How to Choose Your Cut of Lamb

As we mentioned in the past few editions of the Pick of the Month, Minnesota is a great place to live for its diversity of meats. Many people start to think about lamb. Purchasing lamb can be confusing, so we talked to [MLWPA members] Ingrid Bey and Dave Plunkett from Belle Acres about the varieties in cuts of lamb! Leg of lamb and lamp chops are two premium cuts which come from the upper rear leg of the animal. These roasts are usually 4 to 6 pounds and can be carved in a number of ways. Belle Acres says that the best chops are loin chops, which can be cut to customer’s preferred thickness (similar to your preferred steak thickness). Lamb shoulders can yield lamb roasts as well, and are usually cut into steaks or chops, but are not quite as meaty as the rear legs. The lower legs of the animal are called shanks. Belle Acres attests that these are delicious braised-slow cooked in liquid until meat falls off the bone or can be processed for ground and stew meat. Finally, trimmings include meat...
from the ribs, shanks, and other parts of the animal. These can be used in ground lamb or stew meat as well.

Ingrid and Dave recommend lamb for its taste and versatility. In addition, lamb has great nutrition for you and your family. In a three ounce serving of cooked lean lamb, you can find 47 percent of the recommended daily protein. Lamb also has significant amounts of Vitamin B-12, Niacin, Zinc, Iron, and Vitamin B-2.

Thank you to Ingrid and Dave for contributing lamb information and to the American Sheep Industry Association for nutritional facts. This photo was taken from Williams Sonoma leg of lamb recipe: http://www.williams-sonoma.com/recipe/toasted-garlic-and-rosemary-roasted-leg-of-lamb.html

**Belle Acres Turkish Lamb Pizza**

**Ingredients:**
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 small yellow onion, finely chopped
- 6-8 oz. ground lamb
- About 3/4 can (14.5 oz.) diced tomatoes
- 1 1/2 Tbsp tomato paste
- 1 1/2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley or cilantro
- 3 Tbsp pine nuts
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp allspice
- 3 dashes to 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper, to taste
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- 8 oz shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 ready made pizza crust

**Directions:**
1. Saute onion until soft, about 10 minutes
2. Add lamb and pine nuts and cook until lamb is browned and pine nuts are toasted. Drain grease.
3. Add tomatoes and some tomato
MLWPA participated in the Ag Awareness Day at the University of MN Minneapolis Campus on April 15. Kelly Froehlich and Jaclynn Dingles visited with students about sheep production, lamb and wool. Jeremy Geske provided lambs for the display. The event is coordinated by the U of M Ag Education students. Many farm organizations participate. [Ed. Note: We could have made a fortune if we had been charging $1 for lamb “selfies”.

MLWPA Board meeting 3/22/14 – Neaton Farm – Watertown, MN
Present: John Dvorak - President, Karen Stormo, Steve, Kelly & Eric Froehlich, Steve Scheffert, Don Adelmann, Jeremy Geske, Mary Radermacher, Randy Kinney

President Dvorak called the meeting to order at 4:05
Moved/2nd to approve updated agenda – passed

Jeremy Geske distributed the minutes from the last meeting – moved & 2nded to approve the minutes as Amended. passed

Glenette Sperry emailed the treasurer’s report to Jeremy for presentation. Total - $64,774.11 in all accounts. Moved/2nd to approve subject to audit. passed

Membership report 200+, second notices to go out soon. Next newsletter to go to printer in May. Discussion on e-mail newsletters in the off months. Directory – target date is May 1.

Commercial booth discussion – Mary R gave meeting report. Much discussion on potential adjustments to how we provide staffing for the booth. Need a proposal to vote on by April 25.

Old Business:
Baa booth – Ask Jo Bernard to coordinate.
ASI to DC trip - Melanie and John possibly interested. 1st week in May. Conference update provided by Jeremy. Funding request from ALB was not approved.

New Business:
Shepherd’s Harvest Festival – Julie M – asked for ASI insurance coverage. Review notes from fall meeting. Check with ASI – they need to become a satellite member.
Ag Day / urban day / youth report – Kelly provided an update on upcoming youth activities. Need some “handouts” for youth.
ASI committees – several MN producers on ASI committees. John gave an update on the ASI convention – a very worthwhile experience. Next year is the 150th ASI convention – will be in Reno, NV. Jeremy gave a legislative update – ag sales tax / wolves.
Karen S. reported on sheep workshop near Fosston. Well attended, good speakers. Thanks to Holly for hosting Spring Sheep Workshop. Can we get speaker powerpoints on website. Moved/2nd to provide speaker stipend. Passed.

Jeremy – issues w/ website hosting. Will investigate a new hosting company.

