

LAMB & WOOL

A Newsletter For The Iowa Sheep Industry / April - 2011



It's GRILLIN' Time

BY: ROBYN AMTHAUER
ISIA Executive Director

With spring creeping around the corner and the temperatures beginning to rise, there is no denying that grilling season will soon be upon us! So take this opportunity to get the grill clean up and ready to cook your favorite lamb products. Here are a few tips to make sure you have the best lamb grilling experience possible:

Buying and Storing:

When shopping for your favorite lamb product, make sure to look for meat that has a soft pink to red color with white marbling. Fresh lamb should be stored in the refrigerator or freezer immediately after purchasing at 40 degrees or below. Ground lamb meat should be used within 2 days, other cuts within 3-5 days. If you plan to freeze lamb for

long periods of time, be sure to wrap the original packing with airtight freezer wrap or place it in an airtight freezer bag. For the best lamb eating experience, frozen lamb should be used within 3 to 4 months.

Thawing Frozen Lamb:

In the refrigerator - Once frozen lamb has thawed in the refrigerator, most cuts should be used within 3 to 5 days, ground lamb within 1 to 2 days. If you do not use the lamb within this period, you may refreeze it without cooking it first.

In cold water - Leave frozen lamb in its packaging, make sure it is airtight. Keep the lamb submerged in cold water, changing the water every 30 minutes to

GRILLIN' Continued on 6

Wyman Leadership School applications due May 2

Always wanted to attend the Howard Wyman Sheep Industry Leadership School but didn't want to travel far? Well now is your chance! Make sure to get your application in to attend the leadership school in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, July 10 - 13, 2011.



This unique opportunity comes close to Iowa with four days full of sheep industry information. Mike Caskey of the Pipestone Lamb and Wool Program at Minnesota West Community College will bring his innovative sheep management concepts and producer education methods to this year's leadership school. Other activities planned include tours, speakers, networking, real-life situations, problem solving and the latest in sheep management technology.

If you are interested in attending and are 20 years of age or older, please send your application to the National Lamb Feeders Association office at 1270 Chemeketa Street NE, Salem, OR 97301-4145. To request an application call the NLFA office at (503) 364-5462 or e-mail them at info@nlfa-sheep.org.

Applications must be received by May 2, 2011 for consideration.

2+2+2 by 2014

BY: ROBYN AMTHAUER
ISIA Executive Director

The sheep industry is in an interesting place right now with record prices and an overwhelming demand for lamb products. It's an exciting time to be a sheep producer, but also a time to be proactive. In order to sustain this market, every producer needs to do their part to ensure the stability of our ever-changing industry.

In order to maintain a secure marketplace, the American Sheep Industry

2+2+2 Continued on 3

ShortCLIPS by Dan Morriscal

Moving the sheep industry ahead with genetic improvement



The Sheep Industry has been chastised for its slow adaption of new technology. Using genetic evaluation programs like National Sheep Improvement Program is an example of not using technology. So why do we as sheep producers cling to traditional means of evaluating our animals? My contention is that our ancestors from Europe specifically, Scotland and England, used the stockman's eye to identify the best animals. Universities propagated this by hiring Scottish herdsman to manage and show University flocks and herds. Additionally, Universities field livestock judging teams which trained lots of young producers how to evaluate a class of four animals and justify your selections via a set of oral reasons. I happen to be one of those students who benefited from that training and is why I majored in Animal Science during my undergraduate days way back when. The real problem with visual evaluation of animals is somewhat accurate for structural correctness along with composition. However, visual appraisal is extremely inaccurate in terms of determining performance such as gain, prolificacy and milk production. This is mostly due to the fact that things we can evaluate visually are not highly correlated to traits that make us money.

Table 1: Heritabilities of various traits in sheep.

