



The Producer

Maine Sheep Breeders Quarterly Newsletter

A Quarterly Newsletter

Spring 2011



Sheep Shearing Schools Beginner Level

Saturday, March 19, 2011 at Phil & Lisa Webster's in Windham, ME

Saturday, April 9, 2011 at Fred & Inez Arledge in Littleton, ME

FMI - contact richard.brzozowski@maine.edu

or call 1-800-287-1471 or 207-780-4205.

Certified Wool Clip Program

The American Wool Council would like to gather information on participation in the ASI Certified Wool Clip Program and recognize the warehouses, buyers, wool pools and producers that are incorporating the program into their wool marketing efforts.

As part of the program, producers are asked to self-certify and sign either the Choice or Premium Wool Clip Declaration Form depending on their wool clip preparation and marketing level. This form should then be sent along with the wool to the wool marketing agent. This way, the marketing agent is aware of the steps the grower has taken to produce a quality wool clip. The form should then be sent on to ASI for the producer to receive a certificate.

Information on the Certified US Wool Clip Program can be found on the ASI web-site at: www.sheepusa.org and clicking on the link for wool production and then wool quality improvement program.

We have hard copies available to be sent out at your or a producer's request.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact Rita Kourlis Samuelson at 303-771-3500 or rita@sheepusa.org



Photos submitted by Pleasant Valley Farm

The 2011 Wool Pool will be held during the Northeast Livestock Expo on Saturday May 21st. If you are interested in bidding on the 2011 wool pool please contact Lisa Webster msba@me.com or call 207-838-9410.

The printing of the spring 2011 edition was funded by
Pondview and Pleasant Valley Farms

MSBA Board of Directors thank the Faunce & the Hesser Families for their support



Photo submitted by Pondview farm



Sue and Mark Faunce
691 Ossipee Trail
Limington, ME 04049
Icelandic Sheep
Registered Breed Stock
IcelandicFleece,
YarnsandRovings
www.pondviewmaine.com



Pleasant Valley
Farm

The Hesser Family
73 Pleasant Valley Road
Cumberland, ME 04021
(207) 829-6149
e-mail: shesser1@maine.rr.com

VOLUNTARY SCRAPIE ID: ME17

Registered Romneys
Natural Colored Sheep
NCWGA Flock #2929
Breeding Stock • Fleeces
Lambs • Pelts • Handspun
Freezer Lamb



Photos submitted by Pleasant Valley Farm

Maine Sheep Breeders Association Membership Form

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.
If you paid after June 1 2010
you are all set until 2012



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

NORTHEAST



LIVESTOCK EXPO

May 20, 21, 22, 2011.

*At the Windsor
Fairgrounds*

The livestock expo draws beef cattle, sheep, boer goats, rabbits, equine and alpaca for education, shows, youth events and sales.

The MSBA Annual Wool Pool will take place this year at the New England Livestock Expo (NELE) Windsor Fairgrounds May 21st 8am-noon

MSBA WOOL POOL will coincide with the all the other sheep activities happening at N.E.L.E. and with onsite shearing available on Friday from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. shorn wool can be graded and bagged all in one stop!

GUIDELINES FOR YOUR WOOL AT THE 2011 WOOL POOL

We will be accepting clean, well skirted wool only. Wool **MUST** be dry when packed. All bags will be opened and inspected. Absolutely no cap and belly wool tags, manure, wet wool, musty wool, moldy wool, heavy hay chaff. Please pull out neck wool that is heavily contaminated. No straw, shavings, hay or old wool - The wool must be from current year's shearing. No moth damaged wool, moth infested wool, hoof trimmings or burdocks. The MSBA reserves the right to and will reject any wool that does not meet our stated guidelines. Historically the Maine Wool Pool has been bought at up to a 35% higher price than the national price. Clean wool will up the bids from buyers who know we are producing a good clip. Please see the MSBA website for tips and directions for cleaning your fleeces.



