



The Producer

Maine Sheep Breeders Quarterly Newsletter

FALL 2014

- Calling all MSBA members to consider serving on the Board of Directors -

Do you want to support the sheep industry in Maine? Do you want to work with sheep people for sheep people? Do you have about an extra hour or two per month? Why not apply to be an MSBA board member for three years? We will be voting in new board members at our meeting in November (date to be determined). Please contact Donna Flint (donna.flint@maine.edu or 207-324-2814) or Lisa Webster (msba@me.com or 207-838-9410) if you are interested.



MSBA Board of Directors (BOD)

Elected, re-elected, or confirmed at the MSBA BOD meeting on November 25, 2013.

President: Lisa Webster, North Star Sheep Farm, Windham, ME; msba@me.com

Vice President: Brant Miller, Bowdoinham, ME; bsmiller99@gmail.com

Secretary: Donna Flint, Oak Ridge Farm, Sanford, ME; donna.flint@maine.edu

Treasurer: Richard Brzozowski, Buckminster Farm, New Gloucester, ME; richard.brzozowski@maine.edu
Cindy Green, Houlton, ME; cindygreen98@gmail.com

Dorothee Grimm, Scarborough, ME; dorothee.grimm@web.de (appointed editor of The Producer)

Joe Miller, Rivercroft Farm, Starks, ME; rivercroft@dialmaine.com

Diane Schivera, Appleton, ME; dianes@mofga.org

Nancy Webster, Woolweb Farm, Brooks, ME; woolweb@aol.com

Philip Webster, North Star Sheep Farm, Windham, ME; northstarfarms@me.com

Cindy Kilgore, ME; Cindy.Kilgore@maine.gov (Maine Dept of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry; non-voting)

Dear Sheep Breeders,



Welcome to the fall issue. Summer went by fast, and it was busy for most of us. This might be the reason why no articles were submitted for publication. I encourage each of you to contact me with your ideas and articles for publication in this newsletter, pictures of your farm or animals you like to share with other sheep breeders, as well as your feedback, comments, questions, and suggestions (dorothee.grimm@web.de or 207-883-5853).

We will again offer a Sheep & Goat School this year, focusing on animal health. I encourage you to sign up (p. 4).

Details about some events were not available by time of publishing; please check back on the MSBA website <http://mainesheepbreeders.com> or Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/331285921205/>.

Please remember - if you want to re-read an article from a previous newsletter issue, they are posted on the MSBA website <http://mainesheepbreeders.com/Producer.shtml>

Happy reading.

Dorothee Grimm, editor

As a paid member of MSBA you receive this newsletter four times per year. Please make sure we have your correct email address/ mailing address on file. You are entitled to participate in the annual cooperative Wool Pool sale of fleece. You receive marketing and political representation at state, regional and national levels. You meet a great group of people who love to share information about their animals, their farm and their products, as well as information about breeding, management, and marketing techniques. Your MSBA membership automatically makes you a member of the American Sheep Industry Association (ASI), and you receive their monthly newsletter 'Sheepnews'.



The MSBA board of directors (BOD) meets 6-8 times per year. We encourage membership involvement at the board of directors meetings, as well as on committees, and volunteering for one of our events and educational programs. Everyone has something to contribute. Please contact Donna Flint or Richard Brzozowski and volunteer a few hours for the good of all.

Maine Sheep Breeders' Association - by sheep people for sheep people.

facebook

Join the Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/331285921205/>

Classifieds

Sheep for sale (2 year olds):

2 black ewes (friesian/romney cross) \$150 each
 2 white ewes (one friesian and one romney/friesian) \$150 each
 1 Friesian ram \$350

Keith and Constance Bodine
 Sweetgrass Farm Winery & Distillery
www.sweetgrasswinery.com

Farm, Winery, Distillery	Old Port Tasting Room and Shop
347 Carroll Road	324 Fore Street
Union, ME 04862	Portland, ME 04101
207-785-3024	207-761-8446

The following books are available. Richard Brzozowski has a limited supply. To place an order, please send a check to Richard Brzozowski, University of Maine Regional Learning Center, 75 Clearwater Drive, Falmouth, ME 04103

Sheep Production Handbook

This handbook is the latest revision of the familiar SID Sheep Production Handbook which has been used for many years as a resource for the US sheep industry and as a textbook in many courses. It covers all aspects of sheep production for the beginning and experienced shepherd.

\$60 each plus shipping - make check payable to MSBA

Small Ruminant Production, Medicine and Management

by Infovets. This manual is the result of the combined efforts of veterinarians, university professionals, extension agents, and producers who strive to provide current and accurate information to the individual sheep and goat owner.

\$50 each plus shipping - make check payable to University of Maine Cooperative Extension

Reminder

If you are receiving this newsletter (and other MSBA updates) via USPS mail, it is because we don't have a valid email address from you. Please help us save paper and costs, and let us know your email address (if you have one) by emailing Dick at richard.brzozowski@maine.edu or Dorothee at dorothee.grimm@web.de



Research Update: Control of *Haemonchus contortus* in Northern New England Sheep and Goats by Manipulation of Its Winter Ecology

By Jim Weber



For the last few years, I have been working with local small ruminant producers to manage internal parasitism in their flocks and herds. In 2012, I found that almost all of the Maine sheep producers were losing stock due to a blood-sucking parasite called *Haemonchus contortus*, the Barber pole worm. This nematode parasite can rapidly cause young stock to die from anemia. Although *Haemonchus* has traditionally not been considered to be a major parasite in northern climates because of its intolerance to cold, it has managed to adapt to northern environments by evolving a winter hibernation in the sheep's abomasum. While all the free-living stages of *Haemonchus* on pastures likely die over a Maine winter, the hibernating larvae survive at high rates, then mature to adults in response to triggers related to increasing spring day length and lambing. In 2012, our research group started to discuss possible methods to decrease *Haemonchus*' success in our climate through targeted treatments and management strategies.