Next meeting date: – June 21 - Litchfield
Meeting adjourned
MARKET UPDATE - [THESE PRICES ARE FROM 4/18/14]

Slaughter Prices - Negotiated, wooled and shorn, 125-169 lbs. for 140-182 $/cwt. (wd. ave. 164.40); 170-208 lbs. for 150-161 $/cwt. (wd. ave. 153.08)
Slaughter Prices - Formula1, 2,517 head at 282-301.46 $/cwt. for 68.30 ave. lbs.; 4,240 head at 268.55-310.10 $/cwt. for 80.90 ave. lbs.
Equity Electronic Auction, No sales.
Cutout Value/Net Carcass Value2, $335.89/cwt.
Carcass Price. Choice and Prime, YG 1-4, $/cwt., weighted averages, 805 head at 55-65 lbs. for 345.11, 1,245 head at 65-75 lbs. for 321.83, 2,177 head at 75-85 lbs. for 304.92, 2,653 head at 85 lbs. and up for 291.64.
Exported Adult Sheep, 658 head
Wool, Price ($/pound) Clean, Delivered, From 3 weeks ago: 18 micron (Grade 80s) NA, 19 micron (Grade 80s) NA, 20 micron (Grade 70s) 3.96, 21 micron (Grade 64-70s) 3.75-4.05, 22 micron (Grade 64s) 3.67-3.90, 23 micron (Grade 62s) 3.63-3.78, 24 micron (Grade 60-62s) 3.11-3.55, 25 micron (Grade 58s) 2.81-2.97, 26 micron (Grade 56-58s) NA, 27 micron (Grade 56s) 2.35, 28 micron (Grade 54s) NA, 29 micron (Grade 50-54s) NA, 30-34 micron (Grade 44-50s) NA.

Kalona, IA  Feeder Lambs $185 - $217.50/cwt, Slaughter lambs $160 - $197.50/cwt, Ewes & Bucks $17.50 - $55/cwt
Willard, UT  Feeder Lambs $166 - $223/cwt, Slaughter lambs $155 - $166/cwt, Ewes & Bucks $32 - $120/cwt
Fort Collins, CO  Feeder Lambs $115 - $230/cwt, Slaughter lambs $115 - $210/cwt, Ewes & Bucks $32 - $85/cwt
Zumbrota, MN  Feeder Lambs $150 - $200/cwt, Slaughter lambs $140 - $145/cwt, Ewes & Bucks $30 - $50/cwt
Pipestone, MN  Feeder Lambs $127-$200/cwt, Slaughter lambs $131 - $151/cwt, Ewes & Bucks $38 - $62.50/cwt
Billings, MT  Feeder Lambs $150 - $207/cwt, Slaughter lambs $148-$190/cwt, Ewes & Bucks $50.75 - $80/cwt
Sioux Falls, SD  Feeder Lambs $155 - $305/cwt, Slaughter lambs $151 - $195/cwt, Ewes & Bucks $30- $55/cwt
Mt Hope, OH  Feeder Lambs $155 - $250/cwt, Slaughter lambs $160 - $195/cwt, Ewes & Bucks $42.50- $77.50/cwt

Unofficial results from the California range ram sale:
Over 200 Suffolk rams sold for $525-$1400.
Four Hampshire rams sold for $525-$775.
Over 100 crossbred range rams sold for $500-$1050.
38 white-faced range rams sold for $400-$875.

[If you want to receive e-mail market updates from across the country, contact Kent Gwilliam at: kent@suffolkflock.com]

The 2014 Stars of the North on-line sale was held April 29. 17 (of 25) entries averaged $572; selling to buyers from 6 states (MN, SD, NE, OH, IN & GA). The top 3 sellers:
• Rex Quam—Suffolk ewe lamb $1,600 (above)
• Jeremy Geske—Suffolk ewe lamb $1,300 (right)
• Jake Herrig—Hampshire fall ram $800 (Left)
Suffolk ewes averaged $702
Suffolk rams averaged $400
Hampshire ewes averaged $500
Southdowns averaged $500
Dorset ewes averaged $369 (Dew Drop entry—far left)
For information about the 2015 sale, email jeremy.geske@gmail.com.
Lamb Jam Tour
On Sunday, April 13, the American Lamb Board hosted the 5th Annual Boston Lamb Jam at the Royal Sonesta Hotel on the Charles River in Cambridge, MA. This year’s event brought over 650 lamb lovers together with New England chefs and brewers to celebrate American Lamb. Twenty top chefs from Boston, Providence, Portland, and Portsmouth competed for honors in four different cut categories, plus Best in Show and Fan Favorite. The Best in Show winner goes on to compete in the Lamb Jam finale hosted at Sunset magazine’s Savor the Central Coast in September ‘14.

This year’s winners are:
- Best in Shoulder: Chef Beau Vestal of New Rivers
- Best in Leg (a tie): Chef Graham Botto of Back Bay Grill and Chef Brian Reyelt of Citizen Public House
- Best in Shank: Chef Daniel Bojorquez of La Brasa
- Best in Ground: Chef Nemo Bolin of Cook & Brown Public House
- Best in Show: Chef Nemo Bolin of Cook & Brown Public House
- People's Choice: Chef Jim Solomon of The Fireplace

The ALB hosted information sessions, including a butchery demonstration and shepherd talk led by local chef and butchers Nuno Alves and Chris Douglas of Tavolo and Lisa Webster of North Star Farm. The ALB also had a number of other local lamb producers on this year's Producers' Row, including North Star Farm, Superior Farms, Hopkins Southdowns, Mountain States Rosen, Lightning Ridge Farm and Coombs Farm. The producers educated consumers about local lamb production and where to buy American Lamb in New England.