TRAITS	H2
Reproduction1 - .2
Growth25 - .40
Carcass3 - .5
Wool4 - .6

Producers who truly want to breed sheep that have improved performance must use a data processing system such as NSIP. Traits that are important to sheep producers are listed in Table 1 along with their heritability. Traits are categorized into four groups which are maternal, growth, carcass and wool. Heritability is the portion of what you see when viewing an animal or record that is due to genetics. For example number born is lowly heritable trait at .1 or 10%. This means that genetics is 10% of lambs born and environment is 90% of lambs

born. Not only is lambs born a lowly heritable trait it is also low repeatability. Which means that an individual record such as a ewe having twins in 2011 says very little about what she will do in 2012. Therefore it is critical that for lowly heritable traits multiple years of records and or performance of relatives be used to generate genetic estimates for maternal traits. The opposite extreme is wool traits where one evaluation of animals fleece characteristics provides all the information one needs because wool traits are highly heritable.

What sets NSIP apart from other performance data? First off performance records are adjusted for fixed effects. Number born and number reared is an example of a fixed effect that impacts a lambs weaning weight. Other fixed effects are age of dam, season of birth, location of rearing. The real advantage of the NSIP is that the computer does all the calculations to make the adjustments. Additionally it uses statistical methodology of BLUP (best unbiased predictor) to calculate either an EPD (expected progeny difference) or an EBV (Estimated Breeding Values). EBV's are twice as large as EPD's since the animal only transmits half of its genetic material to its offspring (progeny difference). So NSIP provides enrollees with the best estimates of their individual animal's genetic worth for various traits. Sheep have many traits that are important to profitable efficient production. Hand calculating EPD is an impossible task. Trying to hand calculate 60 day adjust weights and ratios for 75 lambs would take most of us more time than we have patience to work at pushing calculator buttons.

Making genetic improvement is impacted by heritability, selection differential and generation interval. We have already discussed heritability (h^2). Traits with higher heritability increase the rate at which genetic progress can be made. University of Wyoming did a long term selection study to improve lambs born. They increased lambs born by 3 lambs per 100 ewes per year or 6% per generation interval, which is the next factor that impacts how fast we can improve the flock. Generation Interval is calculated as the average age of the dams and aver-

age age of sires in the flock. In most cases the ewe flock age is allowed to float but is probably three to five years in most flocks. Turning over the ewe flock every year would maximize generation interval but would be financial suicide since our flock's actual production level would be low because we are only lambing ewe lambs. This might also be hard on one's mental health and longevity as ewe lambs can be challenging to manage. However, we can greatly reduce generation interval by only using ram lambs so that the average sire age is one. If one is buying new sires it is also very expensive to cull them after one year of use. Actually it is not the actual age of the rams but the years they have been used in the flock. So if one buys a five year old ram that has great EPD values, he should be considered as a ram lamb when calculating average age of the sires. Cooperative efforts between several breeders can reduce the initial investment of truly superior rams for performance. The last factor that impacts the rate of genetic improvement is the selection differential (SD). This calculation is how much better the selected replacements are compared to the average animal in the flock. Stated another way is the how superior the selected animals are for a trait compared to the average. Again this is where NSIP gives one a significant chance to improve the flock by identifying the extreme animals for performance. If one just selects within one's own flock the likelihood of having extreme performing animals are less probable. Another aspect of SD is how many traits one selects for. For example if I decided that my flocks use to the industry was to produce terminal sires, than I would select on 120 day weight. However growth and maternal traits are not positively correlated so one would have a lower lamb crop over time. One can prevent this by use of independent selection criteria such as all replacements would need to be positive for maternal trait and then the most positive for 120 day weight available. The sire side is where we can greatly increase the SD because we need only replace a few sires compared to 20 or 25 percent of the ewe flock.

SHORT CLIPS *Continued on page 6*

Game plan for U.S. sheep industry's future

STABILITY

Continued from page 1

Association (ASI) has rolled out a new plan to set goals for increased production of the U.S. sheep inventory. The plan is called 2+2+2=Rebuild and was unveiled at the recent ASI/National Lamb Feeders Association convention in Reno, Nevada. The campaign was approved by the ASI Board of Directors as presented by the Re-build the Sheep Inventory Committee, which is a group in charge of identifying ways to increase sheep numbers and improve infrastructure support.

The concept of the campaign titled 2+2+2=Rebuild is simply indicative of its title. The goal is that each producer increases the size of their operation by two ewes per operation or by two ewes per 100 by 2014. The second "2" is to increase the average birthrate per ewe to two lambs per year. The last "2" is to increase the harvesting lamb crop rate by two percent.