R&R Spinners meet each Tuesday at 9am

Each Tuesday a group of spinners gather at Pineland Farms in the Commons to spin and connect with each other. R&R Spinners was founded over thirty years ago by Dot Goggins. The group sometimes meets on the second Tuesday of the month at a members home for the weekly spinning. Those days are known as a "soup day" More information can be found on R&R Spinners Yahoo Group page. For more information visit Yahoo Groups at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/randrspinners>

or contact Janet Landry by email at janetlandry@comcast.net

The 11th Annual Maine Fiber Frolic

June 4 & 5, 2011, 9 - 4 pm

Windsor Fairgrounds, Rt. 32, Windsor, Maine

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 to discuss availability and costs

MSBA website

www.mainesheepbreeders.com



Jeff Burchstead

Sheep Shearer

8 Years Experience
All Breeds of Sheep
Gentle Handling
Will Travel Most Anywhere

207-882-8082
buckwheatblossomfarm
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Effects of Cache Valley virus during winter lambing season

That's according to South Dakota Cooperative Extension Sheep Specialist Jeff Held, who said CVV reports are higher this year.

"The winter lambing season is well underway, and in addition to dealing with snow and cold temperatures, many flock owners have reported an unusual number of lambs born with skeletal and other developmental deformities," Held said. "Diagnostic laboratories including the South Dakota State University Animal and Disease Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (ADRDL) at Brookings have confirmed CVV-affected newborn lambs."

Held continues to work with Extension Veterinarian Russ Daly and Larry Holler, pathologist at the SDSU ADRDL to monitor the CVV situation this winter. Daly said that although CVV is found throughout the U.S., the reported cases affecting sheep in South Dakota and the upper Midwest region historically have been minimal.

"Mosquitoes cause CVV infection in sheep, and last fall during the early breeding season (August through September) there remained a high population of these pests following the warm, wet summer," Held said. "In addition, sheep-flock owners have reported a higher incidence of open ewes and lower lambing rate this winter, and we often associate lower ewe reproductive efficiency, low lambing rates, and higher percentage of open ewes with ram fertility, nutritional status at breeding, and weather induced embryonic death losses. However, CVV also can contribute to reduced ewe reproductive efficiency."

Daly explained that Cache Valley virus is a potential cause of the birth of abnormal lambs, and that the most dramatic effects of the virus lead to birth defects in lambs, mostly affecting the brain and central nervous system. The virus also affects the skeletal tissue and muscles.

Daly said these defects show up as fused joints, curved or twisted spines, unusually thin and underdeveloped muscles, and enlarged skulls.

"Most lambs born with these severe defects are stillborn, yet CVV also can cause the birth of lambs that act abnormal," Held said. "They can be drowsy, weak, or unsteady and typically all lambs within a set of twins or triplets are affected."

Daly added that the virus infects pregnant ewes and that mosquitoes are the sole carrier of CVV.

"That's why we'll start to see effects now in the early lambing season," Daly said. "These undesirable outcomes are a result of mosquitoes that carried the virus biting ewes last summer. CVV has no apparent effects on non-pregnant ewes or other classes of sheep."

Ewe infections early in gestation, up to day 28 generally, result in fetal reabsorption, but Held said the most critical period is between days 28 and 45 of gestation.

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

Held said that ewes bred later in the fall after the mosquito activity had declined are expected to have lower risk to deliver lambs with clinical CVV induced abnormalities and return to normal flock lambing rates. Daly added that the virus is not contagious.

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

Daly and Held both said that CVV is 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. Past research with this [virus](#) has shown that a high percentage of the ewes in a flock will develop immunity including ewes that delivered clinical CVV and normal lambs.

"Sheep producers suspecting CVV should contact a veterinarian in order to rule out other causes of birth defects, miscarriages, or infertility," Daly said.

"Diagnosis of CVV is sometimes difficult, but can be made in the laboratory by detecting specific antibodies against CVV in the lambs."

In most cases, a diagnosis is made on the basis of the history and nature of the birth defects within the flock.

