Dan Persons’ Rafter P Ranch is one of the largest sheep farms in Minnesota, and thus provided a great setting for producers from all across the state to come and learn during the Minnesota Lamb & Wool Producers’ Spring Sheep Workshop.

The cool day on April 7 didn’t have much affect on the hearty Minnesotans – most of whom were just happy to have not seen fresh snow in a few days. Mixed in among wool handling discussions and a hoof trimming demonstration, the ranch itself proved to be the star of the day. The former cattle ranch went to sheep full time in the mid 2000s because its mix of small buildings was a better fit for the smaller animals.

“We got into sheep to run both cattle and sheep in the same pasture, but we grew because we really liked the sheep,” said Dan about his 950-ewe operation. “We stayed in the sheep because they bring a good profit.”

Among the crowd were young entrepreneurs Jared and Jessica Brinkman. The couple have taken over Jared’s family farm in Goodhue, Minn., in recent years and worked their way from 100 ewes to 350. They kept back nearly 150 ewe lambs this year and hope to lamb 500 ewes next spring. After that, they believe 750 is an achievable goal in just a few years. Eventually, they’d like to be running 1,000 ewes.

“We’re growing as much as we can with

Cont. on p. 10
**President’s Message—Cont**

it wasn’t a snow storm weekend! And we welcomed several new members that day. Also, check out your Sheep Industry News magazine as the ASI reporter attended the workshop, and made several other stops in the area.

Some updates from ASI. The recent news of the Farm Bill progressing was a surprise to most, and in its current wording is very positive for our sheep industry. See John’s column for more info, including ASI President Mike Corn’s comments. Definitely a “win” for us since the ASI Legislative trip to DC in March with many of ASI’s “asks” being included in the current bill. ASI has updated the 2018 Policy Handbook, and the Committees were also approved in their Spring meeting, and again Minnesota has good representation on a large majority of the committees. Check both of these out on ASI’s website.

There are two recent notices to be aware of. FSA has published a bulletin on coverage for losses due to Cache Valley Virus (CVV). Some areas have seen high losses this year due to CVV, especially producers who lamb early, because the virus is carried by mosquitoes, so where mosquito season and breeding season overlap the risk is increased. Also, MDA is providing another round of Wolf Prevention Grants. There were several sheep producers who received grants this prior offering.

**Greetings From Your ASI Region III Director**

Well, what a difference a week can make with this year’s weather. Last week we were dealing with over a foot of snow and now it’s almost t-shirt weather. Field work will hopefully be starting in the next week barring any rain storms.

I hope most of you have completed lambing or are on the tail end of the lambing season. I have seen quite a few pictures on facebook and it looks like there are some very good sheep for sale.

All of a sudden the Farm Bill has picked up steam and is moving forward. The U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture approved a new edition of the Farm Bill on April 18. The farm bill, HR 2, is required to authorize farm and food program support which expires this fall.

The committee wrote strong legislation for sheep producers with new authorization of funding for minor use minor species pharmaceutical development - a top ask of the American Sheep Industry Association. This program for pharmaceuticals development and labeling for American application is critical for sheep. ASI is pleased with this opportunity for annual funding under the U.S. Department of Agriculture in cooperation with FDA’s Center for Veterinary Medicine as the existing program, while successful, has exhausted funding and would not be able to continue.

This version of the Farm Bill increases funding in reauthorizing a competitive grant program to strengthen infrastructure in the lamb and wool businesses, which is another ask of ASI in formal testimony before the House agriculture leadership.

"Sheep producers appreciate the support of the committee for risk management and disaster assistance programs, as well as export market support, each category of which are used by sheep producers," stated ASI president Mike Corn. "Including the specific sheep provisions mentioned, this is the strongest Farm Bill in recent memory. We shared our support with Chairman (Michael) Conaway to actively work for approval by the full U.S. House in the coming weeks."

ASI’s Legislative Action Council met again this month to line up Farm Bill support. This was in addition to March meetings in Washington, D.C., with dozens of volunteer sheep industry leaders carrying the requests for basic risk management and trade support. New provisions for animal health, disease response and a vaccination bank add to the reasons sheep producers support passage of HR 2.

Also added into the farm bill is reauthorization of the wool trust funds continuation of the national sheep improvement center and money to fund a vaccine bank should an outbreak of a foreign animal disease.

Hopefully the bill will make it out of the house floor and on to the senate for their approval.

Should anyone ever have any questions or concerns on the sheep industry, please contact me.

*John Dvorak ASI Region III Director*
Pipestone Lamb and Wool Facility Tour

The Pipestone Lamb and Wool Program is excited to offer an idea-filled sheep facility tour on June 4. This tour is offered every other year. The purpose of the tour is to give producers an opportunity to see various types of sheep facilities, including the latest innovations in sheep buildings, handling systems, feeding systems and facility layout.

The tour will be a full day, visiting four Lamb and Wool producers with feeding systems and facility layout. 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 participants will see lambing barns, hoop barns, remodeled buildings along with various feeding systems designed to reduce labor and minimize feed waste. In addition, this will be an opportunity to hear the philosophy of sheep production from successful sheep producers.

Visit our website www.pipestonesheep.com for registration information and to view pictures of tour locations. Registration forms and additional information about our facility tour are available on our web page or individuals can contact the Pipestone Lamb and Wool Management Program at: (800) 658-2330, philip.berg@mnwest.edu or laurie.johnson@mnwest.edu.

MLWPA Board Meeting Minutes - Jeremy Geske

MLWPA Board Conference Call—April 5, 8pm
Roll Call: Jeremy Geske, Randy Kinney, Kay Edberg, Steve Froehlich, Daryl Boehm, Al Hendrickx, John Dvorak, Glenette Sperry, Travis Hoffman, Travis Fowler
The meeting was called to order at 8 pm by President Kinney. Moved/2nd to approve agenda—carried. Secretary’s Report – Jeremy emailed out – moved/2nd to approve as amended - Carried. Treasurer’s Report – Glenette emailed. Total balance = $52,555.49. After discussion, Moved/2nd to approve - carried.

