



# The Producer

*Maine Sheep Breeders Quarterly Newsletter*

A Quarterly Newsletter Summer 2012

**Focus on Fiber** will be the topic of the annual fall seminar sponsored and hosted by the University of Maine Cooperative Extension and Maine Sheep Breeders' Association. This year's seminar on October 27, at the Kennebec Valley Community College in Fairfield, has been expanded to include camelid & goat fiber producers with additional sponsoring organizations – Maine Llama Association, Maine Alpaca Association, Eastern Cashmere Association, and Maine Fiber Arts. The purpose of the seminar is to equip Maine sheep, fiber goat, and camelid producers with the skills and knowledge to improve production, handling, & marketing of high quality fiber and fiber products and increase their overall farm profits. (continued on pg. 4)



If you are looking to purchase fleece, want to learn more about fleece, or are an avid fiber enthusiast, the Fleece Tent is the place for you. It is a destination point for fairgoers looking for the best of Maine-produced fiber.

As always, fairgoers will have an abundance of sheep fleeces from which to choose for purchase—white and colored; fine, medium and long staple; plus fleeces from “primitive” or dual-coat breeds. The fleeces will be organized initially by color and then grade, with each grower's fleeces grouped together within the respective category. Specialty fibers, including llama, alpaca, mohair, cashmere and angora, will also have ample space. We

invite fiber artists to show off what you made with last year's Fleece Tent purchases!

Kate Henry and Susanne Grosjean will once again put together their amazing exhibit of breeds and fiber samples with information about uses of different types—whether for spinning beautiful yarn or creating fabulous felt. And there will be educational information on hand about the growers and farms selling fleece, and fiber-related groups in Maine.

Throughout the weekend, spinners and growers will be available to answer questions. Find yourself with one too many fleeces to process yourself? We'll have contact information for Maine's fiber processing mills. In addition, the schedule will include talks all three days—at the speakers tent right outside the Fleece Tent and at the Wednesday Spinners Tent—with subjects ranging from choosing the right fleece for spinning to Peace Fleece's new collaboration with Navajo and Lakota sheep farmers. Please see the fair book schedule for details and times.

The Fleece Tent is a major component of the growing presence of fiber at the Fair that includes the Wednesday Spinners, several Maine vendors in the adjacent Fiber Marketplace, and the many farms and vendors at the Maine Fiber Farms and Maine Ag Products areas nearby. Enjoy a journey from fleece to finished product, with many stops



October 27, 2012

Join Maine Sheep Breeders for our Annual Dinner and Meeting Oct 27th at the Kennebec Valley Community College in Fairfield. Gathering at 5:30, Dinner at 6pm. Free for members, \$5.00 for non-members.

School participants are encouraged to join us.

Lisa Webster 207-838-9410 [msba@me.com](mailto:msba@me.com)

Articles, advertising and comments of the "Producer" may be sent to Lisa Webster, secretary of MSBA at [msba@me.com](mailto:msba@me.com)

As a paid member of MSBA you received our newsletter four times per year. 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.

MSBA board of directors meets 6-8 times per year and encourage membership involvement at the board of directors meetings as well as on committees and volunteering for one of our many events and educational programs. Everyone has something to contribute: We encourage you to reach out to Lisa Webster or Richard Brzozowski and volunteer a few hours for the good of all.

Remember MSBA members are "sheep people, by sheep people for all sheep people".

**Maine Sheep Breeders Association 2013 Membership Dues payable by Jan 31, 2013**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Farm Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Website \_\_\_\_\_

Breeds of sheep \_\_\_\_\_



MSBA membership year is Jan 1-Dec 31  
\$20.00 per year/per farm.

Make check payable to: **MSBA Treasurer**  
Mail to: Richard Brzozowski  
525 Cobb Bridge Rd  
New Gloucester, ME 04260

Notes from your Secretary...

First an apology for not finding the time to publish the early summer newsletter. What a blur this summer has been. Here at the farm we have increased our flock, our acreage and our production by 500%. Caring for 600 acres of grassland and 1200 sheep during a maine summer has been a full time job for Phil, this along with his landscaping company has kept him and I very busy. In my lifetime there has never been more happening in the sheep industry in Maine then right now.

Food, Fiber and Dairy all have exciting projects underway and sheep producers across the state are showcasing their animals, products and wares at Fairs, Festivals and Markets. I hope each of you take the time to enjoy the many summer activities showcasing our industry. While the nation is dealing with drought, fires and feed shortages, here in Maine there has never been a better time to appreciate our local agriculture.

Lisa W.



[Soup to Nuts:](#)

[Marching to the bleat of a different drummer](#)

[http://www.pressherald.com/life/foodanddining/marching-to-the-bleat-of-a-different-drummer\\_2012-08-22](http://www.pressherald.com/life/foodanddining/marching-to-the-bleat-of-a-different-drummer_2012-08-22)



Ewes gazing at Colyerbrook Farm, this 300 year old sheep farm has been returned to sheep farming.

<http://www.pinelandfarms.org>



Art Day at Wolfe's Neck

<http://wolfesneckfarm.org/>



Gathering up the ram lambs on Richmond Island August 2012, photo taken by member Nina Fuller, The current flock of Scottish Black Face Sheep have been on the island for 22 years. <http://www.ramislandfarm.com>

Advertise here for only \$100 per year, reaching producers across the state

Ad rates: Business Card size, print ready \$100 for 4 issues, \$35 for a single issue. Interested in sponsoring a full issue? Please contact [msba@me.com](mailto:msba@me.com) to discuss availability and costs

We are in need of a volunteer to producer our quarterly newsletter. If you are interested in helping with this very important project please contact me, thank you in advance for you help - Lisa Webster



MSBA website  
[www.mainesheepbreeders.com](http://www.mainesheepbreeders.com)

## Focus on Fiber (continued from page 1)

A number of opportunities for visiting fiber farms and processing facilities during the summer and fall have been highlighted on the list of pre-seminar activities and are all open to the public. Some have passed but fall activities include a trip to the Fleece Tent at the Common Ground Fair, September 21-23, as a must do. Hundreds of individual fleeces of all types are displayed for show and sale and fiber related presentations are scheduled throughout the 3 days of the fair. Check out the CGCF website for details. This is the biggest marketplace of all types of raw fibers in New England. A great place to market fleeces without additional value added costs. The buyers are looking for high quality hand spinning fleeces of all fiber types and the show rewards producers of clean, quality, and heritage breed fleeces.

