It’s become a tradition for wildly talented artisans to flock to Lake Elmo on Mother’s Day weekend. They come to showcase the fleece and fiber they have transformed into sculpture, heirlooms and wearable art and to meet with shepherds - many artists themselves - to revel in this wooly display. It’s Shepherd’s Harvest Festival, Minnesota’s premier event for wool and sheep lovers, the largest fiber festival in the state and at 15 years old it’s coming of age.

The public can shop 140 vendors, choose from up to 35 classes, see over 20 demonstrations and exhibits and get a first hand look at a wide variety of sheep breeds nestled into the barn. And to celebrate the 15th anniversary, this year’s festival organizers have loaded the fairgrounds with special events.

Fiber rock stars, Deb Robson and Carol Ekarius, authors of The Fleece and Fiber Sourcebook, a one-of-a-kind photographic encyclopedia that features more than 200 animals and fibers, will be available to sign their books and share their secrets on how to know and grow quality wool. Carol is the author of

Cont. on p. 2
eggs are swallowed by the sheep and hatch in the gut, releasing active stages which invade the cells lining in the gut. From hence the process of multiplication increases rapidly causing severe damage to the intestine.

Coccidiosis occurs in young lambs, older sheep having become immune through previous contact with the parasite. Outbreaks occur mainly in lambs 3 - 8 weeks of age. The disease may occur also in flocks which have been housed for a period and are then turned out on to pasture, with cases occurring in lambs 2-3 weeks after turnout. Coccidiosis may also appear in outdoor lambing flocks, where high stocking rates are employed, which can lead to high fecal contamination of pasture, especially around feed and water troughs.

The first sign of coccidiosis affecting the flock is that lambs may not be thriving as well as expected. Observation of lambs will reveal an open-fleeced appearance and dirtiness around the tail due to a mild diarrhea. The lambs in the flock begin to lose their appetite, become weak and unthrifty. Further signs may become apparent as the condition worsens, for example severe scouring and streaks of blood in the diarrhea followed by severe dehydration.

Treatment of coccidiosis is tedious and expensive however a number of products are available for treatment. I recommend that you work with your local veterinarian.

If you have any questions or comments please contact me at: 1533 510th Street, Buffalo Center, IA 50424 (507) 525-0970 email: roefamily@wcatel.net

Good luck with your spring and summer field work.

Shepherd’s Harvest Festival — cont.

the festival where they will hone their skills and capture new memories. Co-author of the book Craft Activism: People, Projects & Ideas from the New Community of Handmade, she is also the photographer/co-author of Shear Spirit and the photographer for Mason Dixon: Knitting Outside the Lines.

Karen Lohn author of Peace Fibres will guide the creation of a commemorative fiber sculpture of a giant sheep. Everyone is invited to bring a small piece of handcrafted fiber art and it will be worked into the sheep canvas and enjoyed for years to come.

The Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers Association who will be on hand to help shepherds young and old perfect their craft and Llama Magic is held on the fairgrounds the same weekend with a splendid array of llama’s and alpaca on display.

Come see for yourself how this cultural phenomenon has become a cherished local tradition. Meet the farming artists and the artistic urban dwellers, see the guilds at their best and enjoy the sheep, llama and alpaca and their extraordinary fleeces. Experience the artistry and animal husbandry that these fine wools have inspired and you’ll have both memories and treasure that will keep you warm for years to come.

Festival hours are Saturday 9:00 – 5:00 and Sunday 10:00 – 4:00. Parking and admission are free. Visit http://www.shepherds harvestfestival.org for more info.
Lawmakers Join Livestock Groups to Oppose HSUS, UEP Legislation

Congressmen Adrian Smith (Neb.) and Joe Courtney (Conn.) hosted a briefing with animal agriculture representatives for congressional staff about their concerns with legislation introduced in the House that would codify an agreement between the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and the United Egg Producers (UEP). H.R. 3798 mandates production practices for the egg industry, particularly regarding housing and treatment standards.

A coalition of agricultural organizations working to stop the legislation hosted the briefing Wednesday. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), the Egg Farmers of America, the National Pork Producers Council, the National Milk Producers Federation, the American Sheep Industry Association and the American Farm Bureau Federation are coalition members.

"My biggest concern with H.R. 3798 is that outside groups with no knowledge of the industry will be dictating my livelihood and potentially compromising the welfare of my livestock," J.D. Alexander, NCBA president said. "This legislation creates a slippery slope. Today, its egg farmers but tomorrow it could be any other segment of animal agriculture and we’re not going to let that happen."

Smith said science must be the driving force behind public policy decisions and that "modernized health and nutrition products are the result of generations of investment and research into raising high quality animals."

MLWPA Board Meeting Minutes - Jeremy Geske

President Roe called the meeting to order at 12:35. The agenda was approved.

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved as presented. A treasurer’s report was distributed indicating a checking balance of $9,953.14, and savings of $69,514.17 for a total of $79,467.31. After discussion on Shepherd’s Holiday income and expenses, the report was approved as submitted.

A membership report of 229 total members was given (203 family, 26 in all other classes). 2nd round of invoices to go out soon. [Ed. Note: now at 236 and growing]

Newsletter – it was moved & seconded to offer classified ad space for a fee for MLWP members in the newsletter. Motion carried.

The 2012 membership directory will be done in early May.

Lambassador—Kelly Froehlich gave a report on youth activities.

Mike Haubrich gave a report on the ASI convention, including the hot topics such as Bighorn sheep and grazing. Kirk nominated several MLWPA members to serve on ASI committees. Discussion on the mentoring program—how can we get the word out that MLWPA is willing and able to mentor beginning shepherds?