Information Updates:
- Follow-up from ASI Annual Convention, DC trip, and ASI committee assignments – Randy, John, Glenette attended plus a few additional state leaders. Randy, John gave update on ASI convention. John gave update on DC trip (John & Bernie Dvorak and Steve Schrier attended). ASI committee assignments – not any change for MN
- Pipestone Lambing weekend course – Randy attended, 2 new members signed.
- OPP MN Grown grant received / complete! – Thanks to Sherry Stirling and Glenette. OPP project did get an ASI grant to make the

program national (10 states – 2yr commitment)
- FMD Response Planning, May -BAH reached out to Jeremy – wanted sheep industry represented on FMD response training – John D attended planning meeting in March. Actual training in May – John D will attend. Travis H will also attend.
- Fosston event – Al H gave update – decent educational event (about 30 attended).
- FSA bulletin – Cache Valley Virus – declared as a “loss” – producers can file for reimbursement.
- Wolf depredation grants – will be available again this year

Committee Reports:
- Spring Workshop at Dan P’s – pre-reg’s / last minute needs / board attendance plans: Randy will do registration. Al, John, Steve, Daryl, Travis H.
- 2018 Shepherds Holiday / Annual Conference & Tour, Rochester MN – Jeremy gave update, Don D working on speakers/topics. – Get current information on website (it is on events Calendar).
- Membership / Directory – Jeremy updated – close to 200 members, working on directory – goal to go to print in May.
- Website updates, Blogging?, FB page – what is allowed posts? Invite people who liked old facebook page to like the new one. Randy will discuss changes with Don

Old Business:
- MLWP Committee assignments for 2018 – Randy will send out

New Business:
- Youth Assoc. Kay asked for ideas to get youth involved – discussion.
- MN FFA Urban Ag Day at State Fairgrounds, May 8 & 9 – discussion on who might attend.
- U of M Ag Awareness Day -April 10 - Jeremy attending
- Shepherd’s Harvest – discussion on who will be in attendance.
- Barron-built/Andrew Barron wants to donate feeder for raffle to raise money for scholarships- need to be filed as a 317a organization with SOS. – We are currently a 501c3
- 2018 Calendar, Plans, Expectations
- Newsletter article due date April 23
- Travis H/, NDSU Lamb Value Discovery Workshop (“Lamb 300”), 4/25/26
- Howard Wyman Leadership school, Sioux Falls, 7/8-11, apps due 4/30
- Young Entrepreneurs - LambEx, applications due 4/30
- Superior Farms - Sheep Innovator Conference 7/19-21
- Pipestone Sheep Facility tour June 4 Mtg Adjourned.
The Stars of the North on-line sale (open to members of MLWPA, MN Suffolk Sheep Assoc. and MN Hampshire Sheep Assoc.) was held April 24 at www.wlivestock.com. Fourteen sheep (8 Suffolk, 2 Hampshire, 1 Columbia, 1 Dorset, 1 Rambouillet and 1 Southdown) were entered. Six ewes sold to buyers from 4 different states for an average of over $817/hd.

Congratulations to Randy & Gunvar Dombek for consigning the high-selling ewe at $1600. The Second high-selling ewe was consigned by Dew Drop Farms. The third high-selling ewe was consigned by Chuck & Jan Bobendrier.

Market Update - [these prices are from 4/24/18]

Feeder Prices. ($/cwt.), San Angelo: 50-60 lbs. $230; 60-95 lbs. $196-$228.
Slaughter Prices - Negotiated 145-186 lbs. $149.52 per cwt.
Slaughter Prices - Formula, 91.70 lbs. carcass weight $261.21 per cwt.
Slaughter Prices *Comprehensive Information*--Formula & Negotiated. 88.30 lbs. carcass weight $272.35 per cwt.
Equity Electronic Auction. No sales.
Cutout Value/Net Carcass Value. $325.97 per cwt.
Carcass Price. Choice and Prime, YG 1-4, weighted average prices ($/cwt.), No prices reported.
Exported Adult Sheep. 324 head
Wool, ($/pound clean), delivered FOB, From Two Weeks Ago: 18 micron (Grade 80s) NA, 19 micron (Grade 80s) NA, 20 micron (Grade 70s) 5.90, 21 micron (Grade 64-70s) NA, 22 micron (Grade 64s) 5.69, 23 micron (Grade 62s) NA, 24 micron (Grade 60-62s) 3.85, 25 micron (Grade 58s) 3.75, 26 micron (Grade 56-58s) NA, 27 Micron (Grade 54-56s) NA, 28 micron (Grade 54s) NA, 29 micron (Grade 50-54s) 1.55, 32 micron (Grade 46-48s) NA, Merino Clippings NA.

Ft. Collins, CO Feeder Lambs $210 - $260/cwt, Slaughter lambs $182.50 - $225/cwt, Ewes & Bucks $60 - $142.50/cwt
Zumbrota, MN Feeder Lambs $100 - $275/cwt, Slaughter lambs $125 - $170/cwt, Ewes & Bucks $10 - $85/cwt
Fargo, ND Feeder Lambs $158 - $170/cwt, Slaughter lambs $145 - $153/cwt, Ewes & Bucks $60 - $92.50/cwt
Pipestone, MN Feeder Lambs $no test/cwt, Slaughter lambs $145 - $150/cwt, Ewes & Bucks $10 - $63/cwt
Sioux Falls, SD Feeder Lambs $207.50 - $222.50/cwt, Slaughter lambs $137 - $143/cwt, Ewes & Bucks $37- $61/cwt
Mt Hope, OH Feeder Lambs $207.50 - $285/cwt, Slaughter lambs $192.50 - $237.50/cwt, Ewes & Bucks $55- $107.50/cwt
Manchester, MI Feeder Lambs $160 - $280/cwt, Slaughter lambs $160 - $220/cwt; Ewes & Bucks $50- $80/cwt
Escalon, CA Feeder Lambs $140 - $200/cwt, Slaughter lambs $135 - $150/cwt; Ewes & Bucks $25- $225/hd
Billings, MT Feeder Lambs $177.50 - $185/cwt, Slaughter lambs $121 - $150/cwt; Ewes & Bucks $60- $75/cwt
Kalona, IA Feeder Lambs $220 - $250/cwt, Slaughter lambs $222.50 - $242/cwt; Ewes & Bucks $58- $82.50/cwt
Fennimore, WI Feeder Lambs $130 - $200/cwt, Slaughter lambs $122 - $135/cwt; Ewes & Bucks $40- $60/cwt
Equity (WI) Feeder Lambs $160/cwt & down, Slaughter lambs $140/cwt & down; Ewes & Bucks $45/cwt & down
American Lamb Board Establishes Goal of 2 Percent Demand Growth

The American Lamb Board (ALB) has approved a new long range plan for 2018-2022 to focus the work of the checkoff and its stakeholders in the areas of promotion, information and research over the next five years – and it boldly sets a demand growth goal.

