:45 – B) Selecting 4-H Lambs

Choosing the best project lambs
Dr. Kelly Bruns, SDSU

1:30 p.m. – Scanning Demo

Loin eye scanning on live lambs.
Dr. Kelly Bruns, SDSU

2:30 p.m. - Adjourn

Make checks payable to: MLWP

Mail check and completed form to: ---->

Jeremy Geske
1507 7th St NE
New Prague, MN 56071



SPRINGSHEEP WORKSHOP REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____
Street _____
City, State, Zip _____
Phone (_____) _____
e-mail _____

Advanced registration is preferred, but you may also pay at the door.

Pre-registration must be received by Feb. 27

REGISTRATION FEE:

I would like to pay my 2006 MLWP family membership dues @ \$35 = _____
3 yr family membership @ \$100 = _____
youth membership dues @ \$10 = _____

Adult MLWP members

pre-registered - _____ @ \$15 = _____
at the door - _____ @ \$20 = _____

Youth MLWP members

pre-registered - _____ @ \$5 = _____
at the door - _____ @ \$10 = _____

4-H and FFA youth (non-MLWP members)

pre-registered - _____ @ \$15 = _____
at the door - _____ @ \$20 = _____

Adult non-members

pre-registered - _____ @ \$25 = _____
at the door - _____ @ \$30 = _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Attention all Minnesota Sheep Producers! Voluntary OPP Test and Control Pilot Program

Culling ewes early—no milk—some lambs not gaining the way they should? You've no doubt heard about OPP (ovine progressive pneumonia). Ever wonder if this silent thief could be affecting *your* bottom line? With a 2001 USDA study reporting more than 45% of the flocks in our region infected with the OPP virus, the Minnesota Board of Animal Health and the OPP Concerned Sheep Breeders Society (www.OPPsociety.org) have teamed up to investigate the feasibility of an OPP test and control program.

A voluntary, producer paid, test and control pilot study is being considered for commercial and purebred flocks of all sizes, raised under a wide variety of management systems. Enrolled producers would work with their local veterinarian to develop a flock plan, which would include annual blood testing of breeding animals and management strategies to minimize the transmission of the OPP virus. (Animals enrolled in the pilot that test positive would not need to be culled, though they would have to be managed in a group separate from test-negative animals.) The program would also identify flocks that are low-risk for OPP based on the number of years they have been participating in the test and control program.

With strong lamb prices holding steady, this may be a good time to make sure that your flock's production potential is not compromised. If you would like to receive more information as this program is developed, please return the following form. This will not in any way obligate you to participate.

Mail to: Voluntary OPP Pilot Program, OPP Concerned Sheep Breeders Society, 6250 Game Farm Road, Minnetrista, MN 55364

NAME _____ STREET _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____ PHONE(____) _____ EMAIL _____

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:

COMMERCIAL PUREBRED SEEDSTOCK SHOW FLOCK

PRIMARY BREED(S) _____

NUMBER OF ADULT EWES LAMBING IN A TYPICAL YEAR _____ EWE LAMBS _____

HAS FLOCK EVER BEEN TESTED FOR OPP? YES NO DON'T KNOW



Calendar of Events Year 2006

Year 2006

- March 4 Spring Sheep Workshop
Madison, Minnesota
- March 17 Irish Drinking Team Finals
"Erin Go Braugh"
- April 8 MLWPA Board Meeting
Pizza Ranch, Glencoe, MN
- April 16 Happy Easter
- May 13-14 Shepherds Harvest Wool Festival
Washington County Fairgrounds
Lake Elmo, Minnesota
- June 7 MN Sheep Judges Conference
Jackson, MN
- June 8-10 National Columbia Show and Sale
Jackson, MN
- July 7-8 Center of the Nation – All Breed NSIP
Sale Spencer, IA
- July 9-12 NLFA Howard Wyman Sheep Industry
Leadership School
Greeley, CO
- December 1-2 MLWPA Annual Conference
Pipestone, 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:

*Jeremy Geske
1507 7th Street NE
New Prague, MN 56071
geskesheep@aol.com*

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