The next stop on the Lamb Jam Tour is on Monday, May 19, in Washington, DC, from 6 to 9 PM. For information, visit dc.fansoflamb.com or if you would like to participate on Producers' Row, please contact Rae Maestas at rae@americanlambboard.org for sign-up details.

Lamb Souvlaki with Tzatziki Sauce
by Chef Ben McCullum (2013 Celebrate Lamb Social)

Lamb Souvlaki
2 lbs lamb shoulder, trimmed of fat and cut into 1 inch strips
¼ cup lemon juice
3 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp fresh oregano, chopped
2 tsp garlic, minced
¼ cup onion, grated
½ tsp salt
½ tsp black pepper, ground

Place the lamb in a non-reactive bowl. Mix together the lemon juice, oil, salt, pepper, 1 tablespoon oregano, garlic, and grated onion, and pour over the meat. Cover and chill at least 2 hours and up to overnight. Thread the meat onto metal or bamboo skewers.

Preheat a grill. Grill the skewers, turning occasionally, until brown on all sides. Remove from the grill. Quickly heat the pita bread on the grill until just warmed through and pliant. Holding a pita in the left hand, and the skewer in the right hand, pull the contents from the skewer into the pita bread. Repeat with the remaining skewers. Top with Tzatziki (cucumber sauce). Serve immediately accompanied by tomato slices and caramelized onions.

Tzatziki Sauce
1 medium cucumber, peeled, seeded and shredded
½ red onion, shredded
1 cup plain yogurt
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp lemon juice
1 tsp fresh dill, minced
1 tsp garlic, minced
Salt and pepper

Put the cucumber and onion in a strainer set over a bowl. Sprinkle with 1/8 teaspoon salt and drain for 1 hour. Put the yogurt in another strainer set over a bowl and drain for 1 hour. Combine the cucumber and yogurt in a bowl with the remaining ingredients and stir well. Cover and chill for at least 1 hour before serving.
Pipestone Program Facility Tour June 9

Don't miss your chance to attend the 2014 Pipestone Lamb and Wool Program Sheep Facility tour which will be held on June 9th, 2014. The tour will begin and end at the Minnesota West Community and Technical College, Pipestone Campus. The Sheep Facility tour is only offered once every two years. The Pipestone Lamb and Wool program has an excellent tour scheduled of four outstanding sheep operations.

The Pipestone Sheep Facility Tour provides producers an opportunity to see various types of sheep facilities, including the latest innovations in sheep buildings, lambing barns, handling systems, feeding systems and facility layout. The tour will be a full day tour, visiting four lamb and wool producers with new and remodeled facilities. All of these operations have devised their buildings and feeding systems to reduce labor and enable them to run larger numbers of ewes with the same labor.

Tour Stops include: Randy Dombek farm, Rob Goerger farm, Moser family farm, and the Brian Winsel farm. Learn more at: www.pipestonesheep.com.


Sutton Ridge Shearing Day Open House—Larry Kiewel

Shearing your flock is a harvest day or a management tool depending on your system. It is always a cost. Mark and Jennifer Jensen of Sutton Ridge Farm in Lydia, MN are turning shearing day into a public relations/profit center sort of day.

Still in the first decade of their back to the land adventure, the Jensens have embraced the local food movement with all their might. The goal of their diversified operation is to form personal relationships with people who want to know where and how their food is produced.

In its second annual form the Jensens have turned spring shearing into an open house to introduce more people to their product line. In an inspected and approved farm store the Jensens sell beef and pork in labeled packages. Fresh eggs from free range hens, and garden produce in season. New this year are processed wool products from their flock of Leiciester Long Wool sheep that numbers 30 animals after spring lambing.

The wool is sent to a North Dakota processing mill and returns as roving, yarn, blended yarns, and cleaned and carded portions that are hand died on the farm and sold as felting kits. The white and natural colored fleeces are blended with exotic metallic strands for bling, Highland cattle hair, angora rabbit, or even alpaca to make a variety of yarns with appeal to multiple fiber artists.

The first year the Jensens kept the invitations to 40 friends and co-workers. This year they opened up the day to all the people on their e-mail list, placed posters in a few places, and put a poster on their Facebook page. The results were 120 people who reserved space and over 70 people that ignored the morning rain, showed up, and watched shearing, carding, and spinning. Not on the outline was the birth of a lamb for the afternoon group. There was a concession stand with coffee and farm made treats. People were then given time to visit the farm store and sample beef and pork products. If success can be measured in bags of product moving to the parking lot, the day was successful.

Minnesota shepherds both old timers and newcomers can share in this story. Lamb and wool are commodities that can be raised for mass markets or they can be direct marketed for increased profits for the shepherd. Even if you are not ready to direct market wool, a shearing day open house can be a public relations tool to meet your neighbors and turn them into partners and customers. Take a couple of hours to clean up the barn a little extra. Put the word out to neighbors, friends, and family. Turn your shearing day into a celebration of your hard work.
USDA Requiring Reporting of PEDv

The USDA announced new steps to slow the spread of a virus that has killed millions of US piglets this past year.