The strategic objective of the plan is to increase demand for American Lamb by 2 percent annually over the next five years, for a total demand growth of 10 percent. Per capita consumption of lamb in the U.S. has remained steady over the past ten years at approximately one pound per person per year with nearly 20 percent of lamb consumption occurring during the spring holidays. Urban shoppers are the most likely to consume lamb with the highest consumption occurring on the East and West Coasts. In 2015, lamb demand was up 7 percent compared to 2014 and increased again in 2016 by 2.5 percent.

“The future holds tremendous promise for our industry which produces a unique, flavorful, tender and nutritious protein that meets the changing needs and preferences of consumers,” says Jim Percival, Xenia, Ohio, ALB chairman. “Improving the quality and consistency of our products to ensuring consumers have a great eating experience every time, increasing our industry’s productivity and stabilizing our prices are all critical to the success of creating demand for American Lamb.”

ALB is committed to Five Core Strategies outlined in the Long Range Plan that aim to increase the demand for American Lamb.

- Grow awareness and increase usage of American Lamb among chefs and consumers.
- Promote and strengthen American Lamb’s Value Proposition.
- Improve the quality and consistency of American Lamb.
- Support industry efforts to increase domestic supplies of lamb.
- Collaborate and communicate with industry partners and stakeholders to expand efforts to address the first four strategies.

“Using these core strategies, the ALB will create budgets and annual work plans to achieve the goals and initiatives set by the Long Range Plan. America’s lamb producers are excited about the work we’ll be doing over the next several years to increase the demand not just for lamb, but specifically for American Lamb,” Percival says.

The Long Range Plan identifies key trends and opportunities in today’s marketing climate. Global demand growth, interest in buying local and production practices, changing consumer preferences, nutrition perceptions of lamb, as well as the price and perceived value of American Lamb all influenced the five core strategies outlined in the Long Range Plan.

“We trust that other stakeholders and allied industry partners will seek opportunities to align their plans with this plan and find ways to support the industry-wide objectives. We all benefit when we focus our efforts to build demand for American Lamb,” Percival says.

Building Awareness for Lamb

The American Lamb Board continues to sponsor events and workshops in target markets to build awareness and educate consumers, chefs and influencers about the versatility and great flavor of American Lamb. Seattle, WA and Vail, CO were sites for recent lamb educational events for consumers. Learn more at:

www.americanlamb.com

Bahn Mi Lamb Sliders

**Ingredients**

- 1 lb lean ground American lamb
- 1 clove finely crushed garlic
- 1 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp hot sauce
- 1 tbsp sesame seeds
- 1 tsp Sesame oil
- Salt and pepper
- 12 slider buns

**Sambal Mayo**

- 1 cup Mayonnaise
- 2 tbsp lime juice
- 1 1/2 tbsp sambal

**Quick Asian Pickles**

- 1 carrot—julienned
- 1 cucumber—julienned
- 2 radishes—julienned
- 1 Fresno chili pepper—diced
- 1/2 cup white vinegar
- 1 tbsp sugar
- Pinch of salt

**Directions**

1. Mix mayo ingredients, set aside.
2. Use gloves to dice chili pepper. Mix pickle ingredients. Set aside.
3. In a large mixing bowl combine the lamb with the spices and seasonings. Mix carefully.
4. Measure out 1 oz. even patties and fry them in a large skillet over medium-medium high heat (3-4 minutes). Flip the patty and cook until done (another 1-2 minutes).
5. To assemble your sliders place a generous tsp of the mayo on the bottom bun, place the hot meat patty on top and top with quick pickles, and top bun!
CVV is a virus that is transmitted by mosquitoes to sheep. If a ewe is pregnant when infected, the virus can cause dramatic neurological and muscular damage to the lambs she carries. CVV cannot be spread from an infected animal to a human or another animal, explained Larry Holler, professor and SDSU extension veterinarian/pathologist at the South Dakota Animal Disease Research and Diagnostic Laboratory.

“The most dramatic effects of the CVV virus leads to birth defects in lambs, mostly affecting the brain and nervous system. The virus also affects the skeleton and muscle,” Holler said. “These defects show up as fused joints, curved or twisted spines, unusually thin and underdeveloped muscles, and enlarged skulls.”

Holler worked with SDSU Sheep Extension Specialist, Dr. Jeff Held to monitor the CVV outbreak this past lambing season. They believe that CVV has impacted South Dakota flocks this lambing season, because high populations of mosquitos remained in the region during the early breeding season (from August into September).

“That’s why we’ll see the effects in the early lambing season,” Holler said. “They are a result of mosquitoes that carried the virus biting ewes last summer and fall during critical stages of gestation. CVV has no apparent effects on non-pregnant ewes or other classes of sheep.”

Infection of a ewe early in gestation, up to day 28 generally, results in fetal reabsorption, but Held said another equally critical period is between days 28 and 45 of gestation.

“Infection at this stage of pregnancy has the highest risk of CVV-caused neonatal developmental abnormalities,” said Held. “After day 45 of gestation, a CVV infection is not expected to cause abnormalities in lambs.”

He said that although CVV is found throughout the U.S., the reported cases affecting sheep in South Dakota and the Upper Midwest region generally are minimal. The 2011 winter lambing season was the most recent widespread reported high incidence of CVV-affected lambs in the state.

