

SHEPHERD'S NEWS

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Lamb Price update

Sioux Falls SD Sept 17

Fat Lambs 107-162lbs
\$160.00 - \$170.00/cwt
Feeder Lambs 43-93lb
\$165.00 - \$257.50/cwt
Market Ewes
\$25.00 - \$104.00/cwt

Mt Hope OH Sept 17

Feeder Lambs 40-100lb
\$162.50 - \$280.00/cwt
Fed Lambs 100+lbs
\$167.50 - \$185.0/cwt
Ewes & bucks
\$80.00 - 110.00/cwt

Billings MT Sept 15

Fed Lambs 98 -137lbs
\$169.50 - \$195.00/cwt
Feeder Lambs 47-96lbs
\$195.00 - \$226.00/cwt
Market Ewes
\$52.00 - \$59.00/cwt

Kalona IA Sept 17

Feeder lambs
\$163-218.00/cwt
Fed Lambs
\$154.50-164/cwt
Cull ewes & bucks
\$70-130/cwt

Fort Collins CO Sept 17

Slaughter lambs
\$163.00-\$195.00/cwt
Feeder lambs
\$190.00 - \$240.00/cwt
Ewes & bucks
\$51.00 - \$90.00/cwt

Zumbrot MN Sept 22

Fed lambs
\$140.00-\$152.00/cwt
Feeder lambs
\$150.00 - \$200.00/cwt

Show Animals are Food Animals - Trent Loos

Reprinted from the High Plains Journal

For anyone who knows our family, they know we certainly enjoy this time of year because our three girls are all involved in exhibiting livestock at county, state and national competitions. I have a growing level of concern about what is happening in that world, however. These problems are certainly not caused by the majority but, as usual, by the minority. Nevertheless, we will all have to pay the price for their indiscretions.

Trust me, most everyone is about doing what they can do to help win, legally. As a family, we breed, feed, exercise and wash livestock, but we do not use any compound that is illegal or could compromise the food supply. At the end of the day, we must remember that we are to use the livestock to make the kids better and not use the kids to make the livestock better.

As I write this, I have four phone calls in to the Illinois Department of Agriculture waiting for an answer to why the grand champion market hog and goat were not included in the Sale of Champions during the fair. Illinois State Fair personnel confirm that they were not allowed to sell, but why? No one will tell me, which leaves it wide open for speculation, especially since the reserve champion hog sold for \$53,000.

A state fair I have proudly been a part of for the past four years as the livestock announcer, the Nebraska State Fair, had a similar situation two years ago when five of the champion animals were disqualified. That means long after the show was over and everyone had gone home, the next animals in line were told they moved up a spot in their placings. But what negative repercussions were involved for the guilty parties? Nothing, except the loss of their premium money and title. There were no other reprimands for fear some negative bit of news might hit the media.

The management of the Nebraska State Fair should be held accountable for such terrible lack of leadership and integrity. For full disclosure, I was not asked back to be the beef show announcer this year. I realize this could easily seem like sour grapes, but what happened to me has nothing to do with the facts involving these animals that were compromised. Research the facts and let the chips fall where they may. We have been trying to get information from fair officials since the word first got out.

In fact, I was told if I shared that information now, people would attack me instead of looking at the real problem. I don't operate that way. If I have a problem with how something is handled, I'm not afraid to speak up. We all need to speak up, and it starts right here at home.

With that said, there have been other junior livestock events that have clearly drawn a line in the sand and have an enforced zero tolerance policy. In Nebraska, at a recent Ak-Sar-Ben show, some sheep came into question and proper action was taken, including expulsion and future disqualification from the show for a period of time.

One of the key problems is that each show follows their own set of rules. Drug testing from one state fair or national show is completely different from the next. I am in favor of a set of protocols that would establish how animals are to be properly tested and punished and that would also uncover false positives.