The government said it will require the reporting of porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDv) in order to slow the spread of the disease across the United States. The USDA said while the movement of pigs will still be permitted, it will require the tracking of animal movements, vehicles and other equipment leaving affected premises. Officials also said Friday they will require tracking and reporting for the Swine Delta Coronavirus, another virus affecting several states.

The executive director of the American Association of Swine Veterinarians says his organization does not have a position on mandatory reporting of the Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea virus but believes it could help. PEDv is currently not a reportable animal disease but Tom Burkgren tells Brownfield Ag News the U.S. Department of Agriculture is working on a plan to require it.

Wild Horses Targeted for Roundup in Utah Rangeland Clash

A Utah county, angry over the destruction of federal rangeland that ranchers use to graze cattle, has started a bid to round up federally protected wild horses it blames for the problem in the latest dustup over land management in the U.S. West.

Close to 2,000 wild horses are roaming southern Utah’s Iron County, well over the 300 the Bureau of Land Management has dubbed as viable for the rural area’s nine designated herd management zones, County Commissioner David Miller said.

County officials complain the burgeoning herd is destroying vegetation crucial to ranchers who pay to graze their cattle on the land, and who have already been asked to reduce their herds to cope with an anticipated drought.

Wild horse preservation groups say any attempt to remove the horses would be a federal crime.

On Thursday county workers, accompanied by a Bureau of Land Management staffer, set up the first in a series of metal corrals designed to trap and hold the horses on private land abutting the federal range until they can be moved to BLM facilities for adoption.

"There’s been no management of the animals and they keep reproducing," Miller said in an interview. "The rangeland just can’t sustain it."

The conflict reflects broader tension between ranchers, who have traditionally grazed cattle on public lands and held sway over land-use decisions, and environmentalists and land managers facing competing demands on the same land.

The Iron County roundup comes on the heels of an incident in Nevada in which authorities sent in men on horseback and helicopters to confiscate the cattle they say are illegally grazing on public land.

Changes Coming in Antibiotic Use

Western Kentucky University animal scientist Dr. Nevil Speer says the new FDA guidelines will bring changes to the livestock industry.

"I don’t think there’s probably any denying that there’s going to be more oversight," Speer says. "We’re going to have veterinarians more involved. A lot of things that maybe we take for granted today is going to change. That's probably true in everything we do--there's going to be more regulation no matter what--but on the other hand, maybe that's better that we'll have a longer--term license to continue to operate."

Vet Focuses on Stewardship of Livestock

Consumers want a deeper understanding of the livestock production system and its practices such as the feeds that are fed, procedures that are performed such as castration and dehorning, and confinement versus free range.

Being proper stewards of animal health and still making a profit was the message Dr. Charles Estill presented to a gathering of livestock owners at the Spring Conference.

Estill is the Oregon State University Extension veterinarian and associate professor for rural veterinary practice. His message to the group was not entirely new information, but was a reminder that some practices in handling livestock can ease stress on the animals who in turn will recover quicker from the situation, which means more pounds and more dollars. Estill emphasized that proper stewardship is not only good for the animal, but also improves the image of the producer with the consumer."It's not just producing more pounds of calf and more pounds of milk," he said. "You also need to have a satisfied consumer."
CAPITOL CONNECTION

Dvorak, Pamp and Geske Participate in ASI to DC Trip
MLWPA President John Dvorak, Vice-President Melanie Pamp, and Secretary Jeremy Geske traveled to DC last week as part of the ASI Spring trip to DC. They met with staff from Senators Franken and Klobuchar, as well as each MN Congressional office.

Topics discussed included: funding for Wildlife Services, trade, immigration reform, the Grazing Improvement Act, EPA over-reach and bighorn sheep.

[Observations: Senators Klobuchar and Franken were very supportive of our issues. The Senate has already passed an immigration reform bill. The House won't do anything on immigration before the elections. Both sides are supportive of the agricultural worker portions of immigration reform—but differ greatly on issues of border security and citizenship. Most of our offices are supportive of trade agreements, but we learned that Japan is trying to exclude several ag products (including lamb), if they don't give in, the TPP will not pass. Congressman Peterson continues to be a great champion for the sheep industry (and agriculture). We had good support from Kline, Paulsen, Nolan and Bachmann. We didn't get a lot of support from Ellison or McCollom (and we were treated rudely by McCollom's staff). Very disappointed in Walz's stance on most issues—especially EPA over-reach—he seems to be siding with environmental activists, and animal activists over farmers and ranchers. Biggest takeaway from our meetings with USDA was that we are working towards a "negligible risk" designation in terms of scrapie which would be a great help in opening up foreign markets to US lamb.]

EPA's Waters of the U.S. Proposal Open for Comment
The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers this week posted the proposed definition for waters of the United States protected under the Clean Water Act (CWA) in the Federal Register. Comments will be accepted until July 21.

American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) President Bob Stallman said the proposal "poses a serious threat to farmers, ranchers and other landowners."