In flocks with clinical CVV the percentage of the total lamb crop affected was generally less than 5 percent. “With CVV infections sheep-flock owners often report a higher incidence of open ewes, decreased lambing rates, and subsequently lower overall ewe reproductive efficiency,” Held said.

“Lambs born with severe defects are stillborn, yet in other CVV cases the result is the birth of live lambs that are compromised due to skeletal and nervous system abnormalities,” Held said. “They can be drowsy, weak or unsteady and reports indicate that normal and abnormal lambs are possible in the same litter.”

Even with excellent management care practices, the mortality rate is high for these lambs born with CVV. Holler added that the virus infects pregnant ewes. Mosquitoes are the sole carrier of CVV.

Held said ewes bred later last fall, late-September or later, when mosquito activity was lower, will have a decreased chance of having abnormal lambs. Therefore, lamb crops arriving in mid-February or later are expected to have lower probabilities for CVV-affected newborns.

“We want to remind producers that the virus is not contagious or spread from ewe to ewe, even during the lambing season,” said Holler. “Unfortunately, there is no vaccine for CVV. Since the cause is a virus, there are no treatments available, either.”

Holler and Held both said that CVV is endemic, or constantly present, in sheep populations in the U.S. Clinical manifestations of the disease tend to occur in cycles, as the sheep population seems to gain some natural immunity after infection. As this immunity wanes over a period of years, the clinical effects become more prevalent.

“Sheep producers suspecting CVV should contact a veterinarian in order to rule out other causes of birth defects, miscarriages or infertility,” Holler said. “Diagnosis of CVV is sometimes difficult, but can be made in the laboratory by detecting specific antibodies against CVV in the lambs.”

[Editor’s note: In March, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that sheep producers who suffered losses do to CVV could be eligible for reimbursement through the Emergency Livestock Assistance Program. Losses must be verifiable and claimed within 30 days of the loss. Keep this in mind for future years if your flock suffers losses from CVV.]
Livestock Waiver for ELD Mandate
Extended with Omnibus Bill

The $1.3 trillion omnibus spending bill that President Trump signed also provided a livestock waiver for the implementation of the electronic logging device (ELD) mandate. The bill was passed on March 23 and prohibits funding to enact the regulation that requires livestock haulers to comply with the ELD mandate. The spending bill delays implantation for livestock haulers until September 30, 2018.

Multiple cattle industry groups such as the United States Cattlemen’s Association and the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association were in support of the spending bill due to the livestock waiver as well as other language in the bill.

As with the other delays to the ELD mandate, the additional time before implementation begins will provide livestock haulers a better opportunity to come into compliance with the regulation. The latest extension will also give FMCSA a chance to reevaluate portions of the rule which have the potential of significantly disrupting the manner in which livestock are hauled cross-country.

Documentary to Highlight Women in Agriculture

Modern agriculture is changing, and women are playing a larger role now in professional and production agricultural pursuits than ever before. Groups like FarmHer work hard to highlight these women, and it’s great to see, particularly since females have historically been left out of agriculture’s earliest stories.

A new documentary film aims to tell the untold stories of past and present female farmers. According to Matthew Weaver for the Capital Press, "Filmmakers from Washington state want to tell the stories of America's women farmers. They are working on a new documentary film called 'Women's Work: The Untold Story of America's Female Farmer.' "We've been putting women back into the narrative of the modern-day story," said co-executive producer Audra Mulkern, founder of the Female Farmer Project.

Consumers Want Greater Transparency in Food Production

The Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef makes Canada the first country in the world to launch a producer framework for sustainable beef production, to certify cattle operations and track chain of custody.

With the launch of a new generation of BIXS, which is a web–based data management system that operates a value–added traceability system, transparency, traceability and verification in beef production is a reality.

It’s been dubbed the "cloud for cows."

BIXS will support the integrity of the beef supply chain, providing transparency for all participants while protecting privacy, moving the industry from the disconnected supply chain of yesterday to true value chains of tomorrow. Using blockchain technology, BIXS will increase efficiencies, building robust integrated blockchain solutions that will work alongside the web–based traceability system, which tracks cattle via RFID (radio frequency identification tags) through their lifetime.

US Fish Farmers Brace for Negative Campaign from Animal Activists

The US aquaculture industry should be prepared for an unwelcome spotlight from animal rights activists who are poised to step up a series of attacks against the practice of fish farming in 2018, industry groups said.

The campaigns are likely to rely on undercover videotaped "investigations" of aquaculture facilities and barrages of negative press against consumer–facing brands, techniques previously used against the beef, poultry and swine sectors, speakers warned fish farmers at Aquaculture America.

The National Aquaculture Association (NAA) first received "credible" evidence in November that several animal rights groups would begin an anti–fish farming campaign this year and has begun preparing its membership, Paul Zajicek, the group's executive director, told Undercurrent News.
CAPITOL CONNECTION

House Ag Committee Farm Bill Markup

Last week the House Agriculture Committee released the 2018 Farm Bill. The Farm Bill provides several provisions to the nutrition title focused on improving the training necessary to obtain well-paying jobs and financial self-sufficiency. On Wednesday, the House Agriculture Committee marked up the 2018 Farm Bill.

The bill includes improvements to the safety net programs for farmers, expansion of the definition of family, and restores full funding for the Market Access Program and Foreign Market Development program.

During markup Democratic Members voiced unanimous opposition due to concerns regarding changes to the nutrition title and did not offer any amendments. The bill was approved in a 26-to-20 vote on party lines and House Ag Committee moved to advance the bill to the House Floor.

Senate Ag Commits to Bipartisan Bill

Senate Ag Committee Chairman Pat Roberts and Ranking Member Debbie Stabenow, issued the following statement after the release of the House version of the 2018 Farm Bill: "We continue to be committed to working on a Farm Bill for all farmers and families. With low commodity prices, worsening conditions in farm country, and unmet needs in communities across the country, we need to get this Farm Bill right. We're working together as quickly as possible to produce a bipartisan bill that can pass the Senate and be enacted into law."

Agriculture Committee Includes Sheep in Farm Bill

The U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture approved a new edition of the Farm Bill on April 18. The farm bill, HR 2, is required to authorise farm and food program support which expires this fall.