MSBA contacts

President — Phillip Webster
northstarfarms@me.com

Vice President — Mary Burr
bburr@tdstelme.net

Treasurer — Richard Brzozowski
richard.brzozowski@maine.edu

Secretary — Lisa Webster
msba@me.com

A complete list of the Directors and their contact information is available at the MSBA website www.mainesheepbreeders.com

2011 LAMB JAM BOSTON



The [American Lamb Board](#) and [BostonChefs.com](#) brought the American Lamb Jam back to Boston on Sunday, February 20th. This year, 17 of Boston's top chefs came together to celebrate American Lamb by creating succulent and savory selections paired with beer from 8 Boston breweries and hand-picked wines from Paso Robles and Washington State. The chefs competed for a Best in Show top prize of a trip to NYC to compete in Lamb Jam NYC Cook-off against Lamb Jam winners from Seattle, DC, and San Francisco.

Best American Lamb Leg Dish:
 Chef Brian Reyelt, Citizen
 Lamb Jerky 3 Ways-
 Whiskey Smoked, Honey
 Ginger, Rosemary & Sea Salt

Best American Lamb Loin Dish:
 Jason Santon, Gargoyles on the
 Square
 Poached Lamb Loin with Black
 Truffle, Cauliflower Espuma,
 Bee Pollen and Fried Garlic

Best American Lamb Shank Dish:
 Jim Solomon, The Fireplace
 Braised Lamb Shank with
 Sheep Milk Cream over Winter
 Squash Stew and Cheesy
 Cornmeal Porridge

Best American Lamb Shoulder Dish:
 Will Gilson, Garden at the
 Cellar
 Lamb Sausage Ssam with Nuoc
 Cham,
 Kimchi Slaw and Crispy Garlic

Best in Show: (Winner competes in NYC Master Lamb Jam)
 Jason Santon, Gargoyles on the
 Square
 Poached Lamb Loin with Black
 Truffle, Cauliflower Espuma,
 Bee Pollen and Fried Garlic

People's Choice:
 Cassie Piuma, Oleana
 Lamb Cammama- Spiced Lamb
 Shoulder with Onions,
 Moroccan Dates, Almond
 Bread, Carrot Salad,
 Blood Orange and Cilantro

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".

Articles, advertising and comments of the "Producer" may be sent to Lisa Webster, secretary of MSBA at msba@me.com

Eye test for neurological diseases in livestock developed

The eyes of sheep infected with scrapie -- a neurological disorder similar to mad cow disease -- return an intense, almost-white glow when they're hit with blue excitation light, according to a research project led by Iowa State University's Jacob Petrich. The findings suggest technologies and techniques can be developed to quickly and non-invasively test for transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, progressive and fatal neurological diseases such as mad cow disease in cattle and Creutzfeldt- Jakob disease in humans. Petrich, in fact, is working to develop a testing device. The findings were published earlier this year in the journal *Analytical Chemistry*.

The project was supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Defense. The research is the result of an accidental discovery while Petrich and his collaborators were developing a fluorescence spectroscopy device that's now used in slaughterhouses to test livestock carcasses for feces and possible *E. coli* contamination. "One day we were testing the apparatus by shining light on the carcass and we saw the spinal cord glow -- it fluoresced," said Petrich, professor and chair of Iowa State's chemistry department. "We saw the spinal cord through the skin. The light was pretty intense. It was an amazing result."

That sparked some new thinking: Maybe fluorescence technology could be used to test animals for transmissible spongiform encephalopathies such as bovine spongiform encephalopathy -- what's often called mad cow disease. To reduce the risk of human exposure to the diseases, the brains and spinal cords of animals are removed during slaughter and processing. But there is no quick test to identify animals with the diseases. And so Petrich and a team of researchers began studying the feasibility of a fluorescence test. The researchers collected 140 eyeballs from 73 sheep. Thirty five of those sheep were infected with scrapie; 38 were not. The researchers took fluorescence readings from various parts of the eyes of all the sheep. "The bottom line is the scrapie-positive retinas fluoresced like crazy," Petrich said. "And the scrapie-negative ones did not." A previous study published in the journal *Veterinary Pathology* reported that the function and structure of retinas are altered in cattle infected with

transmissible mink encephalopathy. Members of that study team included Iowa State researchers M. Heather West

Greenlee, an associate professor of biomedical sciences in the College of Veterinary Medicine; Justin Greenlee, a collaborator assistant professor of biomedical sciences; and Juergen Richt, a collaborator associate professor of veterinary microbiology and preventive medicine. Other studies have reported that lipofuscin, an intracellular fluorescent pigment, accumulates in the eyes of animals infected with the neurological diseases. Petrich and his team attribute the glow from scrapie-positive retinas to the elevated levels of lipofuscin.