In a statement, he said the exemptions for agriculture included in the proposal "do not protect farmers from federal veto power over pest and weed control, fertilizer application and other essential farming activities."

EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy said during a Senate Appropriations subcommittee hearing that current exemptions for CWA permits for "normal farming, ranching and agricultural practices" are kept intact in the proposal. "If a farmer was not legally required to have a permit before, this rule does not change that status," she said. The proposal "does not add to or expand the scope of waters protected under the CWA," McCarthy said.

According to the EPA, the proposed definition of waters of the United States would increase predictability and consistency for CWA programs.

The proposed rules is available at www.regulations.gov/#!documentDetail;D=COE_FRDOC_0001-0673.

[Ed Note: The EPA says they are trying to make the rules "easier to understand". Policy experts from ASI, Farm Bureau, MAWRC and other farm groups have reviewed the proposal. In our opinion, they are doing the exact opposite.]

COMMENTARY: WHY MUST THE EPA REGULATE EVERYTHING IN SIGHT?

Dave Ladd, RDL & Associates

Time and again the agriculture sector is witness the executive branch “going around” Congress in order to advance an intrusive regulatory agenda that an agency cannot achieve via the legislative process. Not only are such maneuvers a stark reminder of the regulatory gauntlet that must be navigated by the agricultural and business sectors, but they are clear examples of a government that chooses to regulate rather than legislate.

The most recent example of regulatory overreach run amuck is the attempt by the Environmental Protection Agency - via regulations and guidance - to expand its authority in relation to the Clean Water Act beyond the limits approved by Congress.

Although the Clean Water Act clearly limits federal jurisdiction to “navigable” waters of the United States – limits that have twice been reaffirmed by the United States Supreme Court – the Environmental Protection Agency continues to have its sights set on regulatory control over virtually all waters.

In the event they are successful, the Agency would have the authority to regulate any or all waters found within a state – regardless of traditional state prerogatives relating to land use planning and economic growth or how unconnected those
waters are to the federal interest or interstate commerce.

The Clean Water Act, enacted in 1972, limits federal jurisdiction to “navigable” waters of the United States. The U.S. Supreme Court, in 2001 and 2007, reaffirmed those limits. The Environmental Protection Agency, through regulations, guidance and other means, is seeking to expand its authority beyond the limits approved by Congress.

Over the past two decades Supreme Court decisions have reaffirmed that “navigable waters” under the CWA does not extend to all waters. Legislation to overturn those decisions – despite aggressive lobbying campaigns by environmental groups – has failed to reach a vote on the floor of either the House or the Senate.

Congress should not permit the agency to move forward with expanding their regulatory overreach. Expanding jurisdiction of the federal government to intrastate waters, including groundwater, ditches, culverts, pipes, desert washes, sheet flow, erosional features, farm and stock ponds, and prior converted cropland was not the intent of the framers of the 1972 legislation.

Efforts to change the meaning of “navigable waters” – either via legislation or regulation – would fundamentally change the Clean Water Act, legislative authority that should remain limited to navigable streams and flowing waterways that have continuous flow.

The key to holding government agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency accountable is for Congress to exercise the fundamental role of oversight of the executive branch. Unfortunately, this is a role members of congress have not fully embraced and an authority that has not been fully utilized.

**Agriculture Unfairly Blamed for Climate Change**

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said this week that agriculture tends to take the brunt of criticism about climate change when the industry contributes only nine percent of the greenhouse gases blamed for a warming planet.

"Everyone assumes what's happening globally is happening nationally," said Vilsack, a keynote speaker at Drake University forum on climate change. "Clearly, there are challenges globally in terms of agriculture and its contribution to greenhouse gas emissions. That's not necessarily the case in the United States."

By comparison, farming contributes a smaller percentage than other industries. For example, transportation contributes 28 percent of the nation's greenhouse emissions, public utilities - 32 percent and other industries - 20 percent, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Still, Vilsack said the nation is confronting several environmental farm issues, including severe drought and dwindling water access in some areas.

"Our challenge is to educate farmers about the vulnerability of agriculture," when it comes to climate change, he said. "We've seen temperatures increase since 1970 accelerate at three times the rate prior. So there are warning signs."

That's one reason why the agency has created seven climate hubs across the country, including Ames, to look at the ramifications of climate change and what actions should be taken to mitigate them, Vilsack stressed.

**Sheep Producers Respond to Action Request on Wolf Hunt Amendment**

In late April, we learned that an animal rights group “Howling for Wolves” was planning to get an amendment introduced to the omnibus Game and Fish bill that would have put a moratorium on MN’s wolf hunting season. MLWPA worked with MN Farm Bureau, MN Farmers Union and the MN State Cattlemen’s Association to ask members to call their state Representative and urge a no vote on any wolf-related amendments to the bill.

We asked and you responded. I received many emails from MLWPA members who voiced our concerns to our legislators. MFBF, MFU and MSCA had similar responses from their members. Thank you to all who contacted their legislators on behalf of our fellow livestock producers who are trying to ranch in wolf territory.