The committee wrote strong legislation for sheep producers with new authorization of funding for minor use minor species pharmaceutical development - a top ask of the American Sheep Industry Association. This program for pharmaceuticals development and labeling for American application is critical for minor species, such as sheep. ASI is pleased with this opportunity for annual funding under the U.S. Department of Agriculture in cooperation with FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine as the existing program, while successful, has exhausted funding and would not be able to continue.

The committee addresses a key trade issue for wool suit and fabric manufacturers in the United States with establishment of a textile trust. This provision to address a trade loophole under the North American Free Trade Agreement is key to wool manufacturing and an American customer base for United States wool growers. ASI is a key partner of the wool textile business and spurred creation of this successful provision in the years following NAFTA implementation.

This version of the Farm Bill increases funding in reauthorizing a competitive grant program to strengthen infrastructure in the lamb and wool businesses, which is another ask of ASI in formal testimony before the House agriculture leadership.

"Sheep producers appreciate the support of the committee for risk management and disaster assistance programs, as well as export market support, each category of which are used by sheep producers," stated ASI president Mike Corn. "Including the specific sheep provisions mentioned, this is the strongest Farm Bill in recent memory. We shared our support with Chairman (Michael) Conaway to actively work for approval by the full U.S. House in the coming weeks."

ASI's Legislative Action Council met again this month to line up Farm Bill support. This was in addition to March meetings in Washington, D.C., with dozens of volunteer sheep industry leaders carrying the requests for basic risk management and trade support. New provisions for animal health, disease response and a vaccination bank adds to the reasons sheep producers are urged to ask their congressional representatives to vote for HR 2.

ASI Accepting Nominations for Sheep Center, ALB

The American Sheep Industry Association is accepting nominations for directors to serve both the National Sheep Industry Improvement Center and the American Lamb Board.

Recognized as a nominating organization by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, ASI will accept applications through May 11 for positions with both entities before forwarding qualified applicants by USDA's May 25 deadline.

There are two vacancies on the NSIIC board - one for a sheep producer and one for an individual with expertise in finance and management. Nomination forms for the sheep center are available at http://sheepusa.org/Resources_AlliedOrganizations_NsicNominations. On the American Lamb Board, there are four openings: a producer with 101 to 500 lambs, a producer with more than 500 lambs, a feeder with 5,000 or more lambs and one
first handler. Nomination forms are available at http://sheepusa.org/Resources_AliedOrganizations_AlbNominations.

Anyone interested in applying for either NSIIC or ALB should first consult with representatives from their state sheep association. Applications should be submitted to ASI Executive Director Peter Orwick at porwick@sheepusa.org and nominations will be considered by the association’s executive board.

Dayton administration kicks MN farmers while they are down

A week of tough news got even worse for Minnesota farmers. That’s because Gov. Mark Dayton’s administration is proposing an amendment to the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) administrative penalty order (APO) for the implementation of buffers under Minnesota’s buffer law that would ding farmers tens of thousands of dollars in fines due to noncompliance.

Without the amendment, MN Statutes 103B Subd. 12a clearly states that a county or watershed district with jurisdiction or BWSR may issue a fine “up to $500 per parcel” for landowners in noncompliance. The amendment changes the APO to state: “An annual penalty will be assed based on the total linear feet of riparian frontage on a parcel. The penalty will be due on day one of the 11th month after the noncompliance notice was issued. The penalty may be repeated at the discretion of the county or watershed district.”

“This proposed amendment is concerning,” says Joe Smentek, director of public affairs for the Minnesota Soybean Growers Association (MSGA). “This new action by BWSR would exceed that legislative authority by 100 times what was authorized in statute.” Smentek, an environmental attorney, says this overreach will be costly to farmers. According to the proposal, farmers who do not attain compliance after an 11-month period will be subject to an annual fine. The penalty amount could be as much as $500 per linear foot.

“This makes no sense,” Smentek says. “This proposed rule penalizes small violators disproportionately greater than large offenders by reducing the fine per foot. That’s like putting someone in jail for five years for punching someone in the face but only giving them three years for murdering that same person.”

Based on worst case scenarios, a farmer with a violation of 100 feet of linear riparian footage could face a maximum annual penalty of $50,000. Likewise, a violation of 500 linear feet could carry a maximum penalty of $100,000. If a person has 1,000 linear feet in violation, the maximum penalty would again be $50,000, and if a person had more than 1,000 linear feet in violation, the penalty likely will eclipse $30,000.

MSGA Vice President Jamie Beyer says the news is discouraging because after the 2017 session, farmers were left with the understanding that the fine would be $500 per parcel.

“Farmers are doing their best to comply with all these regulations from the Dayton administration,” Beyer says. “These regulations are costly and unnecessary. To burden small farmers when farm income is down an average of 50 percent since 2013 shows this administration clearly does not understand farmers or rural Minnesota.”

[Editor’s note: Shortly after the proposed penalties were announced, the farm organizations submitted hundreds of comments to BWSR and to Governor Dayton. Governor Dayton quickly back-tracked and sent a letter to BWSR encouraging this proposal to be voted down. The next day, BWSR Executive Director John Jaschke issued a letter of apology to farmers and farm organizations. This is an example of why it’s important to contact your elected officials when asked.]

Bill Introduced Creating Buffer Property Tax Credit

Minnesota Representative Paul Anderson and Senator Bill Weber have introduced legislation (HF 4395/SF 3960) that would provide farmers with a $50 property tax credit, each year, for farmland converted to buffers.

Cosponsors in the House include Representatives Gunther, Backer, Swedzinski, Schomacker and Marquart. Cosponsors in the Senate include Senators Dahms and Frentz.

Governor Dayton has issued a statement of support.

Property Tax Report Includes House, Garage and One Acre Language

The Minnesota House Property Tax and Local Government Finance Division amended and adopted their division report, HF 465, on Friday.

An amendment introduced by Representative Marquart added the language of HF 2495 to the final report. This amendment provides that school district (and other local government) debt service levies beginning with projects approved after June 30, 2021 will be spread on a tax base that excludes all agricultural lands except for house, garage and one acre.