The board has received multiple calls and emails about the website not being updated. It was moved & seconded to hire Sarah Brakke to get the website current and assist the board in keeping it updated. Motion carried.

Mary Radermacher asked for volunteers to assist with the Shepherd’s Harvest Festival.

An ultrasound workshop was held in the NE. 23 people attended. Maybe a summer workshop to follow.

Glenette submitted a National MIWW report which was read.

State MIWW contest – Steve started discussion. A letter from Glenette was distributed. Discussion ensued from several board members. The board wished to recognize that some contestants were displeased with how some things were handled.

Discussion on how to get the Faribault Woolen Mill more involved with MLWPA. A subcommittee was formed.

Silver Bell award – do we need to update the criteria? Discussion ensued. Randy and other will consider a re-write of the criteria and present at a future meeting.

Funding requests from the All American Junior Sheep Show and National Junior Suffolk Sheep Show were discussed and approved. A request from the state fair foundation was discussed but not approved.

State fair booth / Baa booth – much discussion, more follow-up is needed.

NLFA leadership school. Randy may apply.

Fall grazing workshop – George Warrant willing to host. John D. will follow up.

Ag Ambassador Institute - information will be forwarded to lambassadors and interested youth leaders.


Meeting adjourned.
MLWPA members serve on ASI committees

Several MLWPA members will serve on ASI committees again for 2012. Your representatives to ASI include:

- Mike Lippert—Lamb feeder rep on the ASI Exec committee, Resolutions Committee and chair of the American Lamb Council
- Dr. Cindy Wolf—Vice-chair of the Animal Health Committee
- Dan Persons—American Lamb Council
- John Dvorak—Legislative Action Council
- Jeremy Geske—Legislative Action Council
- Phil Berg—Promotion, Education and Research Committee

In addition—Dan Lippert serves as Vice-chair of the American Lamb Board and Bret Oelke represented MN on the American Farm Bureau Sheep Advisory Committee.

MLWPA thanks these individuals for serving Minnesota sheep producers and the American Sheep Industry!

Real Farmers Real Food

The 2012 Animal Agriculture Alliance’s (AAA) annual Stakeholders Summit will be held May 2-3 in Arlington, Va., and will explore the theme of "Real Farmers Real Food: Celebrating Tradition and Technology."

Topics to be covered include a legislative outlook, positive consumer outreach case studies, activist response strategies, retailer perspectives and international lessons learned.

AAA is a broad-based coalition of individual farmers, ranchers, producer organizations, suppliers, packer-processors, scientists, veterinarians and retailers. The alliance with its members is interested in helping consumers better understand the role animal agriculture plays in providing a safe, abundant food supply to a hungry world.

Summit attendees are encouraged to stay for the adjunct legal workshop, which will offer response strategies to the growing challenge of activist-driven litigation. A group of respected legal professionals will offer case studies and opportunities for agriculture to unite. The workshop is being offered for a fee of $50.

Details of the summit are available at www.animalagalliance.org/register.

US Dept. of Labor abandons farm labor rule

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Wage and Hour Division released a statement withdrawing its widely criticized proposed rule restricting children under the age of 16 from doing regular farm chores. MLWPA applauds the DOL for coming to its senses and listening to the thousands of comments submitted by farmers.

The original rule, proposed September 2011, prohibited children under the age of 16 from work in agricultural environments. This prompted a huge outcry from farmers, multiple agricultural organizations, the public, and members of Congress representing rural agricultural districts.

ASI, along with the National Pork Producers Council and the National Turkey Federation, submitted comments opposing the rule.

“This is just simple common sense. Rural American farming families teach their children the values of farming by having them do farm chores every day. The government should not be regulating these life lessons,” said NPPC President R.C. Hunt.

In its statement, the DOL said that they and the USDA will work with national agricultural stakeholders “to develop an educational program to reduce accidents to young workers and promote safer agricultural working practices.’

MLWPA congratulates Gene Sanford on being elected to the MN Livestock Breeders Hall of Fame.

Gene & Marci Sanford are Dorset and Hampshire breeders from Faribault, MN.
ALB Meets American Chefs in Reno

The American Lamb Board participated at the American Culinary Federation's Western Regional Conference in Reno with an exhibit that featured foodservice materials and information, and by sponsoring a Basque cooking demonstration.

Executive Chef Michael Norton of John Ascuaga's Nugget gave the cooking demo, which featured dishes from the property's fine dining Basque restaurant Orozko as well as from the Ascuaga family.

Spreading the Love of American Lamb

In celebration of Lamb Lovers Month in February, fans shared their love of lamb through our consumer recipe contest. Dan Brown from Boston, Massachusetts, won this year's contest with his inspiring lamb love letter and romantic Mediterranean Lamb Taco.

Celebrate spring w/ American Lamb

The American Lamb Board is working to remind consumers to celebrate the spring season with American Lamb! This month, ALB sent a national Spring Holidays recipe release and Spring Holidays media kits to all of the daily newspapers across the country. The kit included two new recipes and images for Easter and two new recipes and images for Passover.

American Lamb will be featured in a spring entertaining TV segment that will air on April 5 via the nationally syndicated morning show The Daily Buzz, which airs in 160 cities and reaches more than 65 million households. The segment will feature leg of American Lamb for spring entertaining.