In October you can visit/tour 3 fiber processing facilities including a CSA fiber farm and self serve processing and two small commercial mills – all of the details are on the UME Ext website.

There is information for both the experienced and new shepherd. Topics include fiber terms, management, improving fiber through genetics, skirting fleeces, and yes, finances – what is



the best thing to do with your fiber. Pre-registered participants will receive spreadsheets to use for their own operations prior to the seminar. There will be small group sessions, panel discussions, demonstrations, and presentations lead by experienced farmers, scientists, processors, consumers, and financial analysts from around the state. Participants will have time for informal networking during lunch – Maine raised of course!

For more information or to register for the seminar call 1-800-287-1471 or visit the event website <http://umaine.edu/livestock/fiber/>

The MSBA Annual Meeting and dinner will be after the seminar. We hope you all can join us!



**Want to learn to shear? Plans are already under way for three spring shearing schools teaching both electric and hand blade shearing, information will be posted at <http://umaine.edu/livestock> as our plans and dates are finalized.**

**WeeklyTrends:** Compared a year ago lamb pricing is sharply lower this summer. Follow Weekly pricing for lambs and sheep at:

[www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/lswlamb.pdf](http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/lswlamb.pdf)

Filming is underway for the upcoming film "Neptune". The story of a young girl who wrestles with her identity during her last summer on the island where she was raised.


# Message from the President



Dear Friends,  
Thank you for taking the time out of your day to read our summer Producer. It is very important to the Board of Directors to receive feed back on the articles as to what is helpful to you, our members. We are always looking for items of interest or suggestions for articles from our readers.  
Summer is winding down and your barns should be in the process of filling with good quality second cut hay. The better the second cut hay, the less grain is needed to meet the nutritional needs of the flock during the winter.  
September has arrived and that means breeding season. Don't forget to have your ram in good health and conditions. On our farm we use marking paint on the ram's chest to monitor when the ewes are bred. It works for two things...one, you have a lambing date for the ewe and second, if the ewe continues to get remarked you know there is a fertility problem.  
In closing, lamb is a very popular protein in restaurants and markets. It is very rewarding to see new local meat markets opening up in communities across Maine. Don't be shy about approaching them and showing them your lamb product. They are not going to come seeking you, you need to "market your product" to them. Good luck and take care, Phil



Photos: Shear genius | The Portland Press Herald / Maine Sunday Telegram

 [American Sheep Industry | SHEEP INDUSTRY APPLAUDS USDA FOR ADDITIONAL LAMB PURCHASE](http://www.sheepusa.org)  
[www.sheepusa.org](http://www.sheepusa.org)

 [Your Checkoff. Your Comments Matter. | Lamb Check Off > American Lamb Board](http://www.lambcheckoff.com)  
<http://www.lambcheckoff.com>



## Agricultural Fair Information

Maine has some of the best agricultural fairs in New England. If you want to know more about Maine's Great Agricultural fairs, go to the Maine [Agricultural Fairs website](http://www.maineairs.org) for the latest news and information or link directly to the fairs listed below.

<http://www.maineairs.org>

Photos by Gregory Rec/Staff Photographer

[www.getrealmaine.com/index.cfm/fuseaction/home.showpage/pageID/40/index.htm](http://www.getrealmaine.com/index.cfm/fuseaction/home.showpage/pageID/40/index.htm)



**University of Maine Cooperative Extension** conducts the most successful out-of-school educational program in Maine. As the youth development arm of UMaine Extension, **4-H** has always emphasized the importance of building the life skills needed to be successful adults. Today, 4-H also is focused on science and technology to help foster interest in these areas as avenues to successful careers. 4-H makes science fun and exciting for everyone.

[The University of Maine - Cooperative Extension: 4-H](http://extension.umaine.edu/4h)

<http://extension.umaine.edu/4h>



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### MSBA contacts

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[msba@me.com](mailto:msba@me.com)

**A complete list of the Directors  
and their contact information is  
available at the MSBA website**  
[www.mainesheepbreeders.com](http://www.mainesheepbreeders.com)

Please renew your membership today. Our membership drive allows us to bring you this newsletter along with the annual wool pool, shearing schools and the fall annual meeting each year.

### Schedule of events and BOD meetings

Sept 1 Producer sent out, all articles to be submitted by August 15



Sept. 14-Sept 30, 2012

:: THE BIG E :: Daily Schedule

<http://www.thebige.com/fair/agriculture/2010DailySchedule.asp>

Sept 21,22,23 Common Ground Fair

Sept 25 BOD conference calls at 6:30 call in number 207-581-3545

Note: **this is to be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday this month only**



[www.fryeburgfair.com/Fair\\_2012\\_Brochure.pdf](http://www.fryeburgfair.com/Fair_2012_Brochure.pdf)

Oct 16 BOD conference call at 6:30 call in number 207-581-3545

Oct 27 Annual meeting at KVCC

Nov 20 BOD meeting in Augusta at the Great Wall, dinner at 6,  
meeting at 6:30 MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND.

Dec 1 Producer sent out, all articles to be submitted by Nov 15