Because the new Referendum Market Value (RMV) tax base removes agricultural lands, some small school districts may not have sufficient resources to build a new school building. A grant program is created to help make school buildings affordable for these school districts.
Sheep Heritage Scholarship Applications

Through the American Sheep Industry Association, the Sheep Heritage Foundation Memorial Scholarship in the amount of $3,000 is being made available for sheep-related graduate studies. The scholarship is for the advancement of the sheep industry through financial support of a graduate-level (M.S. or Ph.D.) student who is attending a school in the United States.

Requirements for applying include:
- Be a graduate student involved in sheep and/or wool research in such areas as animal science, agriculture economics or veterinary medicine with proof of graduate school acceptance.
- Complete an application.
- Present two letters of reference.

The application can be downloaded at http://www.sheepusa.org/research/education_scholarship or obtained by contacting ASI, Attn: Memorial Scholarship, 9785 Maroon Circle, Suite 360, Englewood, CO 80112-2692, by calling 303-771-3500 ext. 107, or by emailing angela@sheepusa.org.

Applications must be received by May 31 and the scholarship recipient will be announced in June or July.

Sheep Learned to Ignore Overhead Drones

Researchers have found that sheep mostly ignore the presence of a drone after a time, allowing the technology to be used effectively on smaller farms. The study was conducted by Virginia Tech's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences on various applications of drone technology, from monitoring crops to sampling microbes in the air.

"Farms could use drones as a 'check-on' tool to ensure sheep are where they are supposed to be," says Dan Swafford, project associate for Virginia Cooperative Extension.

"Drones can help farmers gain quick access to see if an animal is in need or injured, [or] to examine if a ewe has delivered a lamb."

Swafford worked with Andrew Weaver, a former graduate student in the Department of Animal and Poultry Science. Weaver had been working with sheep and had a private pilot's license.

"We kept a scoring system to see how flighty the sheep were." Weaver says. "They learned that it was OK, and with regular flying they got used to it."

The major finding was that after being exposed to the machine several times, most of the animals did not appear to notice it.

With drone technology being easy to use and affordable, Swafford is looking to getting the technology into the hands of farmers. He has applied for grants that will allow students to take drones back to their family farms and test them.

"We’re targeting farm youth," he says. "They have an understanding of the practical nature of using drones with livestock, and understand that it’s more than just cool technology."

Spring Sheep Workshop—Cont. from p. 1

the space that we have," Jared said. “We’re pushing to get to 750 ewes because that will justify some of the equipment we’d like to buy and buildings that we want to build. It’s great to come here and see a bigger operation and how everything flows around the property. Managing an operation of this size is a big deal, so I’m glad we got to see it.”

The Brinkmans have been front and center for meetings, workshops and seminars throughout the state in recent years, said ASI Executive Board member John Dvorak of Minnesota.

“We’ve been looking around a lot and going to all of the meetings,” admitted Jessica, who grew up on a hobby farm just 10 minutes from the Rafter P Ranch. “These producers have done the trial and error, and we want to be able to learn from that. It’s important to us to leave this farming legacy for our kids.”

The couple jumped at the chance to have Dan join them for lunch last year at a state meeting. It gave them a chance to pick his brain about the Shearwell Data systems he sells part-time from his home base in Kensington, Minn.

“We already knew our organization could be better,” said Jessica. “He gave us the rundown on the system and we were in.”

The Brinkmans said they leave every such meeting with motivation for the future.

“Last time, we bought 150 ewes on the way home,” Jared said. “We need a new building now, so we’re taking a close look at the facilities here.”
An American Dream - Faribault Takes Pride in Rejuvenating Factory Brand - Kyle Partain, ASI

There’s a fine line between a good investment and a money pit, and Paul Mooty was trying to figure out where Faribault Woolen Mill fell as he tiptoed his way through toxic chemical residue on March 8, 2011.

He was along for the ride as other potential investors toured the property that sits about an hour south of Minneapolis off Interstate 35. The mill had been closed for approximately two years at that point. Had he driven his own car, the tour would have come to an abrupt end.

“There had been a flood the fall before and the lower level had taken in eight or nine feet of water,” Mooty recalls. “There was chemical residue everywhere and they told us not to touch anything. It was bad. It seemed senseless.”

As luck would have it, Mooty likes a good challenge. After spending a couple of hours in the historic property, he couldn’t shake the sense that Faribault offered a unique opportunity. But buyers from Pakistan were interested in the mill’s equipment – some of which dates to the early 1900s. The clock was ticking.

“Sometimes a short time frame is good,” Mooty admits. “I had practiced law and could have written 10 legal pads about why I shouldn’t do this. But what I quickly realized is that if they started to dismantle the mill, then it would probably never be put back together again.”

Mooty joined with his cousin, Chuck, and jumped into the wool textile business with both feet. A crew of five opened the door for business again on July 5, 2011, and with it rejuvenated a 153-year-old business that has long been a source of pride in this central Minnesota town.

“We’re not the biggest business or the biggest employer in town by any stretch, but the community has always taken a lot of pride in the mill,” Mooty says. “We are a business, but we’re standing on the shoulders of the Klemers and the Johnsons, who ran this as a family business for so many years. There is a mission component here, and that is to create a viable, long-term, sustainable model so that people 100 years from now still recognize and understand the value of the Faribault name.”

It’s been estimated that at one time as many as half of the wool blankets in the United States were produced by the Faribault mill. Soldiers have carried them into battle across the globe, energetic children have been known to nap under them and they’ve been passed from one generation to the next as family heirlooms.

“That’s why we decided to take a risk on it,” says Mooty. “The purchase of buying the assets and the building wasn’t really a lot. The unknown was the building. We knew we could bring it back to life, but we didn’t know how much that might cost. But you don’t find a lot of 150-year-old companies lying around looking for a new owner. We had a head start in the race because we had a brand name with a long history.”