Many of the April issues of the major food publications, such as Martha Stewart Living and Food and Wine, included lamb in their holiday features. Fine Cooking featured a roasted leg of lamb recipe and "How to Carve a Leg of Lamb" as well as a "Lamb Leg Lingo" guide.

www.americanlamb.com

Mediterranean Lamb Taco - Dan Brown

Cucumber Tzatziki:
(2) 6oz non-fat plain Greek yogurt
1 pickling cucumber (skinned & diced)
2 Jalapenos (diced & seeded)
1+ to 2 teaspoons of Agave
If you have time - place the plain yogurt in cheese cloth in a strainer over a bowl to drain excess liquid (4-5 hours). Otherwise - use that time to allow the yogurt to infuse with the additives. Fold all the ingredients above into the yogurt, cover and let sit in fridge.

Apricot & Habanero gastrique chutney:
2 cups red wine vinegar
2 cups sugar
4oz package dried apricots (soaked in warm water—30 min—coarsely chopped)
3 cloves garlic—chopped
1 large shallot—diced
1-2 habaneras (diced & deseeded)
1 tablespoon olive oil
A pinch of Salt & Pepper

In a saucepan combine the Olive Oil, garlic, shallots, salt and pepper, let sweat for a minute. Add in red wine vinegar and sugar. Bring to a rolling boil then simmer until the sugar is dissolved and vinegar has reduced to about half. Add apricots and habanero, cook for 10-15 min. stirring often. Once reduced to a thick jam, remove from heat and let cool. Use a food processor for a smoother texture.

Marinade:
3-5 lbs leg of American lamb
1 lemon
3-4 sprigs—Rosemary
5 cloves garlic
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 pinches—salt & pepper

Place the lamb in a large bowl, salt & pepper both sides, then add in remaining ingredients mix thoroughly, transfer the lamb and marinade into a zip lock bag; let stand in refrigerator for a day or two.

Dry Rub:
1 heaping teaspoon of each: fresh cracked pepper, coriander (seed or powder), cinnamon, cumin, turmeric, ginger, cloves.

Remove all lemon, rosemary and garlic, pat dry before applying the rub.

Preparation:
Pre-heat oven to 325 and heat a skillet with a slight coating of olive oil. Sear for a few minutes on each side until crisp & brown then transfer lamb onto an oven rack. 15-20 min. per lb; (temp = 140).

Remove from oven, cover with foil, let stand for 10 min.

Mint Pico de Gallo
2 tomatoes (chopped)
1/2 red onion (chopped)
1 clove garlic (minced)
15-20 mint leaves (finely chopped)
1 jalapeno (seeded & chopped)
1 tablespoon lemon juice
2 teaspoons olive oil
Pinch salt & pepper
1 teaspoon red wine vinegar

Mix in bowl

Jicama and Apple slaw:
1 small jicama (peel & use only edible portions)
1 green apple (cored, peeled, diced)
1 cup red cabbage & carrots (julienned)
1-2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons white vinegar
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon agave or honey
Pinch salt & pepper

Mix in bowl

Serve all ingredients on Nan bread.
RAISING EWE LAMBS

After weaning at sixty days of age the ewe lambs should be fed until they reach 110-130 pounds. The ewe lambs need to be fed according to their frame size and not allowed to become too fat, but at the same time keeping them on a ration that allows them to mature and continue to grow. The ewe lambs cannot be kept with the ewe flock as they are growing and should be kept separate prior to the lambing season. Ewe lambs do not have the same immunity level as the mature flock, they require a booster abortion vaccination and need to be kept as a separate unit until they have weaned their lambs. Ewe lambs will not compete with mature ewes for feed at the bunk and will not gain weight properly. Ewe lambs that are forced to run with the ewe flock will lose weight in late gestation and during lactation. Consequently, their lambs will weigh less at weaning and the ewe lamb will be in poor condition at weaning. If the ewe lambs become too thin we often see the following lambing affected. Some producers will have a very good lambing rate on their ewe lambs but the second time lambing ewes never seem to do as well. This is because the ewe lambs are too thin at weaning and never get back into the proper condition prior to being rebred for the next lambing season.

The ewe lambs require extra nutrition and extra immunization prior to entry into the flock. Management practices need to be suited for the feeds you have available and the size of the flock. Other factors such as breed and season of the year affect your management. We know that Finn ewe lambs mature reproductively at an early age and rambouillet or targee ewe lambs mature at a much later age. Also, late summer or fall born lambs have poor lambing rates if bred for the following spring.

Producers need to keep their ewe lambs separate from the ewe flock and set up an effective management program based on feed available and existing disease level on their farm.

Urinary Calculi

April is when the urinary calculi problems begin. It is an annual occurrence and will continue to be as long as minerals containing phosphorus are added to finishing rations for sheep. Whole corn pellet rations also contribute.

Finishing rations need at least a 2:1 Calcium to Phosphorus ratio. Ideally .8% calcium and .4% phosphorus. Phosphorus levels of over .4% are trouble and the addition of phosphorus to attain the .4% level should be avoided when finishing lambs. Basic rule of thumb is when formulating corn soybean oil meal rations add 30 lbs. of limestone, 20 lbs. of iodized salt, 5 lbs. of ammonium chloride with no added phosphorus. Clean loose white salt should always be available and good quality alfalfa hay offered free choice. If rations are structured correctly free choice hay won’t affect their efficiency and may improve it.

Other factors that cause calculi problems include a lack of clean loose salt, minerals being self fed that contain phosphorus, sorting of rations in a way that individual sheep don’t consume entire ration whole corn and pellet rations, lack of a clean water supply and mineral content of water.