The program provides an attainable, challenging, measurable and realistic plan for increasing the U.S. sheep numbers in order to maintain jobs and infrastructure. The plan's two-prong approach will work to increase production from current producers, while also encouraging and facilitating new producers into sheep production.



Photo submitted by Ken Root.

To put it all into perspective, if each operator increases their flock by two ewes or two ewes per every hundred by 2014 there will be an additional 175,000 ewes, 254,000 additional lambs to harvest and 2 million additional pounds of wool. Subsequently, if the harvested lamb crop is increased from 108 percent to 110 percent, we will see an increase of 67,500 head being harvested.

Industry leaders say not only is this goal obtainable by 2014, but it is necessary to ensure the safety of the U.S. sheep

market. But in order for the plan to work, producers need to be on the cutting edge of management practices including the consideration of new technology to increase both lamb birth rate and lower lamb mortality rates. Management practices like flushing, teaser bucks, cross breeding, vaccination, ewe nutrition and parasite management are just a few key practices that may help in executing the 2+2+2 by 2014 plan.

With this increase in sheep inventory of 315,000 lambs,

at today's market prices, it equates to \$71 million for lamb and \$3 million for wool. Studies have shown that for every 1,000 ewes, 18 jobs are created.

It is important for Iowa sheep producers to be aware of how this plan works and to start thinking about ways to execute it, in order to continue to grow a strong sheep industry.

More information on the 2+2+2 by 2014 plan can be found on a new website, www.growourflock.org, being launched at the end of April.

COMMERCIAL BREEDING STOCK FOR SALE

Looking to sell your commercial breeding stock?

Then send your listing to us and we will feature it in upcoming issues!

Free listing for ISIA members. Ads must be limited to 50 words and will run in four issues (date in parenthesis indicates first issue). Ads may be re-submitted for an additional four months at a time. Send ad information along with name, address, phone and e-mail to the ISIA office at 1175 Vance Ave., Beaman, IA 50609 or info@iowasheep.com by the 25th of the month for publication in the following month's newsletter. Newsletter is published 11 times/year with a July/August issue.

Calendar of Events

April 21: 7:30 p.m.: Iowa Sheep and Wool Promotions Board conference call meeting.

May 7: 6:30 p.m.: Kimm Suffolks Annual Production Sale at Tippie Beef Center, Kirkwood Community College Campus, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. See Kimm Suffolks ad on back page of newsletter. Bob Kimm, 1636 W Ave., Dysart, IA 52224, 319-476-3875, bbkimm@fctc.coop.

June 11: Iowa Sheep Industry Association Annual Meeting, Adel, Iowa. In conjunction with the 7th Annual Iowa Sheep and Wool Festival.

June 11 - 12: 7th Annual Iowa Sheep and Wool Festival, Dallas County Fairgrounds, Adel, Iowa. Check out www.iowasheep.com for more details and schedules as they become available.

July 29 - 30: Center of Nation NSIP Sale, Spencer, Iowa

Do you have an event that you would like to place in the Lamb & Wool newsletter? Please send information by the 20th of the month preceding publication date of newsletter. Submit via e-mail at info@iowasheep.com or phone 641-366-3008.

Iowa Sheep Industry Association Meeting Minutes

March 25, 2011 - ISIA Meeting at Dublin Bay, Ames, IA

President Steve Bernhard called the conference call meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

Board members present included Gary Erickson, Steve Bernhard, Erlene Leonard, Margie Meehan, Ben Johnson, Jim Timmins, Chris Osborn and Executive Director Robyn Amthauer.

Motion made, seconded and approved (MMSA) to approve the January meeting minutes as presented.

Treasurer's report was made by Erlene. Des Moines Account \$100, Colfax Payroll Account \$5,049.60, Colfax General Account \$23,011.08 and Conrad Account \$657.40. Motion made, seconded and approved (MMSA) to acknowledge the Treasurer's Report.

Director's Report by Robyn - Requests filed with the Iowa Sheep & Wool Promotion Board for their upcoming April meeting. Requests include one for State Center BBQ Championship Contest for \$440.00 for legs of lamb, the Iowa Agriculture Awareness Coalition for \$500 and Ag Magic Show at the Iowa State Fair for \$500. Robyn also reported on recent activities including a trip to Ames to present to Dr. Morrical's Advanced Sheep Class, a trip to the capitol to support the ultrasound technician bill and her participation in the Iowa Sheep and Wool Promotion Board's conference call meeting in January.

