MLWPA Leaders Visit DC

Last week, MLWPA leaders: Randy Kinney (President), John Dvorak (Past-President, ASI Reg. III Director), Jeremy Geske (Secretary) and Dan Lippert (Past Chair—American Lamb Board) participated in the ASI Legislative trip to DC. They met with the entire MN Congressional delegation.

Topics discussed included: Farm Bill (LDP rate for wool, FMD Vaccine bank, minor species designation, mandatory price reporting), funding for wildlife services, support for US Sheep Research Station and grazing on public lands.

A Fat In Sheep Brains May Have The Ability To Treat Degenerative Diseases In Humans

The overproduction of lipids in a lamb’s brain may be the key to treating degenerative brain diseases and brain injuries, a South Dakota scientist says.

Since the late 1980s, Larry Holler, a pathologist and veterinarian with South Dakota State University’s Veterinary & Biomedical Sciences Department, has been working with a special kind of sheep that produces too much of a good thing.

Ovine GM1 gangliosidosis is a genetic disease sheep develop where the animal accumulates too much GM1 ganglioside because they lack an enzyme called beta–galactosidase. Sheep can have up to 40 times the normal level of ganglioside stored in their tissues if their genetics have the gangliosidosis mutation. The accumulation is in the brain, spinal cord, and other tissues.

That’s important because brain disease treatments based on GM1 gangliosides from cows have already showed promise. There has been success in animal trials on mice with Huntington’s Disease. A mouse injected with the GM1 gangliosides has seen a 50% decrease in the Huntington’s protein in as few as two weeks.

Wool Prices Climb Higher

Solid demand boosted by new business continued to push Merino and crossbred wool prices higher at Australian auctions this week. Prices next week are expected to remain buoyant, with bidding this week dominated by traders, rather than the market’s large Chinese indent buyers.

The Eastern Market Indicator rose 9 cents to finish at 1449. The EMI in U.S.-dollar terms rose three cents to US1115 cents, with the $A-$US exchange rate at US76.92 cents.

The finer micron groups continue to appreciate at a faster rate than their broader cousins causing the price differentials between microns to further widen. The gap between an 18.0 and 19.0 micron is now out to nearly 200 cents, as is the gap between a 19.0 and 20.0 micron, meaning the difference in price between the two microns.

Lamb Price update

Sioux Falls SD Mar. 22
Fat Lambs 138lbs & up $144.00 - $159.00/cwt
Feeder Lambs 42-85lb $212.50 - $312.00/cwt
Ewes—$77 - $96/cwt

Mt Hope OH Mar. 22
Feeder Lambs 40-100lb $195.00 - $320.00/cwt
Fed Lambs 100+lbs $150.00 - $215.00/cwt
Ewes & bucks $70.00 - 115.00/cwt

Billings MT Mar. 6
Fed Lambs 100 lbs & up $123.00 - $182.00/cwt
Feeder Lambs $183.00 - $235.00/cwt
Market Ewes $70.00 - 117.00/cwt

Kalona IA Mar. 22
Feeder lambs $247.50-272.50/cwt
Fed Lambs $14200-205.00/cwt
Cull ewes & bucks $74.00-93.00/cwt

Fort Collins CO Mar. 16
Slaughter lambs $175.00-$212.50/cwt
Feeder lambs $192.50 - $242.50/cwt
Ewes & bucks $50.00 - $136.00/cwt

Zumbrota MN Mar. 21
Fed lambs $130.00-$170.00/cwt
Feeder lambs $170.00 - $275.00/cwt
Ewes: $12.50-$82.50/cwt
between every micron point in these groups is 20 cents. Any price differences at the micron level are being largely driven by the quality of the selection. Better types continued to attract good support and maintained their large premiums compared to lower spec types.

Sheep Industry Compliance with VFD

Effective Jan. 1, 2017, stricter federal rules regulate how medically important antibiotics can be administered to animals in feed and drinking water. This was a much discussed topic during the 2017 American Sheep Industry Association annual convention in Denver in January.

DVM's Cindy Wolf and Jim Logan, co-chairs of the ASI Animal Health Committee, spoke with attendees about the directive and how the sheep industry can comply.

"Producers should foster a relationship with their veterinarian," said Wolf. "Both parties should work together because it benefits both of us to do that."

Sheep producers will still have access to those antibiotics they were using prior to the directive, now they just need a veterinarian-client-patient relationship.

"Basically, the drugs that we have always used will still be available, however, many of them will require a feed directive written by a state-licensed veterinarian who is familiar with the operation, has seen the livestock and has worked with the producer," said Logan.

According to Meg Oeller, DVM, Ph.D., Food and Drug Administration Veterinary Medicine, "The Compliance Policy Guide allows the veterinarian to write a VFD or an over-the-counter recommendation for extra-label use in minor species only (sheep and goats) as long as it is for therapeutic use and is in the context of a valid client-veterinary-patient relationship. We are going to say that we will not ordinarily take any action against this use even though it is not legal - it is a policy of enforcement discretion. The CPG spells out very clearly each party’s role in the case of over-the-counter drugs and VFD drugs."

A video of the interviews, prepared by Russell Nemetz, Nemetz Communications, is available on ASI's YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/watch?v=GAVW7d1JO9c.

Sheep Health Day a Great Success

Over 80 people attended the workshop in St. Paul. Below: The OPP Panel shares their wisdom.
The UJSSA National Junior Suffolk Show is at the same time/location. Learn more at u-s-s-a.org.