**Legislative Session Nearing the end**

The Minnesota Legislature is moving to wrap-up conference committees for the purpose of working through differences in the second installment of the omnibus tax bill, the supplemental appropriations and eventually a bonding bill. Legislators are also processing other pieces of legislation while these main pillars are being finalized and actions concluded.

Of particular interest are the developments taking place in the conference committee working through the omnibus tax bill. The House included an $18 million property tax provision which deals with the agricultural homestead tax credit system. The Senate did not follow suit. These differences extend beyond the property tax package in the House bill, but that is the portion we are primarily focused on.
MLWPA YOUTH REPORT - KELLY FROEHLCIC

MLWP junior committee has been off to a busy spring! On April 15th the MLWP juniors hosted a booth at the University of Minnesota Agricultural Awareness on the Minneapolis campus. It brought many preschool kids, as well as college staff and students. We also had the opportunity to host an a booth at the MN state FFA convention on April 28th bringing more than 3,000 high school students from all over MN. Both events gave a great opportunity to promote the lamb & wool industry. Educational material from the American Lamb Board, American Sheep Industry, and MLWP was given away.

Coming up, we are planning a promotional booth at the state fairgrounds (May 15th) for an FFA chapter Urban Agriculture day in which around 550 upper urban elementary school kids are coming to learn about agriculture. We are also planning a promotional booth at Shepherd's Harvest at Lake Elmo May 17&18. If you want or know anybody who would be willing to help out with any of the upcoming events send me an email at kellyssheep@gmail.com

Scott County
City to Country Autumn Fare

Saturday, September 13, 2014 9am-4pm
Scott County Fairgrounds
7151 – 190th Street West, Jordan, MN $5 parking fee

8am – 10am Farmer's Breakfast Buffet crafted by Menu to be determined

Educational seminars all day!
Canning • Farm Safety • Master Gardeners
Sheep Shearing • Wagon Rides • Milking

Come Enjoy this Showcase of Local Farms and Products
• Shop vendors of locally produced crafts, natural fibers, food & art!
• Meet local farmers to learn about their farm, family & touch their animals!
• Step back in time and ride the Big Eli Ferris Wheel

For Information regarding vendor/commercial space, contact:
Norm Pint, Scott County Fair Manager (952) 492-5440
Abby Neu, Scott County Extension (952) 492-5386
OR
Lori Pint lori54@bevcomm.net (952) 758-4128
THE PETERSON FARM BRO'S' BEEF WITH CHIPOTLE

GREG PETERSON (PART 1 OF A 3-PART SERIES)

Many have probably seen or heard about Chipotle's commercial, "The Scarecrow" and their recent video series, "Farmed and Dangerous." Chipotle claims these spots are shedding light on the "inhumane" and "unsustainable" nature of "industrial farming." They try to use the videos to inform people of the perceived problems with the current food system, such as the difference between meat that is ethically raised and meat that isn't. Chipotle claims they are supporting:

- The consumer does deserve healthy meat from humanely raised animals
- The family farmer is who should be raising their food
- Ethical behavior should be of greater concern than profit.

What I don't agree with is Chipotle's definitions of family farmers, humanely raised animals, and ethical behavior. As a 5th generation family farmer in central Kansas, I along with my family raise cattle. Our farm is quite large, (over 1,000 head), and yes, we raise our livestock "conventionally." That means our cattle are confined in pens, antibiotics are given to revive them when they are sick, and hormones are administered to them to promote healthy growth. These are all methods Chipotle has deemed "unhealthy, unsustainable, and unethical" and are some of the things they attack in their video series.

While it may seem that Chipotle is on the side of family farmers, the truth is that they are attacking thousands of family farms across America like ours that fit the definition of an "industrial farm."

Nearly everyone who believes these methods are wrong (including Chipotle) are basing their beliefs on what seems to be everyone's collective emotions toward the concepts, and have never actually seen the way the overwhelming majority of conventional beef is raised in person. I do say majority because there are exceptions where animals are not treated correctly, and I will address that later on. There are so many misconceptions on this topic, believe me.

Why am I, Greg Peterson, asking the people reading this to trust what I have to say on this topic? Well first of all, I am a real farmer, and I have been all of my life. I base my beliefs off of personal experience on a real farm and the real, independent, scientific research that has been done on the topics. The reality of who I am compared to the propaganda (from both sides of the argument) of what you might read on the Internet is what should set me apart. As a farmer, I will actually do as much research as anyone into what I grow as food. It's my livelihood. Who do you think is more of an expert on farming, a blogger from the city, an overpaid celebrity, a giant fast food corporation, or a real life family farmer? I'm not a corporate spokesman, a paid journalist, or a crazed activist. I'm a down-to-earth, hard-working farmer, who isn't getting paid a dime to write any of this. Quite honestly, I am literally writing this article for the sole purpose of promoting the truth and correcting the false information that so many believe about some of the most valuable people in the world, family farmers.

Furthermore, my own family eats our own beef and our own crops (straight from the field!) and we have never doubted the quality of them for a second. I definitely understand why people are scared of what Chipotle and others are claiming is happening in agriculture and are concerned about what they are eating, but if my family trusts what we are growing and the methods that we use enough to eat it ourselves, then why shouldn't you?