Whole corn and pellet rations warrant special mention because more urinary calculi occur on these rations versus conventional rations. If whole corn and pellet rations are formulated correctly and genetic and husbandry conditions are correct they can be very effective. It is difficult to maintain the correct calcium to phosphorus ratio and maintain a good pellet. It is impossible to include the salt and ammonium chloride at recommended levels and maintain palatability. Regimes that use 500# of a pellet in grower ration and decrease to 300# in a ton of finisher absolutely can’t be balanced.

Some ideas about prevention and treatment are as follows. Flock treatment is aimed at prevention and reversing the condition that is producing calculi. Water supply needs to be evaluated, is it clean and available? With whole corn pellet rations make palatable hay available free choice. Salt can be mixed 50-50 with limestone. In texturized rations ammonium chloride can be raised to 10 lbs. Be sure there is 20 lbs. of salt and 30 lbs. of limestone per ton with no added phosphorus.

For sheep health questions and supplies, visit their website at: www.pipevet.com

Or call: 800-658-2523
Advancing animal agriculture

Following the National Institute for Animal Agriculture’s annual conference in Denver, Scott Stuart, the organization’s managing director, offers his observations from the program.

Animal agriculture faces a time of unprecedented opportunity in meeting the world’s growing demand for protein, while also navigating an array of challenges. The National Institute for Animal Agriculture’s annual conference focused on those issues, and Scott Stuart, NIAA’s managing director summarized some of the key points. NIAA is a broad-based organization with representation from across the industry and production of all livestock species.

Much of the discussion, Stuart says, centered around the need to address those challenges, including regulatory issues, a shrinking land base, higher production costs and a consumer base with limited understanding of agriculture and food production. Several speakers, he says, pointed out how tremendous advancements in efficiency and productivity have allowed animal agriculture, and food production overall, to keep pace with growing world populations.

U.S. Seeks Voluntary Antibiotic Limits

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration said antibiotics should only be used under the supervision of a veterinarian to prevent or treat illnesses in animals. It asked companies to start phasing out the use of antibiotics for non-medical purposes such as promoting growth, and said that process could take three years.

The FDA had previously banned certain types of antibiotics, like cephalosporins, for non-medical uses in livestock.

The move to limit the drugs could affect large meat producers like Tyson Foods Inc, Cargill Inc and Hormel Foods Corp.

Some antibiotics are specifically approved for growth promotion because they have been shown to help animals better absorb nutrients in their feed, said Dave Warner, a spokesman for the National Pork Producers Council. They also keep animals from getting sick, he said.

Environmental advocacy groups have long argued that using common antibiotics like tetracyclines and penicillin in animal feed has contributed to the rise of antibiotic-resistant bacteria in humans, known as “superbugs.” Some groups said the FDA should make limits on antibiotics mandatory, not voluntary.

HSUS “faith outreach” efforts

Public perception of “Faith Outreach” programs typically would involve a connection with a religious community or church and a desire to guide followers in the way of their fundamental beliefs. That mission would be led by a trained, educated leader of the community or church.

Almost universally, animal activists have adopted their self-proclaimed model of “Faith Outreach” programs. While ministers, priests, evangelists and other trained religious leaders guide most of these programs nation-wide, animal rights groups use their program leaders and other professionals to perform these tasks. Unlike religious leaders, these representatives typically have little, if any, training on “Faith Outreach” ministry.

Their approach involves the documentation of biblical passages that reference animals and their place in the universe. Since part of their mission is to promote veganism or a vegetarian lifestyle, typically only a portion of the passages that support those beliefs are shared.

A former medical doctor has become the primary promoter for the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) biblical outreach efforts. According to HSUS CEO, Wayne Pacelle, this physician left medicine behind to lead an emerging movement with contemporary American Evangelical Christianity. He has no divinity school or seminary training of any kind.

He will lead an upcoming Earth Day international simulcast from a church in Florida that is being offered to churches throughout the nation in an attempt to promote the newly adopted “Faith Outreach” agenda of HSUS and other animal activist organizations.

For the unsuspecting churchgoer, the affiliation with and confidence in their church’s “Faith Outreach” programs, may make them easy prey for animal activists adopting this format for fundraising. Listed on the HSUS website are most of the church denominations in this country. Conveniently alongside, is a donation box that can be used by the “faithful” to submit donations to HSUS.

Anyone considering participation in these so-called animal activist “Faith Outreach” programs should know: (1) Less than 1% of donations to HSUS find their way to local animal shelters. (2) HSUS is not the umbrella organization for your local animal shelter. Donations intended for them should be sent directly to the pet shelter. (3) If you are concerned about their self-serving outreach efforts, inform your church or religious community or speak with your trained, educated religious leader. They too may be uninformed of the motives behind animal activism and this biblical approach to funding their radical movements.
MN Legislative Session Winds Down

There can always be surprises, but it looks like the 2012 Legislative Session will end on or before the self-imposed April 30 deadline. During this past week three occurrences help support the idea that the end is near.

Several major bills that normally need to be wrapped up before session ends are close to completion. Conference committees finished work on the Omnibus Ag Bill and the Omnibus Education Bill last Friday. Both are expected to come up for final passage today or tomorrow. The Health and Human Services Bill is also headed towards completion in its conference committee.

Two Bills In Miniature Train Wrecks

There are two bills that have run into trouble, but the problems may indicate the second item that points to the session ending. In every political election year it seems a couple of miniature train wrecks must occur before the legislature can come together to end the session. It is part of the political posturing that takes place before statesmanship moves the legislature forward. The bonding bill and the environment policy bills are this year’s place for that to happen. These two bills have the furthest to go and both ran into trouble last week.