[Read the rest of the story in the May issue of the Sheep Industry News. You can read it online at: https://www.sheepusa.org/Newsmedia_SheepIndustryNews_Pastissues_2018_May2018_FaribaultTakesPrideInRejuvenatingFactoryBrand ]

Update from the Natural Fiber Alliance

We have a manufacturer willing to use Minnesota Wool in it’s 2019 fall collection. We are thrilled. We will have a commercial woolen product made with Minnesota Wool on the shelves for the consumers!

Once a product is determined we will release the manufacturer's name and will have begun the work with the farmer and designer of the product and the design agency for the marketing and branding. Thank you to so many who have been supportive of this effort!

There is a market! We are counting on this market to make this woolen product a success. If it is, then it will lead to more products and more of a demand for Minnesota Wool from all sizes of farms. Think positive!

Thank you to the University of Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture for the current Endowed Chair position, also to the University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, and to the Mary Page Family Foundation for the funding of the past research. I am humbled and grateful for the funding and for your belief and support.
The NDSU Hettinger Research Extension Center (HREC) recently acquired an OFDA 2000 through a lease with the American Sheep Industry Association that gives the HREC the ability to test fleece samples for sheep producers. The OFDA has the ability to test a multitude of fleece variables, including, but not limited to, fiber diameter and standard deviation (in microns), comfort factor (% of fibers less than or equal to 30 microns), staple length, and minimum/maximum micron diameter across the staple. Samples can be sent to the NDSU Hettinger Research Extension Center at the address below, or schedule permitting, the HREC staff and graduate students can travel and conduct the testing on the farm. When testing on the farm, sorting of sheep by individual traits or producers defined indexes is available. Availability for on the farm testing is limited, but samples sent to the HREC via mail can usually be processed within a week. The sample size is about the diameter of a pencil, and usually collected from the side of the sheep. The cost of analyzing samples is $2.00/sample for ND residents, $2.50/sample for out of state residents, and $350 plus travel costs for on the farm testing. If interested in this service, please contact Dr. Christopher Schauer at christopher.schauer@ndsu.edu or 701-567-4323.

I am thrilled to move forward from a persistent and prolonged 2017-18 winter toward a prosperous spring/summer. I couldn’t be more excited about the future of the U.S. sheep/lamb industry.

Prices are steady, lamb consumption is trending up, and interest in becoming a sheep producer or expanding a flock is growing. We had several successful lambing workshops, but now we shift to the marketing of our toils through the lamb crop.

I always have been an advocate of having a plan regarding lamb marketing. What is your plan? Are you reaching production and profitability goals? Are you providing a high-quality lamb product for consumers?

Knowledge is power, and the opportunity for price discovery through enhanced value-based marketing options is in the near future. Inclusion of instrument grading to augment U.S. Department of Agriculture lamb grading was approved for the Superior Farms Dixon, California plant, and future acceptance in Denver and Greeley, Colorado is imminent.

I believe that a focus on genetic improvement, combined with animal health and nutrition protocols, is important to the lamb supply chain approach. I predict that continued emphasis on technology and pricing mechanisms will reward lean, muscular carcasses of a desired weight and reinforce the value of sheep production management decisions in the future. We recently completed a tremendous NDSU/UofM Extension sponsored Lamb Value Discovery Workshop in Fargo on April 25-26 to learn about the journey from finished lamb to consumer.

Furthermore, I am excited to offer the opportunity to benchmark your operation with the Northern Plains Lamb Value Discovery Program. Previous research indicated that sheep from South Dakota, Minnesota and North Dakota averaged 137 pounds of live weight, 50.8% dressing percent, 0.32 inch backfat, and 2.36 square inch ribeye area (Held, 2016). I believe we can reach loftier goals!

Interested sheep producers in North Dakota, Minnesota and South Dakota are invited to learn more about the carcass merit of the sheep produced in our region. Approximately 30 producers are being identified/recruited to provide groups of 15 to 20 lambs for the collection, evaluation and dissemination of production/carcass information showing the status of carcass merit and lamb value for producers. The research will provide high-quality “gate-to-rail” information that will be relayed back to individual producers and combined to describe the value of lambs merchandised in the northern Plains. If you are willing to take advantage of this opportunity, please contact me.
I am proud to announce that Pipestone Veterinary Services has joined forces with Premier to continue and better serve the Sheep and Goat industry. Sheep and goat producers have been a top priority of mine over the years. In that time we have been able to develop some unique products that better serve the industry. Joining with the Premier team allows for expanded use of these products and a greater opportunity to serve the industry. As of May 1, all catalog shipments will be made from Premier’s warehouse. We will continue to serve our local veterinary clients. We will continue the question and answer service via phone and email, Shepherds Club and the webinars will be continued. We will remain the information center. Like everything, there are bittersweet aspects but we truly believe this is a necessary step in the right direction. Thank you for your past and future business and keep the questions coming.

[Editor’s Note: Below is the information from Premier 1.]

Premier1 Acquires Pipestone Sheep Unit

Premier is pleased to announce the purchase of Pipestone’s Sheep Business Unit. Pipestone Veterinary Services has provided sheep production and health knowledge, feeds, supplements and supplies to sheep and goat producers throughout the United States for 75 years.

Both Premier and Pipestone have shared a similar mission for the sheep and goat industry. Premier will continue to focus on providing innovative products, including those previously offered by Pipestone. And we will expand our role as a world-class resource for up-to-date information and advice, with the same core values you’ve come to expect from both Pipestone and Premier. The future for our industry is bright!

When does the change occur? Premier will begin offering Pipestone products and most services via its catalogs and website on May 1.

What does this mean for Premier customers?

- Access to Pipestone’s small ruminant veterinarians as well as Premier’s other on-staff experts including Dr. Dan Morrical, the just-retired sheep specialist from Iowa State University.
- Access to Pipestone’s veterinary-formulated mineral and feed supplements.
- Access to Pipestone’s “best-in-class” Shepherd’s Choice Lamb & Kid Milk Replacer.
- A wide array of small ruminant supplies backed by proven veterinary knowledge.

What does this mean for Pipestone customers (those who aren’t already Premier customers)?