I'm asking for your trust in reading this, and I know that is a hard thing to gain these days. There is so much misinformation out there anymore. But I hope that most of you have followed my brothers and me for awhile now and understand who we are, what we are about, and where we are coming from. Please, keep an open mind with what you are about to read, because it will probably contradict a lot of different things you have heard about large agriculture operations.

[read part 2 at:
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/greg-peterson/the-peterson-farm-bros-be_1_b_4995367.html
and part 3 at:
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/greg-peterson/the-peterson-farm-bros-be_2_b_5088567.html]
With more than 30 years of commercial lamb production experience, Westbrook’s Roger Knudson knows that he has to “either make it simple or quit” the career path he chose back in the 1980s. “Sheep adapt to a lot of things, but as you get bigger you have to reduce the workload,” he said.

Knudson’s experience with sheep began early when he was in kindergarten in the 1960s and his dad surprised him with a couple of ewes. Back then, the farm contained several species of farm animals, specifically cattle and hogs.

“From then on, we raised sheep,” he said. “As barns became available, we added more sheep.” At one time, Knudson said his dad “had ewes in seven different pastures,” with the two of them mending fences at each rented location.

By the time the former Westbrook FFA member had his commercial sheep flock, Knudson said he eliminated the use of pastures, opting instead to manage his ewes on dry lots on his grandparents’ farm east of Westbrook.

Sheep, he said, fit more easily into his row-cropping schedule because the majority of the sheep work is completed during the winter. The sheep also provided a natural transition for the old, two-story barn located on his grandparents’ farm east of Westbrook.

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The sheep also provided a natural transition for the old, two-story barn located on his grandparents’ farm east of Westbrook. While the dry lots adjacent to the 80-year-old barn were too small for a beef operation to expand, it could easily hold several hundred head of sheep. The elimination of multiple ewe locations, saved on labor, Knudson said.

When Knutson enrolled in the Pipestone Lamb and Wool Program in 1984, he had 130 ewes, all housed and lambed out of that older barn. Ten years later, he added fence-line feeding to the dry lots and gradually stopped feeding small square hay bales, opting to feed a total mixed ration to the ewes since hiring labor for baling had become scarce.

As ewe numbers grew to more than 300 and the older barn began reaching capacity for finishing lambs, Knudson said he questioned whether he had reached his production limit.

An answer came from the lamb and wool program instructors, who suggested Knudson construct a hoop barn facility consisting of four-foot sidewalks bridged together by large metal hoops topped with a tarp as a roof. “You can’t raise animals in a tent,” a then-skeptical Knudson recalled thinking.

Back in 1996, only hog producers used the inexpensive form of cold housing. According to instructor Mike Caskey, Knudson was one of the first sheep producers to use the structures.

“Everyone said it wouldn’t work,” Caskey said. “They thought they were too cold. (And) they didn’t know how long they would last – the first ones were designed real cheap.”

Kudson erected two hoop barns. Expense was the primary reason he decided to construct hoop barns instead of pole structures. He could assemble the hoop barns himself and he found the rounded structures fit more easily between the existing feed bunks in the slopped feedlot area.

The hoop barns have been a positive learning experience for Knudson. “I learned the first day, you don’t have to tighten it up,” he said.

On the ends of each hoop barn are adjustable flaps. If he left a portion of the top flaps open, the circulating air didn’t create drafts and prevented condensed water from forming and dripping on the livestock below. On sunny days, the south facing flaps were opened to allow sunshine and more air to freely enter and exit the hoop barns. The barns, however, were better suited for cold housing.

Through other lamb and wool program producers’ experiences, Knudson said he learned that hoop barns couldn’t be heated for lambing because a temperature in the 40s couldn’t be economically maintained.

Until 2005, the old two-story barn sufficed for lambing the more than 1,000 lambs born each year. But his marriage in 2002 to wife Laurie, followed by the births of their two sons, Erik and Zach (now 10 and 9 respectively), caused Knudsen to make adjustments with his lambing routine to allow for more family time. After touring the barns of other lamb and wool program participants, he constructed a 60- by 128-foot insulated pole structure with an open floor plan, something the old barn did not have. The new structure with removable fencing was placed in the same location as the old barn and improved Knudson’s routine.

“It’s like a complete circle,” he said. Ewes lamb in groups and the pairs are placed out in the hoop barns after the lamb is around 10 days old. In the hoop barns, moms and babies are kept together until weaning, when the ewes (lambs are finished to market weight in the hoop barns) are brought back to the lambing barn.

The new lambing barn has allowed Knudson to expand his flock to 560 ewes. Future plans may involve the construction of another hoop barn.

“You either make it easier or you quit,” he said, grinning slightly. “I am too stubborn to quit.”
Successful weaning of your lamb crop requires planning that starts several weeks ahead of the expected wean date. We recommend that lambs be weaned at 60-70 days of age. The lambs should be well-adjusted to eating creep and drinking water by this age. The creep ration should be a 16% protein ration at this age.