Plenty of people will be thrilled to criticize me for shedding light on the growing problem we have in the livestock

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competition world. The truth of the matter is, if we do not step to the plate ourselves and get a handle on this, it will all come to an end. If you talk to a packer about buying show animals, they are increasingly saying “no.” They tell me they can’t afford it because when they buy these animals, USDA increases monitoring because the track record of show animals is not good. That’s extra and unwanted expenses for them.

In closing, let’s remind ourselves that we use these “food” animals to teach our kids many facets of life, including work ethic, responsibility and a sense of accomplishment. But at the end of the day, we are also teaching about the bigger responsibility of taking care of natural resources that will eventually feed and clothe mankind. We do eat them, and let’s never ever forget that when we are considering what we need to do to make them winners. The discussion needs to begin openly about solving this issue. The bottom line is these animals are food animals, and we must not sweep the issue under the rug. We need to make sure the right thing is always done. **[Ed. Note: Amen!]**

Shepherd’s Holiday—Dec. 5-7, Chaska

The 2014 MLWPA Shepherd’s Holiday will be held Dec. 5-7 at the Oak Ridge Conference Center in Chaska, MN. (Open to all shepherds and sheep enthusiasts.)

Fri. Dec. 5 “Celebrate Lamb Social” 7-10pm. This will include lamb cooking demos with sampling, sheep cheese samples and more with MLWPA members and special guests.

Sat. Dec. 6 A full day of educational seminars (for experienced producers, for beginners and for fiber enthusiasts; *topics include: health, management, marketing, fiber and much more*), the Make it With Wool contest, Trade Show, Awards luncheon, Annual Banquet & Fundraiser Auction. Please check the [MLWPA website](#) this fall for an updated agenda.

Sun. Dec. 7 Business meeting & election of officers.

Reserve your guest room **by November 14!** Call in at 952-368-1492, or 877-874-6772 and ask for the [MLWP questroom reservation room rate](#). Visit our website at www.oakridgeminneapolis.com and use the [Group Code: MLWP](#)

DON'T MISS IT!!!

The Debate About GMO Safety Is Over, Thanks To A New Trillion-Meal Study

Jon Entine—Forbes Magazine

Visit almost any anti-GMO website and you will find alarming headlines about the alleged dangers of GMO foods. They kill pigs, cows and sheep on farms and in lab studies! Humans are next!

“Monsanto’s GMO Feed Creates Horrific Physical Ailments in Animals,” screams a typical article, in AlterNet, a popular anti-GMO site. It touts “new research” but as is typical of such articles and such sites, it neither quotes a study nor links to any independent research.

Although there have been more than 2,000 studies documenting that biotechnology does not pose an unusual threat to human health and genetically modified foods are as safe or safer than conventional or organic foods, questions remain in the minds of many consumers.

What does the research say?

Animal feeding studies are the basis for evaluating the safety of GMO crops. One-off studies of lab animals have occasionally shown some problems. Gilles-Eric Séralini, in his retracted GM corn study (later republished in a non-peer-reviewed anti-GMO journal), claimed rats fed genetically engineered corn developed grotesque cancerous tumors—the kind no farmer would miss among his animals if this cause-effect was genuinely in place.

Anti-GMO crusader Jeffrey Smith, on his personal website, the Institute for Responsible Technology, lists more than a dozen cases in which he claims animals fed GMOs exhibited abnormal conditions, including cancer and early death. He also references his own self-published book, and anecdotal evidence that pigs fed GM feed turned sterile or had false pregnancies and sheep that grazed on BT cotton plants often died.

“Nearly every independent animal feeding safety study on GM foods shows adverse or unexplained effects,” he writes. “But we were not supposed to know about these problems...the biotech industry works overtime to try to hide them.”

The American Academy of Environmental Medicine—an alternative medicine group that rejects GMOs and believes that vaccines are dangerous—claims, “Several animal studies

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indicate serious health risks associated with GM food," including infertility, immune problems, accelerated aging, faulty insulin regulation, and changes in major organs and the gastrointestinal system.