In 2013, I collaborated with Anne Lichtenwalner and faculty members from UVM and UNH on a three-year, \$200,000 Northeast SARE (sustainable agriculture, research and education) grant that was awarded later this summer. The grant, "Control of *Haemonchus contortus* in Northern New England Sheep and Goats by Manipulation of Its Winter Ecology", will fund basic and applied research on the ecology of free-living larval stages of *Haemonchus* in regions where winter-kill occurs on pastures. We plan to complete basic research at the Witter Center, then train producers in Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire to apply new management strategies tailored to work in our climates. The grant also has a large



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teaching and outreach component, so we hope that area sheep and goat producers will become much more proficient at managing internal parasites on their farms.

One positive spin-off of this project will be the return of sheep to the Witter Center, the large animal farm at the University of Maine in Orono. We have funding to maintain a breeding flock of registered Icelandic sheep for the next three years, and student interest is high. We plan to introduce new hands-on coursework on sheep management starting in the fall of 2014. If interest continues, we hope to continue the research and teaching flock indefinitely.



Hawaii - in full fleece, and after shearing

Jim Weber, DVM, PhD, Associate Professor, School of Food and Agriculture, Institutional Veterinarian, University of Maine
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Calendar of Events and MSBA Board of Directors (BOD) Meetings 2014

September 3-7: Fiber College of Maine, Searsport, ME. More information at www.fibercollege.org

September 10+ 17+ 24, 6-8:30pm: Two at a time, worsted weight toe up sox. With Laura Freeman.
Please pre-register at www.awrinkleinthymefarm.com, or call 207-212-4058.

September 13, 1-4pm: Hands on Learning with Marty Elkin, A Wrinkle in Thyme Farm: Dyeing Indigo Blue. At McLaughlin Garden & Homestead, 97 Main Street, South Paris, ME. To register call the McLaughlin Garden at 207.743.8820

September 19-21: 38th Common Ground Country Fair, Unity, ME. Details at www.mofga.org

On all three days: Fleece Tent, Maine Fiber Farms, Wednesday Spinners, Sheep Dog Demonstrations. Talks by featured speaker Tamara Taylor (Patteran Dairy Goats, TX) about Preventing Livestock Predation (19th), Livestock Protection Dogs (20th), Selection and Evaluation of Dairy Goats (21st). Talks and demonstrations on hoof care and trimming for sheep and goats, hands-on sheep care, caprine ulcers, birthing lambs and improving survivability, what to do when livestock gets sick: organic livestock care, draft goats, goat milking, spinning, weaving, blending fibers, felting, dyeing, choosing the right fleece, preparing sheep for show, managing flies on the farm. And so much more.



October 4, 10am-4pm: 2nd Annual Maine Chicken Coop Tour.

Along with chickens you'll also see honeybees & goats. Free, self-guided tour will bring together chicken enthusiasts while encouraging education, community and local food. Want to have your coop on the tour? Basic qualifying criteria include coop cleanliness, bird health, visitor safety and available parking for visitors. Visit www.facebook.com/MaineChickenCoopTour and contact kitchens.sharon@gmail.com for more information.

October 4-5: 26th Annual Vermont Sheep and Wool Festival. Tunbridge Fairgrounds, VT.
More information at <http://vtsheepandwoolfest.com/>

October 18-19: New York State Sheep and Wool Festival. Rhinebeck Fairgrounds, NY. More information at www.sheepandwool.com/

October 18-25: Annual Conference of the American Dairy Goat Association in Portland, ME. Details at www.adgaconvention.com

November 15: Sheep & Goat Seminar - Animal Health. Kennebec Valley Community College, Fairfield, ME.

The 2014 Sheep & Goat Seminar will focus on animal health. Keeping your animals healthy is key to success in raising sheep or goats. A single disease, if not addressed effectively in a timely fashion, can put you out of business. Understanding how specific diseases can occur, preventing those diseases, recognizing symptoms and using effective treatments are important for producers to understand and apply. The purpose of the seminar is to equip producers with skills and knowledge to keep their animals healthy and productive. The specific topics to be presented and discussed include:

- Key disease preventative measures
- Detecting disease in your animals - simple steps
- Common diseases of sheep / common diseases of goats (mastitis, barber pole worm, coccidiosis, fly strike, lice, OPP, CAE, footrot, footscald, pregnancy toxemia, sore mouth, etc.)
- Summer parasite data from northern New England - a report from Dr. James Weber (see also p. 3)
- Scrapie program - Is it worth it for you to join the new voluntary scrapie program? Costs versus potential benefits.
- The importance of having a working relationship with a veterinarian
- Reportable diseases of sheep and goats in Maine
- The importance of keeping health and performance records
- How much is a healthy flock/herd worth to you?

Details on the schedule and registration forms will be available on the U Maine Extension website <http://umaine.edu/livestock/sheep/> later in September. As MSBA member, you will receive a direct communication (an email message or mailing) about the seminar.

MSBA Annual Meeting: Date and details to be announced.

We will reflect upon 2014, discuss events for 2015, and elect new board members (see p. 1). All MSBA members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Please check the MSBA website and Facebook page frequently for updates to the calendar www.mainesheepbreeders.com

Your articles, advertisements, classified ads,
pictures, questions, calendar items, ...
could be here



MSBA
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Dorothee Grimm
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**Moki. Member of the new
UMaine research flock.**