Whatever the cause, Petrich said it's clear there are distinct differences in the fluorescence and spectroscopic signatures of retinas from sheep that were naturally infected with scrapie and those that were not. And so he and his research team think there's great promise for a diagnostic test based on that discovery. That has Petrich starting to develop a device (he likes to call it a "gizmo") that could be used in meat plants to test the retinas of animals for signs of neurological diseases. He expects it will take several years to develop, build and test a useful device. "What I like about this is it's really simple," Petrich said. "It's light in and light out."

Science Daily, November 9, 2010

Photo submitted by Pondview farm



Message from the President



Good day fellow Sheep Enthusiasts

Thank you for renewing your annual membership. Your MSBA membership supports the events we host to increase our farm management and marketing practices. The Producer is a wonderful way for MSBA to give back to our members and I want to thank Pondview and Pleasant Valley Farms for their combined sponsorship of the spring issue.

By now I'm sure your lambing season is in full swing and I truly hope it is going as you expected. If you have questions or concerns during lambing season please feel free to call me or any of the other Board members for help or guidance. A few nights ago I was thinking about the fact that I have been involved with sheep my whole life and what it takes to be a shepherd to these wonderful creatures who depend on our decisions for their very existence. We choose their living conditions, their protein intake and water source. We choose which lambs will be replacements within the flock and which will go to market as a revenue source to keep our farms viable. We choose what ram is going to provide the next generation, it may be based on a need of beautiful fleece, tender meat or breeding stock. These decisions are not easy. Most times they work out just fine but other times it can be very discouraging. Getting back to my question: Why do we do it? I personally don't believe it is for the money, it is something way down in our heart and soul that brings us such joy when we look into the eyes of a new born lamb or the way a new mother skillfully gets her lambs to suckle for the first time. It also comes from the pride you feel when you see your flock healthy and thriving in the pasture. As your president I encourage you to drop us an email or written message with your reason for being a shepherd so we can share your thoughts with other members in future issues of the Producer

On a final note, MSBA is seeking a few energetic, creative members to join our board of directors this year. People who are willing to lend a hand with our events as well as to give input, guidance and education to our members through leadership. We can improve our management skills by working together. Knowledge is a great thing and should be shared. If you are up for the challenge and want to work with a great group of people I welcome you to come forward and provide leadership for the Maine Sheep Breeders Association.

Sincerely,

Phil Webster

Livestock 101 workshops are planned for Saturday, May 14, 2011 at the American Legion in Waterville. This state-wide, day-long conference is designed for those who are beginning in any type of livestock enterprise. There will be sessions on feeds, facilities, handling, pasture, health, etc.

Livestock 101 conference is designed to have followup hands-on sessions at NELE the following weekend.

FMI contact Donna Coffin at donna.coffin@maine.edu or 1-800-287-1491.



Photo submitted by Pondview farm



MSBA
Phillip Webster, President
PO Box 1867
Windham, ME 04062

MSBA events

Mar 19
Shearing school @ 10AM Northstar Farm in
Windham, ME, registration required

Mar 22
Ag At the Legislature Day

April 9
Shearing School @ Fred & Inez Arledge in
Littleton, ME FMI - contact
richard.brzozowski@maine.edu
or call 1-800-287-1471 or 207-780-4205

Date change April 27
Board of Directors meeting 6:30 Great Wall
Augusta

May 14
Livestock 101 American Legion in Waterville
FMI contact Donna Coffin at
donna.coffin@maine.edu or 1-800-287-1491.

May 20-21-22
Northeast Livestock Expo
Shearing on Friday May 20 from 3-7 by
appointment for more information email
msba@me.com

Wool Pool Saturday, May 21 8am-noon
Youth events all three days
www.northeastlivestockexpo.com

June 4-5 Fiber Frolic
[Maine Fiber Frolic](http://www.fiberfrolic.com)
www.fiberfrolic.com

July 24
Open farm days
FMI www.getrealmaine.com
Self Guided Tour of members farms. Contact
judy.blaisdell@maine.gov for more
information