Old business - It was discussed

and a MMSA to compensate Marsha Spykerman for her 30 hours at a rate of \$15/hour for the Festival booklet and \$25 of expenses associated with the work. A MMSA for reimburse the Iowa Sheep and Wool Promotion Board \$1,950 for money not used while searching for a new Executive Director.

New business - MMSA to do electrical updating to the foodstand in the amount of \$1,200 to meet the Iowa State Fair requirements. MMSA to also replace the countertop on the back wall of the foodstand. MMSA to replace a bad faucet with a new high arch one in the foodstand.

MMSA to pay a \$96.55 set-up fee associated with Robyn's phone and internet for ISIA's business line.

Discussion took place as to who should submit an application to attend the Howard Wyman Leadership School. A MMSA to send Robyn to leadership school and pay the \$200 enrollment fee plus mileage if she was accepted. MMSA to offer \$200 for any other ISIA members that were interested in attended and were accepted.

Discussion took place about a need for an order on dedication bricks for Steve Bernhard and Steve Karber.

Also discussed was a list of officers to be presented for election at Festival. Leland Shipley is president elect, Erlene Leonard as treasurer, Gary Erickson as secretary and vice chair position needs a nominee. Steve Bernhard indicated

he would be leaving the board after the annual meeting. Jim Timmins said he would also be stepping down and suggested a nomination of Ted Greiner to replace him.

MMSA to nominate KICD radio in Spencer for the Media Award to be given at the Festival. Steve Karber was nominated for the Industry Service Award for supplying Iowa lamb to restaurants.

A caterer for the Lamb Lovers Feast at this year's Festival was discussed, MMSA to have The Smokehouse do the catering. A discussion took place as to whether we should have ice cream at the feast, ISIA will make an offer to Picket Fence Farm regarding this and offer them a free vendor space in exchange for the service of providing the ice cream. MMSA to keep the Lamb Lover's Feast ticket price at \$25.

MMSA to lock in meat prices with Superior for Iowa State Fair foodstand meat.

Discussion took place on reimbursement for Robyn's mileage and meals. MMSA to reimburse mileage at the IRS rate. MMSA for meal rates at \$6.00 for breakfast, \$10.00 for lunch and \$15.00 for supper.

Next conference call meeting of the ISIA is set for May 22 at 7:30 p.m.

MMSA to adjourn the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Erickson,
ISIA Secretary

Madison County annual meeting held March 29

The annual Madison County Sheep Producers Meeting and Lamb Banquet was held on March 29 in Winterset, Iowa. The banquet kicked off with a meal that was prepared by the Master Griller out of Earlham, Iowa. The meal was followed by a short meeting. Bill Songer, President, gave the welcome address. The secretary's report was given by Dawn Dudney and the treasurer's report by Dennis Eckles. Ivan Strable gave the nominating committee report followed by the association activities report by Chris Jamison. 2011 Board of Directors were voted on, which remained the same. Directors are Lowell Bence, Bob Simon, Dawn Dudney, Ivan Strable, Tom Cassidy, Dennis Eckles, Bill Songer, Chris Jamison, Mike Hochstetler and Don Schutz.

The featured speaker for the evening was a local veterinarian, Dr. Jason Hall, DVM, from the Madison County Vet Clinic in Winterset. The topic was Parasite Resistance and using the fumacha method



of worming.

The speaker was followed by the group's 9th annual trophy auction which was auctioneered by Chris Nehring. During the auction, local merchants and farmers bid on all the trophies that are given out during the Madison County Fair. The money goes to the Madison County Sheep Producers and is used for local events.

Overeating Disease

BY: J.L. GOELZ, D.V.M.

Pipestone Veterinary Clinic

The term "overeating disease" unfortunately has been used to describe three different diseases. This has led to confusion for both inexperienced shepherds and lifetime sheep veterans and their veterinarians. In this article we will discuss each of the diseases that has been termed "overeating disease" including cause, presentation, treatment and prevention.