The Omnibus Environment Bill has been held up in the Senate because the game and fish bill failed on the Senate floor. The game and fish bill failed because conservative Republicans refused to support license fee increases contained in the bill. Those increases are supported by all of the sportsman groups, who are holding rallies at the Capitol this week to show their support. Democrats opposed the game and fish bill because it changed a provision that the Senate majority leader had authored. Today, however, an attempt to add the game and fish provisions to the Omnibus Environment Bill is likely to be made. Should it succeed, both are likely to be heading to conference committee soon.

The bonding bill also had problems last week. A trial balloon bill that provided over $200 million to fix the State Capitol building was brought to the floor. Democrats had agreed to supply the minimum number of Democratic votes needed to pass the bill if all Republicans voted for the bill. A bonding bill requires a super majority of 81 votes in the House. Two Republicans were absent. One of those was out campaigning against Sen. Amy Klobuchar. Therefore, Democrats supplied eleven votes for the bill, which was one vote short of 81. The bill failed.

Immediately there were charges by Democrats that Republicans could not govern and Republicans countered that Democrats had not kept their word. The Senate then moved their bonding bill forward. Though not a certainty, it is probable that something can now emerge. Sometimes train wrecks have a way of moving things forward.

The third thing that happened last week to signal we are near to completing the session was movement on the Viking’s football stadium. It looks as if a vote will now be taken on the floor. Most observers see the outcome odds at 50/50.

Omnibus Ag Bill

The ag bill conference committee report is headed back to the floor for final passage. It should happen on Monday or Tuesday of this week. There is very little in the bill that directly affects pork producers. One provision that was added on the Senate floor and then dropped in conference committee was the restriction of the use of “pink slime” in certain meat products.

Wolf Management Update

The Game and Fish Bills continue to make their way through the legislative process that would establish hunting and trapping seasons for wolves. Most importantly, language is included in both the House and Senate that directs revenue collected from the licenses to be deposited in a dedicated account, for which wolf trapping services can be paid for.

In the House bill, HF2171 awaits action on the House floor. The bill would establish a $4 fee for all hunters to enter into a lottery, with 400 people being awarded a license being charged $26. The wolf hunting season would be held in conjunction with the deer hunting season. The Senate companion, SF1943 awaits action on the Senate floor, and includes very similar language as the House bill.

Dayton Signs Permit Reform Bill

The bill would streamline the environmental review process by creating a 150-day cycle to issue or deny permit applications, and create a permit coordinator in the Department of Employment and Economic Development to serve the “permit applicant professionals”. The bill also extends the length of a state disposal system (SDS) permit for feedlots from 5 years to 10 years and exempts manure digesters for air emission regulations.

Farm Bill

Senate Agriculture Committee leaders are preparing to mark up the
Farm Bill on April 25. Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow (Mich.) and ranking member Pat Roberts (Kan.) released the joint mark for the committee today.

“We pretty much know where the issues are,” Stabenow said in a meeting with agriculture reporters on Tuesday. "We have actually a tremendous amount of consensus around a majority of the bill.”

Stabenow plans to go title-by-title through the legislation to pass it next week and doesn't expect a lot of disputes. "I don't anticipate amendments on every title," Stabenow said. "Most of the issues have been worked out."

Roberts said members of the committee would like to get a bill written next week. Not everything is ironed out yet, he said.

"We know that the Senate has to move. We know that 2013 is not going to present a better situation from a fiscal standpoint, from a (Congressional Budget Office) score," commented Roberts.

Roberts said a strong, bipartisan vote out of committee will convince the Senate leadership to move a bill to the floor in May.

The proposed commodity programs have changed since last fall’s proposal, but the Senate Ag Committee plans to continue pushing for $23 billion in cuts.

American Sheep Industry Association Executive Director Peter Orwick relayed, "The mark includes reauthorization of the wool marketing loan, the National Sheep Center and the livestock indemnity and forage programs, each a priority of the sheep industry.”

Additional information on the Farm Bill is available at www.ag.senate.gov/issues/farm-bill.

**HSUS FTC Complaint**

The National Pork Producers Council has learned that the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has filed a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission, claiming that NPPC is “engaging in deceptive advertising related to animal well-being.”

NPPC will analyze the complaint once it actually is made public and will vigorously defend against the absolutely false claims made by HSUS as set forth in a press release it issued today.

The FTC complaint is the latest attack by animal-rights activists on America’s hog farmers, an assault that seems obviously in response to the U.S. pork industry’s strident opposition to congressional legislation that would allow federal bureaucrats to tell farmers how to raise and care for their animals.

NPPC looks forward to the FTC quickly dismissing HSUS’s complaint.

America’s hog farmers are committed to providing humane and compassionate care for their pigs at every stage of life. U.S. hog farmers are the ones who ensure the well-being of their animals and who are dedicated to producing safe, affordable and healthful foods for consumers – using standards and practices that have been designed with input from veterinarians and other animal-care experts – not groups that spend well over half of the donations they receive on soliciting more contributions and, apparently, the other portion on suing American farmers.

**Sheep Grazing**

This week, three activist groups filed a motion in federal district court seeking to halt domestic sheep grazing on three allotments in the Payette National Forest to protect bighorn sheep in Hells Canyon and the Salmon River Canyon. In 2010, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) agreed to phase in the closure of hundreds of thousands of acres of public land to grazing to reduce contact between domestic and wild sheep.