- Access to a much larger array of products, including Premier’s portable electric fencing, clippers, shears, and ear tags.
- Continued access to Pipestone’s unique, proven, veterinary-formulated milk replacer. We’re aware the cost of milk replacer can be an important part of a successful ewe flock or goat herd. So we will offer Shepherd’s Choice Lamb & Kid Milk Replacer at the same price as Pipestone did. There may be differences in shipping costs because it will come from a different location.
- We look forward to offering practical management, nutritional and expert advice to all segments of the sheep and goat industry for years to come. Whether you’re a shepherd of 5 or 5,000, we stand ready to provide the knowledge, services and tools needed to raise sheep and goats successfully and profitably.

We’d be happy to answer any questions you have. Contact us at 800-282-6631.

PG600 Unavailable

PG600 used along with CIDRS has become unavailable. There is no substitute. Pregnant mare serum would work but it’s unavailable also. PG600 is used widely in the pig industry. If you have an outdated product go ahead and use it and you can expect good results.

There are a number of products intended for use in livestock that all of a sudden become unavailable or difficult to find. In my years of practice, I have never seen supply issues this bad. It’s like people don’t care.

Learn more at
www.pipevet.com
(800) 658-2523
**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)

**For Sale: Suffolk Rams and ewes**

NSIP tested, Nationally Competitive, RR. Improve your flock with genetics from JMG Suffolks. 612-756-1200  
Jeremy.geske@gmail.com  http://jmgsuffolks.webs.com

**Jeremy Geske represented MLWPA at the U of M Ag Awareness Day**

**Leland Thiesen inducted into Minnesota Livestock Breeders Hall of Fame!**

Thiesen and his family are Columbia breeders from Cottonwood County.

**MLBA President Jeremy Geske honors Leland Thiesen**
## Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018 Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 12-13</td>
<td>Shepherd’s Harvest Festival</td>
<td>Lake Elmo, MN</td>
<td>shepherdsharvestfestival.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 31-June 2</td>
<td>Nugget All-American Sale</td>
<td>Reno, NV</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wlivestock.com">www.wlivestock.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 11-12</td>
<td>NSIP Carcass Ultrasound Certification</td>
<td>Arlington, WI</td>
<td><a href="mailto:toddtaylor@wisc.edu">toddtaylor@wisc.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 12-16</td>
<td>National Columbia Sheep Show &amp; Sale</td>
<td>Gillette, WY</td>
<td><a href="mailto:charliew@extendeddag.com">charliew@extendeddag.com</a></td>
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<td>June 15</td>
<td>ASI Wool Handling School</td>
<td>Ames, IA</td>
<td>Regina Frahm at <a href="mailto:info@iowasheep.com">info@iowasheep.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 16-17</td>
<td>Iowa Sheep &amp; Wool Festival</td>
<td>Ames, IA</td>
<td><a href="http://www.iowasheep.com">http://www.iowasheep.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 28-29</td>
<td>Advanced Shearing School</td>
<td>Watertown, S.D.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lorkatopstedahl@goldenwest.net">lorkatopstedahl@goldenwest.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 25-20</td>
<td>MW Stud Ram Sale</td>
<td>Sedalia, MO</td>
<td><a href="http://www.midwestsale.com">www.midwestsale.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 29</td>
<td>National Suffolk Sale</td>
<td>Sedalia, MO</td>
<td><a href="http://www.midwestsale.com">http://www.midwestsale.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1-2</td>
<td>Advanced Shearing School</td>
<td>Watertown, S.D.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lorkatopstedahl@goldenwest.net">lorkatopstedahl@goldenwest.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>July 5-8</td>
<td>USSR National Jr Suffolk Show</td>
<td>Boone Co Fair, IN</td>
<td><a href="http://www.u-s-s-a.org">www.u-s-s-a.org</a></td>
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<td>July 5-8</td>
<td>All-American Jr Show</td>
<td>Indianapolis, IN</td>
<td><a href="http://www.countrylovin.com/AAJSS">www.countrylovin.com/AAJSS</a></td>
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<td>July 8-11</td>
<td>Howard Wyman Sheep Ind. Leadership</td>
<td>Sioux Falls, S.D.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nlsa-sheep.org/leadership.html">http://www.nlsa-sheep.org/leadership.html</a></td>
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<td>July 12-14</td>
<td>U.S. Targhee National Show and Sale</td>
<td>Miles City, MT</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ustargheesheep.org/">http://www.ustargheesheep.org/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>July 13-14</td>
<td>Crossroads of the West All-Breeds Sale</td>
<td>Location TBA</td>
<td><a href="http://www.bannersheepmagazine.com">http://www.bannersheepmagazine.com</a></td>
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<td>July 19-21</td>
<td>Superior Farms Sheep Innovators Conf. innovators-conference-tickets-42479951679</td>
<td>UC-Davis</td>
<td><a href="https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sheep-industry-innovators-conference-tickets-42479951679">https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sheep-industry-innovators-conference-tickets-42479951679</a></td>
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<td>July 20-22</td>
<td>MN State Suffolk Show</td>
<td>Faribault, MN</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jeremy.geske@gmail.com">jeremy.geske@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>July 28</td>
<td>Center of the Nation NSIP sale</td>
<td>Spencer, IA</td>
<td>nsip.org/home/events/center-of-the-nation-nsip-sale</td>
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<td>Aug. 24</td>
<td>MN State Fair 4-H Sheep Show</td>
<td>St Paul, MN</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mnstatefair.org/competition/4-h.html">www.mnstatefair.org/competition/4-h.html</a></td>
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<td>Sep. 7-9</td>
<td>WI Sheep &amp; Wool Festival</td>
<td>Jefferson, WI</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wisconsinsheepandwoolfestival.com">www.wisconsinsheepandwoolfestival.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep. 13-14</td>
<td>Newell Ram Sale</td>
<td>Newell, SD</td>
<td>newellramsale.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 30—Dec. 1</td>
<td>MLWPA Shepherd’s Holiday</td>
<td>Rochester, MN</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jeremy.geske@gmail.com">jeremy.geske@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1</td>
<td>Make it With Wool Contest</td>
<td>Rochester, MN</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gtsperry@frontiernet.net">gtsperry@frontiernet.net</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

### SYDELL INC.

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