Type C Enterotoxemia: This is a disease of young suckling lambs or bottle fed lambs. The causative agent is a bacterium, *Clostridium perfringens* Type C. *C. perfringens* is an anaerobic bacteria that resides in soil and manure and forms spores that are highly resistant to disinfectant and environmental breakdown.

Essentially *C. perfringens* is present in all types of soil throughout the world. *C. perfringens* Type C causes death in young suckling lambs. The bacteria enters the body through the mouth either from contamination on the udder of the ewe or from suckling on dirty wool or manure tags in effort to find the teat. The bacteria grow rapidly and produce a toxin, which causes rapid death. The lambs are rarely observed ill but rather are simply found dead in the morning. If observed before death treatment is unsuccessful.

Post-mortem exams on dead lambs are the most reliable method of diagnosing Type C. The abomasum and small intestine are hemorrhagic and blood filled. Type C is easy to control and prevent by vaccinating ewes 3-4 weeks pre-lambing with *C. perfringens* Type C toxoid. This will boost antibody levels in the colostrum which will neutralize the toxin when ingested. Obviously, if the lamb ingests high number of *C.*

perfringens before it suckles colostrum you may still have an occasional death. Therefore, drop pen and lambing pen

sanitation are very important to prevent the disease and shearing pre-lambing is also beneficial.

Type D Enterotoxemia: This is a disease of rapidly growing lambs on a high plane of nutrition. The causative agent is also *Clostridium perfringens* but it is the Type D strain and the toxin which it produces

that is the problem. Again, *C. perfringens* is present in soil and manure and is present on all sheep farms.

The bacteria are ingested by lambs exploring their environment. The acid in the abomasum kills most of the bacteria. However, in lambs that are on a high plane of nutrition, such as rapidly growing single suckling lambs, creep fed lambs and feedlot lambs some of the bacteria gets into the small intestine where it grows rapidly on the starch that is in the diet.

The bacteria produce a toxin that causes rapid death. Convulsions, muscle tremors and bizarre neurologic behavior can be seen before death. Treatment is rarely successful, as the toxin has already done extensive damage by the time the shepherd observes the lamb. Vaccinating the lambs with *Clostridia* Type D toxoid is very effective in preventing the disease.

Both a primary and a booster vaccination, 3-4 weeks later are required for protection. One of the frustrating problems is timing of the vaccination. If we vaccinate very young lambs (2 weeks of age) we do not see a good response, as the lamb's immune system is not mature enough to respond adequately to the vaccine. If we wait too long to vaccinate we can see death loss before we get the lambs vaccinated with the booster dose. If the lambs are young when they are vaccinated it is wise to give an additional booster at 5 months of age, especially

if the lambs are on a high concentrate diet.

Grain Overload: This is strictly a management disease where lambs are allowed to gorge a large amount of grain or when we change rations quickly. Sheep, along with other ruminants, need to be kept on a regular diet. If they are suddenly allowed uncontrolled access to grain the grain rapidly ferments in the rumen. This drops the pH of the rumen and causes, dehydration, lowering of blood pH and acid burns to the rumen wall. If severe this can result in a quick death.

If the sheep survives the rapid change in pH the next problems that can develop are laminitis (founder) and polioencephalomalacia. Weeks after the incident the lamb can still be affected by liver abscess and poor growth rate due to severe damage of the rumen. If caught in the early stages grain overload can be drenched with sodium bicarbonate in cold water. The sodium bicarbonate will buffer the pH change and cold water will slow the fermentation process. Activated charcoal is also used to bind the starch and prevent further fermentation. Banamine and dexamethasone are useful to treat inflammation, pain and shock. If the lamb lives more than 24 hours it should be fed grass hay and probiotics to stimulate the rumen, treated with B complex vitamins to prevent polioencephalomalacia and treated with long-acting penicillin or tetracycline to prevent liver abscess for 2 weeks. Prevention is much easier than treatment. Changing rations gradually, secure gate latches and sheep proof feed storage can easily prevent grain overload.

Editor's Note: These recommendations are provided for your information but advice from your local veterinarian should always be sought.

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Lamb Grilling Tips

GRILLIN'

Continued from page 1

continue thawing. Cook lamb immediately after thawing. It should not be refrozen unless cooked first.