However, because of language included in a rider on the 2012 Consolidated Appropriations Act, domestic sheep grazing will continue in 2012. The rider, inserted by Rep. Mike Simpson (Idaho), precludes the use of federal funds for management restrictions on domestic sheep on USFS lands in excess of the management restrictions that existed on July 1, 2011.

The activist groups are saying the Payette Decision was finalized in 2010 and the management restrictions were already in place well before the rider's deadline.

In a separate lawsuit, an activist group filed a federal lawsuit in an attempt to force the USFS to separate domesticated sheep from a small herd of wild bighorn sheep in Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest. The lawsuit renews an eight-year-old fight over whether special protection should be provided for the 50 or so bighorn sheep in the Sierra Madre Range near Encampment, Wyo.

American Sheep Industry Association Executive Peter Orwick remarked that these suits filed by activists are exactly why the U.S. Congress approved the language on wild sheep and domestic grazing in 2011.

“Sheep are hunted in both states and are not listed as threatened or endangered species, plus each state’s fish and game authority has already addressed management practices and management of the wild sheep in question,” concluded Orwick.
Wool Prices Could Fall Further

The price of wool has fallen sharply and some in the industry think it may fall further when sales recommence next week. The indicative price benchmark, the Australian Wool Exchange's Eastern Market Indicator, lost 21 cents to 1191 cents per kilogram clean in recent sales.

New England Wool's Andrew Blanch says the next sale will be the biggest in over a year, with 56,000 bales offered nationally. With so much wool, there could be a large percentage of the fiber passed in at auction.

"They're probably not confident to buy any wool that they don't require. Stock is a dirty word again," said Blanch. "Certainly the buyers overseas are waiting for a time to get in again when they feel it's getting close to the bottom and, unfortunately, we just don't know when that is."

In similar news, New Zealand Wool Services International Limited's General Manager John Dawson reports that the unacceptably high New Zealand dollar, high customer stock levels and restricted demand are continuing to subdue wool prices.

The market in New Zealand is following recent trends in other wool-producing markets. Client confidence is at a low point as they wait for increased consumer demand particularly from Europe and the United States.

U.S. Per Capita Meat Consumption Slips

High feed prices, the economic recession and drought in the Southern Plains of the United States have combined to cut into producer returns and lowered production incentives in the livestock sector during the past several years. As a result of declines in meat production, plus strong meat exports, consumer meat prices have increased and per capita consumption in the United States has decreased, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service (ERS).

Annual average consumption of red meat and poultry is predicted to decrease from the more than 221 lbs. per capita recorded from 2004-2007 to a projection of less than 200 lbs. from 2012-2014. However, with feed costs anticipated to decline from recent highs, improved net returns in the livestock sector provide economic incentives for expansion of meat and poultry production for the rest of the decade, ERS relays.

By 2021, as production increases, per capita consumption of red meat and poultry is expected to increase to about 213 lbs.

Weekly National Market Prices for Wool & Lamb


Market Summary, Week ending April 13, 2012

Feeder Prices, San Angelo, 54 lbs. for $238/cwt., 70 lbs. for $226/cwt., 90 lbs. for $180/cwt.

Slaughter Prices - Negotiated, Live, woolled and shorn 110-160 lbs. for 140-180 $/cwt. (wtd. ave. 149.40).

Slaughter Prices - Formula1, 3,042 head at 292-352 $/cwt. for 79.7 ave. lbs.; 4,175 head at 282-327 $/cwt. for 100.7 ave. lbs.

Cutout value/Net carcass value2, $337.46/cwt.

Carcass Price, Choice and Prime, YG 1-4, weighted averages, 723 head at 55-65 lbs. for $362.45/cwt., 1,261 head at 65-75 lbs. for $341.88/cwt., 1,902 head at 75-85 lbs. for $330.14/cwt., 1,905 head at 85 lbs. and up for $301.43/cwt.

Wool, Price ($/pound) Clean, Delivered, From 2 weeks ago: 18 micron (Grade 80s) NA, 19 micron (Grade 80s) NA, 20 micron (Grade 70s) $5.22, 21 micron (Grade 64-70s) $4.91, 22 micron (Grade 64s) $4.83, 23 micron (Grade 62s) $4.42, 24 micron (Grade 60-62s) $4.22, 25 micron (Grade 58s) $3.47, 26 micron (Grade 56-58s) $2.97, 27 micron (Grade 56s) $2.55, 28 micron (Grade 54s) $2.37, 29 micron (Grade 50-54s) NA, 30-34 micron (Grade 44-50s) NA.

[Ed. Note: Market prices were included at the request of an MLWP member. Keep in mind that by time this goes to print and ends up in your mailbox, it will be outdated information. For those of you who want timely lamb and wool market information please make sure your MLWPA dues are current and that we have a current email address for you and that you send that email address to mary@sheepusa.org. By doing so, you will receive weekly (Friday afternoon) emails with the latest news and market reports.]
Make Plans to join us in 2012 for the
19th Annual
All-American Junior Show
in Des Moines, Iowa at the Iowa State Fairgrounds
July 6-8, 2012

Hotel Information
Adventureland Inn: $99 plus tax
Phone #: 515-265-7321 Address: 3200 Adventureland Drive, Altoona, IA 50009

Camping at Adventureland
Full Hookup ($45/night), tent ($25/night)

Camping at Iowa State Fairgrounds
Full Hookup ($23/night), Water/Electric only ($20/night), No Utilities ($18/night)

More information at: www.countrylovin.com/AAJSS

2012 NATIONAL JUNIOR SUFFOLK SHOW
JULY 5-8 *** BROOKINGS, SD

LEARN MORE AT:
HTTP://WWW.U-S-S-A.ORG/#SUFFOLKSHOW
MLWPA IS A PROUD SPONSOR
OF BOTH THE AAJSS AND THE NJSS
Great Wool is not simply the name of a business to Julie and Andrew Mackenzie — it describes every step of their operation from the birth of a lamb with superior wool quality to the end product of a hand-knit sweater. Although Rambouillet sheep produce good meat, the Mackenzies specifically breed their sheep for wool quality.