Is there any basis to these allegations? After all, globally, food-producing animals consume 70% to 90% of genetically engineered crop biomass, mostly corn and soybean. In the United States alone, animal agriculture produces over 9 billion food-producing animals annually, and more than 95% of these animals consume feed containing GE ingredients. The numbers are similar in large GMO producing countries with a large agricultural sector, such as Brazil and Argentina.

Estimates of the numbers of meals consumed by feed animals since the introduction of GM crops 18 years ago would number well into the trillions. By common sense alone, if GE feed were causing unusual problems among livestock, farmers would have noticed. Dead and sick animals would literally litter farms around the world. Yet there are no anecdotal reports of such mass health problems.

But we don't need to depend on anecdotes to address these concerns. Writing in the *Journal of Animal Science*, in the most comprehensive study of GMOs and food ever conducted, University of California-Davis Department of Animal Science geneticist Alison Van Eenennaam and research assistant Amy E. Young reviewed 29 years of livestock productivity and health data from both before and after the introduction of genetically engineered animal feed. [NOTE: article is behind a paywall until October 1.]

The field data represented more than 100 billion animals covering a period before 1996 when animal feed was 100% non-GMO, and after its introduction when it jumped to 90% and more. The documentation included the records of animals examined pre and post mortem, as ill cattle cannot be approved for meat.

What did they find? That GM feed is safe and nutritionally equivalent to non-GMO feed. There was no indication of any unusual trends in the health of animals since 1996 when GMO crops were first harvested. Considering the size of the dataset, it can reasonably be said that the debate over the impact of GE feed on animal health is closed: there is zero extraordinary impact.

The Van Eenennaam study corresponds to other reviews of animal feeding data, some multi-generational and as long two years.

"Several recent comprehensive reviews from various authors summarize the results of food-producing animal feeding studies with the current generation of GE crops (Deb et al., 2013; Flachowsky, 2013; Flachowsky et al., 2012; Tufarelli and Laudadio, 2013; Van Eenennaam, 2013). Studies have been conducted with a variety of food-producing animals including sheep, goats, pigs, chickens, quail, cattle, water buffalo, rabbits and fish fed different GE crop varieties. The results have consistently revealed that the performance and health of GE-fed animals were comparable with those fed near isogenic non-GE lines and commercial varieties."

Here is a comprehensive list of animal feeding studies. Many of these studies are independent. The list included systematic reviews, all of which conclude that GMO feed is safe.

As Dr. Steven Novella notes on his blog *Neurologica*:

"[T]his data is observational, meaning the authors are looking at data collected out there in the world and not part of any controlled prospective experiment. Observational data is always subject to unanticipated confounding factors. However, robust observational data is still highly useful, and has the potential to detect any clear signals."

The findings also comport with long-term GMO feeding laboratory studies. The GENERA database, found at *Biology Fortified* online, lists more than three-dozen examples of multi-year studies. A recent review of 24 of these studies by Snell et. al found: "Results...do not suggest any health hazards and, in general, there were no statistically significant differences within parameters observed." There have been a few outlier studies, such as the retracted GMO corn research. But if Seralini's data were real and 80% of food was poison, animals and people would be dropping like flies.

The authors also found no evidence to suggest any health affect on humans who eat those animals. No study has revealed any differences in the nutritional profile of animal products derived from GE-fed animals. Because DNA and protein are normal components of the diet that are digested, there are no detectable or reliably quantifiable traces of GE components in milk, meat, and eggs following consumption of GE feed.

In other words, the debate over the risks associated with GMO food is effectively over. As Novella writes:

"We now have a large set of data, both experimental and observational, showing that genetically modified feed is safe and nutritionally equivalent to non-GMO feed. There does not appear to be any health risk to the animals, and it is even less likely that there could be any health effect on humans who eat those animals."

In order to maintain the position that GMOs are not adequately tested, or that they are harmful or risky, you have to either highly selectively cherry pick a few outliers of low scientific quality, or you have to simply deny the science.