In the microwave - As with the cold water method, when frozen lamb is thawed in the microwave, it must be cooked immediately. It should not be refrozen unless cooked first.

Grilling Lamb:

One of the biggest challenges in cooking lamb is determining when it is done. Do not rely on guesswork, a good meat thermometer will provide reliable results. Do not cut into the meat to check its done-

CUT OF LAMB	SIZE	COOKING TIME	INTERNAL TEMPERATURE
Cubes for Kebobs	1"-1.5"	8-12 minutes	Medium 160°F
Ground Lamb Patties	2" thick	15-19 minutes	Medium 60°F
Chops, Rib or Loin	1"-1.5" thick	15-19 minutes	Medium-Rare 145°F
Leg Steaks	5" thick	14-18 minutes	Medium-Rare 145°F (grill 4" from heat)

ness. Use an instant read thermometer to give you a quick, accurate reading. Lamb always benefits from rest before serving, as it allows the meat's juices to settle. Give thin cuts 5 minutes to set before serving.

Remove lamb from heat when the thermometer reads 5-10 degrees less than your desired temperatures. To ensure lamb remains safe throughout cooking, it is

recommended to cook ground lamb to an internal temperature of 160° F. Other cuts should be cooking to 145°F for medium-rare, 160°F for medium and 170°F for well done.

Remember that grilling is an excellent cooking option to optimize the delicious taste of lamb, so get out your grills and get cooking!

Integrating a data processing system into your flock

SHORT CLIPS *Continued from page 2*

NSIP has many traits on which participants will receive EPD values on their flock. The large number of traits can be overwhelming. Improvements in the program have made it easier for producers to use in making selections. Flocks with producing terminal sires can use the terminal sire index. This single value combines multiple traits that are important for a terminal sire. One aspect that should not be overlooked or terminal sire flocks is average lamb survival of a sire's offspring. This can help overcome some of the negative response to terminal sire by commercial producers. Flocks interested in producing superior maternal genetics can use the maternal index as the value on which to base selection. Another aspect of using NFIP is that because animals have EPD on multiple traits it is possible to

better advise potential buyers on which animals can most benefit their flock. For example, if a ram buyer is looking for a sire to increase number born/weaned in his flock, identifying those rams which are the most positive for lambs weaned is his best choice. A high maternal index ram may not be as genetically superior. Another example is a flock with adequate number born but needs more milk. They should select a ram that is very positive for maternal milk or maternal 60 day weight.

Commercial producers should purchase breeding stock from breeders who have EPD's on their sheep. Additionally commercial producers should be willing to pay more for these superior genetics. Participating in NSIP will generate returns from increased production within the flock as we truly are selecting and breeding better, more profitable sheep. Additionally, participation improves one's

ability to market seedstock because you have a competitive advantage because you know your sheep are truly superior. Sheep have multiple traits that are important for profitable production and it is essential to use a genetic evaluation program. The cost of operating a sheep flock will probably not decrease in the next few years and may never decrease with the growing international economy. Therefore it is critical that we improve the output per ewe and output per flock. Breeding or buying superior genetics is the surest way to increase production efficiency. The value of our flock is at an all time high. It is time to invest in genetic improvement via NSIP for registered flocks. Commercial flocks who are selling seedstock or who have at least 300 ewes should consider joining Lamb Plan Australia. Lamb Plan is currently contracted to process NSIP records. The NSIP web site is www.nsip.org.



Restaurant of the Year

Have you had a delicious lamb meal at an Iowa restaurant recently? Then let us know! We are currently taking nominations for restaurants serving quality lamb meals to honor them with the Restaurant of the Year award at the 2011 Iowa Sheep & Wool Festival in June. Please e-mail suggestions to the ISIA office at info@iowasheep.com. Please provide restaurant's name and location, as well as the lamb meal served. Submissions must be made by May 13, 2011.

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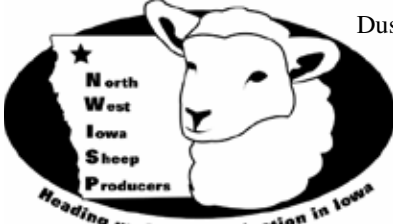
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