“Rambouillet sheep wool is a type of merino wool, the finest wool. It’s stretchier than merino, good for spinning and easy to dye,” said Julie Mackenzie, who is the planning committee president for Shepherd’s Harvest Festival, an annual May event in Lake Elmo.

“It is the only fleece competition in Minnesota and a great way to connect with local farmers,” said Mackenzie. “We started with 40 fleeces and last year had 140. We’re smarter about caring for sheep, and the vendor base is growing.”

“There are companies in Ireland and Canada who use wool to make home insulation,” Mackenzie said.

“The average fleece weight is six pounds,” she said. “Washing takes off some of the lanolin which takes away some of the weight. Then the fleece is skirted, which is removing the unusable parts around the edges. My daughter is a champion skirter.”

“After being washed, carded, combed, spun, possibly dyed and then knitted, an average fleece can produce three or four sweaters,” said Mackenzie.

The Mackenzies bought Open Sky Farm, located south of Sauk Centre, in 2000, after a family reunion brought them back to Stearns County. “I was a city girl and my husband is from New York. We had been discussing on the car ride up how we wanted our kids’ growing-up years to be,” Mackenzie said.

“We drove past the farm where my mother and her sisters grew up and saw it was for sale,” she said. “We looked at it, then looked for another farm to make a comparison.”

“This farm was advertised in the Dairyland Peach, and we decided to make an offer. It was when we were discussing terms with the realtor that I walked over to some trees next to the house and my hair stood up,” said Mackenzie.

After closely questioning the realtor, she found out that the property they were standing on belonged to her great-grandmother’s sister. “And this farm is next to the farm where my great-grandmother lived,” she said.

“We are the keepers of the land,” said Mackenzie. “I can trace my family back six generations on that property.”

“When choosing a sheep breed, we found that Rambouillet are able to handle both high heat and humidity and extreme cold,” she said. “They are good mothers who usually have twins.”

“So far this season, 27 lambs have been born. They are so cute and gentle; this is why Jesus was born in a manger,” she said. “We also have Hot Rod the llama, who is a spectacular guard animal and very good with lambs.”

“Since sheep are prey animals and they know it, they generally shy away from people,” said Mackenzie. “But if we spend time with the young lambs, they are calmer with us.”

“We try to hang out near the sheep pens, letting them hear our voices and be more familiar with us here, so that when it comes time to inoculate or shear them they aren’t so bothered,” she said.

“With fewer than 200 sheep, this is considered a small flock,” Mackenzie said. “A lot of people could have a couple of sheep of their own. Most shepherds do something else to support themselves.”

“A good way to connect with other shepherds at the community level is through Minnesota Lamb and Wool,” said Mackenzie. Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers can be reached at www.mlwp.org.

She feels that raising and caring for sheep is really a family project. “It’s not as big an operation as cattle,” she said. “I would love to see more small farm innovations.”

“The quality of life I have comes with caring for an animal,” said Mackenzie. “From birthing it, through shearing, to spinning and then knitting a sweater, to repurposing the worn sweater.”

“Spinning is very calming. When I’m aggravated, I can sit and spin for 15 minutes, and it calms me down,” said Mackenzie.

“When I wake up at 4 a.m. to check the barn and get to see the Big Dipper, it’s really a gift,” she said. “It’s a bigger connection to nature.”

“Wool in your hands. Art in your life.” is Great Wool’s motto.

“Using wool isn’t just knitting a sweater; it can be felting a tea cozy, crocheting a rug or needle-felting a painting,” said Mackenzie.

Mapping the ancestry of sheep over the past 11,000 years has revealed that our woolly friends are stars among domestic animals, boasting vast genetic diversity and substantial prospects for continued breeding to further boost wool and food production for a rising world population.

An international research team has provided an unprecedented in-depth view of the genetic history of sheep, one of the world's most important livestock species. The study, published February 7 in the online, open-access journal PLoS Biology, maps out how humans have molded sheep to suit diverse environments and to enhance the specialized production of meat, wool and milk.

The study identified particular regions of the sheep genome that appear to have changed rapidly in response to selection for genes controlling traits such as coat color, body size, reproduction and, especially, the lack of horns, one of the earliest goals of selective breeding.

Detailing sheep domestication and migration patterns across the globe, it also supports and adds to the current knowledge of human movements throughout history.

The team traced the relatedness between nearly 3,000 sheep by comparing 50,000 DNA sites across the genome, and pinpointed the genetic consequences of domestication and subsequent division of sheep into hundreds of breeds, according to lead author Dr James Kijas from Australia's national science agency, CSIRO.

“Our detailed gene map is telling us that sheep breeds have been formed in a ‘fluid’ way that makes them different from other species of domestic animals. Frequent mating and strong gene flow between animals of different breeds has ensured that most modern sheep breeds have maintained high levels of genetic diversity, in contrast to some breeds of dogs and cattle that generally have higher levels of inbreeding,” Dr Kijas says.