The producer should not feed the ewe flock any corn the last week prior to weaning and the ewes should be on coarse grass hay. The reduction of energy will signal the ewe to reduce her milk production, and result in less mastitis and ruined udders. I know many people restrict water at time of weaning, but I do not. If you have done a good job in reducing the quality of forage intake the ewes will dry off correctly. You should walk the weaned ewe pen multiple times a day for the first week watching for signs of mastitis. If you see a ewe with a full, reddened, swollen painful udder, that maybe reluctant to move freely, you should treat her immediately and aggressively. Nuflor and Flunixin work very good in most cases. The higher the milk production, the higher the chance for mastitis. Poor milking ewes rarely have mastitis following weaning.

Lambs wean best if they stay in familiar surroundings. If you can move the ewes to a distant area and leave the lambs in a pen where they know the location of feed and water that is advisable. Makes sure that there is a source or multiple sources of clean, fresh water available. Adding a source of water-soluble Vitamin E and electrolytes to the water sources is recommended. The Vitamin E will help boost immune function and reduce cases of White Muscle Disease. The electrolytes balance the lambs body needs and requirements. Lambs like long stem hay at weaning time and many prefer the hay over a grain source. You should limit the amount of hay after one week, and work at getting the lambs onto a higher grain diet. Keeping a source of high quality hay at low levels in their diet helps prevent Polio, Acidosis, Water Belly, and digestive upset. Bi carb offered free choice as well, is a good idea. Lambs should be gaining a pound a day during this phase, and some lambs will gain over a pound and a half. We think most lambs should be marketed by five months of age, the best doing lambs will be ready by four months of age.

Keep weaned lambs in an area that has plenty of fresh air avoiding stale high ammonia barns. The high ammonia levels lead to barn cough and rectal prolapsing.

Western lambs that have been on grass often are much older when weaned. These lambs should be started with a grass base diet and slowly worked to a concentrate diet over a three-week period. The western lambs definitely should also be started with Vitamin E and electrolytes in their water. If you have questions about handling the ewes or lambs at weaning please give us a call. salt starved animals don’t do all that well.

Learn more at www.pipevet.com (800) 658-2523
**Shepherd's News**

**CLASSIFIED ADS**

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)

**Suffolk ewe lambs for sale**: I have a select group of ewe lambs for sale that would make a great starter flock youth project. They are all RR with good pedigrees—mostly out of first times mommas, so they are a little smaller than the rest. Reasonably priced. Contact me soon if interested. Jeremy Geske: 612-756-1200 or Jeremy.geske@gmail.com

**Electric Tail docker for sale**: Used twice. Contact Gail or Ron at 952-466-5876.

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**Volunteer at the BAA Booth**

Going to be at the MN State Fair? Can you spend part of the day in the BAA booth? Can you do a demo in the BAA booth one day? If so, contact Jeremy Geske at Jeremy.geske@gmail.com

**Work in the Commercial booth?**

Contact Sherry Stirling at grazelandsheep@gmail.com

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**Featured product**

Salt & Mineral feeder

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<tr>
<td>May 16-18</td>
<td>Shepherd's Harvest Festival</td>
<td>Lake Elmo, MN</td>
<td>Julie McKenzie 612 961-9625</td>
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<td>May 29-31</td>
<td>Nugget All-American Show &amp; Sale</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.wlivestock.com">www.wlivestock.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun. 9</td>
<td>Pipestone Sheep Facility Tour</td>
<td>Pipestone, MN</td>
<td>Phil Berg <a href="mailto:Philip.berg@mnwest.edu">Philip.berg@mnwest.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun. 10-14</td>
<td>National Columbia Show &amp; Sale</td>
<td>Tooele, UT</td>
<td><a href="http://www.columbiasheep.org">www.columbiasheep.org</a></td>
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<td>Jun. 14</td>
<td>NSIP Carcass Scanning Workshop</td>
<td>Faribault, MN</td>
<td>Jeremy Geske 612-756-1200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun. 14</td>
<td>Midwest Jr Preview Show</td>
<td>Sedalia, MO</td>
<td><a href="http://www.midwestjuniorpreviewshow.com">www.midwestjuniorpreviewshow.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul. 3-6</td>
<td>National Jr. Suffolk Sheep Show</td>
<td>Hutchinson, KS</td>
<td><a href="http://www.u-s-s-a.org">www.u-s-s-a.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul. 3-6</td>
<td>All-American Junior Show</td>
<td>Hutchinson, KS</td>
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<td>Jul. 12</td>
<td>Ohio Sheep Day</td>
<td>Cumberland, OH</td>
<td>Roger High <a href="mailto:rhigh@ofbf.org">rhigh@ofbf.org</a></td>
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<td>Jul. 17-19</td>
<td>National Targhee Show &amp; Sale</td>
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<td>Mn State Fair open class sheep shows</td>
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<td>Chaska, MN</td>
<td>Glenette Sperry <a href="mailto:gtsperry@frontiernet.net">gtsperry@frontiernet.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 5-7</td>
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<td>Jeremy Geske 612-756-1200</td>
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Have an item for the calendar—email it to Jeremy.