“This high level of genetic diversity means that sheep breeders can continue to expect strong improvements in important production traits – improvements that could play a part in feeding the growing number of people in the world, with an increasing demand for animal protein.”

“The technology that we have used in this study is helping to identify genes that control economically important traits, and to track down genetic variants that cause diseases. This may ultimately help producers to intensify or remove certain traits through targeted breeding practices.”

The extensive DNA sampling that underpins the research, encompassing 74 sheep breeds from around the world, will provide a touchstone for livestock research for years to come, including studies of genetic diversity to better manage the conservation of threatened breeds.

The research was facilitated and coordinated through the International Sheep Genomics Consortium.

---

Mature Suffolk Ram - UK
Ancestors to the Suffolks in the U.S. Early Suffolks were developed by crossing Southdowns and Northfolk Horns.

Genetic selection for growth has resulted in significant changes.

Champion Suffolk Yearling Ewe
ND State Fair—1970
Selection for frame size began to take priority over other traits.

2012 Yearling Suffolk Ram
42+” tall, 400+ lbs. Breeders return focus to muscling and body capacity, while maintaining size.
Your Business Card Sized ad could be here promoting your flock! For ad sizes & prices—contact Jeremy at: jeremy.geske@gmail.com


Sheep Shearer: Need your sheep sheared? Contact Bob Smith, New Richland, MN at 507-456-8179

Suffolk Rams: Performance-tested, RR rams for sale. Improve your genetics with a high-quality JMG Suffolk ram. Contact Jeremy Geske at 612-756-1200 or jeremy.geske@gmail.com

Do you have breeding stock, fleeces, guard dogs, used sheep equipment, or other sheep-related items to sell? (place your classified ad here: $20/3 lines + $5/additional line)
## Calendar of Events

### 2012 Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 10-12</td>
<td>Big Ohio Sale / Ohio Suffolk Sale</td>
<td>Eaton Ohio</td>
<td>Julie Mackenzie (612) 961-9625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 12-13</td>
<td>Shepherd's Harvest Festival</td>
<td>Lake Elmo, MN</td>
<td>Julie Mackenzie</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 31-Jun 2</td>
<td>Nugget All American Sheep Sale</td>
<td>Reno, NV</td>
<td>Kirk Roe roefamily@wctatel</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>MLWPA Starter Flock application deadline</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mike Caskey <a href="mailto:mike.caskey@mnwest.edu">mike.caskey@mnwest.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 4</td>
<td>Pipestone Sheep Facility Tour</td>
<td>Pipestone, MN</td>
<td>Mike Burch <a href="mailto:info@iowasheep.com">info@iowasheep.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 9-10</td>
<td>Iowa Sheep &amp; Wool Festival</td>
<td>Adell, IA</td>
<td>Taylor Peck <a href="mailto:peck676@yahoo.com">peck676@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 25-30</td>
<td>Midwest Stud Ram Sale/Nat. Suffolk Sale</td>
<td>Sedalia, MO</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 5-8</td>
<td>National Junior Suffolk Show</td>
<td>Brookings, SD</td>
<td>Jeremy Geske <a href="mailto:jeremy.geske@gmail.com">jeremy.geske@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>July 6-8</td>
<td>All American Junior Sheep Show</td>
<td>Des Moines, IA</td>
<td><a href="http://www.countrylovin/AAJSS/">www.countrylovin/AAJSS/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>July 8-11</td>
<td>NLFA Howard Wyman Leadership School</td>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nlfa-sheep.org">www.nlfa-sheep.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>July 21</td>
<td>MN Suffolk Sheep Assoc. State Show</td>
<td>Faribault, MN</td>
<td>Jeremy Geske <a href="mailto:jeremy.geske@gmail.com">jeremy.geske@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>July 22</td>
<td>MN Suffolk Sheep Assoc State Jr. Show</td>
<td>Faribault, MN</td>
<td>Sara Saul <a href="mailto:saramsaul@gmail.com">saramsaul@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>July 27-28</td>
<td>NSIP Center of the Nation Sale</td>
<td>Spencer, IA</td>
<td>Micky Burch <a href="mailto:info@iowasheep.com">info@iowasheep.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 23-Sept. 3</td>
<td>MN State Fair</td>
<td>St. Paul, MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 24</td>
<td>MN 4-H Sheep Show</td>
<td>St. Paul, MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 20-21</td>
<td>Newell Ram Sale</td>
<td>Newell, SD</td>
<td>John Dvorak <a href="mailto:bjdvorak81@hotmail.com">bjdvorak81@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept ?</td>
<td>Fall Sheep Workshop</td>
<td>Kassota, MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 24</td>
<td>MN Bred Ewe Sale</td>
<td>Rochester, MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 1</td>
<td>MLWP Shepherd's Holiday</td>
<td>Mankato, MN</td>
<td>Jeremy Geske <a href="mailto:jeremy.geske@gmail.com">jeremy.geske@gmail.com</a></td>
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### 2013 Date

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 23-26</td>
<td>ASI Annual Convention</td>
<td>San Antonio, TX</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sheepusa.org">www.sheepusa.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Have an item for the calendar—email it to Jeremy.*

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### Sydell Inc.

**Sydell is proud to offer the following discounts to members of the MLWP.**
- **Orders from $100-$1000 will receive a 10% discount**
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c/o Jeremy Geske  
31307 171st Ave  
New Prague, MN 56071  

Have an idea for the newsletter?  
Send it to:  
Jeremy Geske - editor  
31307 171st Ave  
New Prague, MN 56071  
Phone: 612-756-1200  
E-mail: jeremy.geske@gmail.com