

The North Dakota Sheep Industry

Newsletter

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A joint publication brought to you by the North Dakota Lamb and Wool Producers Association and the NDSU Extension Service

President's Corner

Hope all of you are doing well. It seems as though spring is finally here, just in time for summer. Time is flying by and I seem to be getting very little accomplished. I seem to spend my whole life just trying to catch up anymore.

The sheep industry seems to be one of the only positive notes in the livestock industry right now. Lamb prices are strong, wool prices are OK and input costs seem to be moderating a bit from last year. At this time last year we were feeding hay already; and as I look out the window, the ewes are in grass up to their bellies right now. Amazing what a little moisture will do for this country. We had 4.5 inches of rain last weekend with snow the weekend before. We were lucky, as there were people 15 miles away that had over 10 inches of rain last weekend. I think I prefer this to the droughts we have been having.

I hope you are able to attend some of the events that are on tap this summer and fall:

North Dakota State Fair	Minot	July 25-31
Ram and Ewe Lamb Sale	Fargo	August 8
34 th Hettinger Ram Sale	Hettinger	Sept. 16
Bowman Ewe Sale	Bowman	Sept. 25
NDLWPA Convention, Doublewood Inn	Bismarck	Nov. 20-21

We are going to be able to offer up to 10 Perpetual Starter flocks this year. If you know of anyone who might benefit from this program, please direct them to the website to access the application. Applications are due by August 1. This is a terrific opportunity for young people to become involved in sheep production as well as expand present enterprises.

Justin Luther is leaving NDSU the end of the month to accept a position at University of Wisconsin – River Falls. I would like to thank him for his dedication to the industry and our group over the past years and wish him and his family well in their new venture in life. Thanks Justin for everything.

Hope to see you at some of the events this summer. Please promote the Starter Flock program.

— Lyle Warner, President

North Dakota Lamb and Wool Producers Association Meeting April 3, 2009 Gladstone Inn, Jamestown, ND

President Lyle Warner called the meeting to order.

Brent Kuss read the minutes from the March 13 board meeting. Matt Benz made a motion to accept the minutes as read. Mark Sheppard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mark Sheppard presented the current treasurer's report. Brent Stroh made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Todd Sears seconded the motion. Motion carried.

New Business

ASI: Dean Swenson gave an ASI report. Dean discussed the grazing allotments in the western states, and that they are trying to get the Goat Association to merge with ASI. Next year's convention will be in Tennessee.

Ram Test: President Warner gave a brief report on the Hettinger Ram Test, as Dr. Chris Schauer was unable to attend. The Ram Test will start May 15 this year and will not be as long as last year. Wyman Scheetz made a motion to support Dr. Schauer's recommendations for the ram test. Luke Lillihaugen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Fargo Ram Sale: A change for this year will be that if a producer brings a Ram Test ram to the Fargo Ram Sale, the highest ranking ram will sell first then the remaining rams will follow the sale order as with past sales. President Warner assigned a committee of Todd Sears, Nathan Robbins, and Brent Stroh - Chair.

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Hettinger Ram Sale: President Warner assigned a committee to manage the Hettinger Ram Sale. The committee will be Wyman Scheetz, Matt Benz, and Lyle Warner.

Perpetual Flock: The board discussed some possible changes to the application form for future flock distributions.

Newsletter: Matt Benz offered to be an inter editor for the newsletter until that position gets filled. Chelsey Saevre will help to get it printed through NDSU as it has been in the past. Chelsey Saevre also will help to update the web page.

Lamb Cookoff: Ann Osborne addressed the board on the Lamb Cookoff and some changes she would like to see made for the next Lamb Cookoff. Matt Benz made a motion to allot \$1,500 to the Lamb Cookoff for advertising. Don Osborne seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Brent Stroh moved to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned.

Board members in attendance: Don Osborne, Todd Sears, Brent Stroh, Lyle Warner, Brent Kuss, Mark Sheppard, Nathan Robbins, Wyman Scheetz, Matt Benz, Luke Lillehaugen, Dean Swenson, and guest Ann Osborne.

North Dakota Lamb and Wool
Producers Association Meeting
July 1, 2009
Lyle Warner Farm

Brent Kuss read the minutes from the April 13 meeting. Curt Stanley made a motion to accept the minutes as read. Nathan Robbins seconded the motion. Motion carried

Mark Sheppard presented the treasurer's report. Brent Stroh made a motion to accept the treasurer's report as read. Brent Kuss seconded the motion. Motion carried.

New Business

Bylaws Changes: Mark Sheppard presented the board with some possible changes to the bylaws to bring to the annual convention. They are as follows:

Section 3a. – Wyman Scheetz made a motion to change this to ANNUAL MEETING NOMINATING COMMITTEE shall consist of three members elected at the last prior Annual Meeting and ~~two members who are appointed by the President~~. The President shall designate the chairman and ~~make his appointments at least 180 days in advance of the convening of each Annual Meeting~~. Curt Stanley seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Section 3c6. – Nathan Robbins made a motion to change this to *The ASI State director shall be elected at large annually by the members of the Association*. Curt Stanley seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Section 4. – Curt Stanley made a motion to The BOARD OF DIRECTORS shall consist of the four elected officers, the eight elected directors, and the immediate past president. *The ASI state director*, the presidents of all auxiliary organizations, and the various state breed associations recognized by the Board of Directors shall be ex-officio members of the Board of Directors. These ex-officio members shall have the right to speak at meetings but not to vote. Mark Sheppard seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Section 6b Sales Eligibility. – Curt Stanley made a motion to ELIGIBILITY- The manager of coordinator of any sale sponsored by the Association shall determine who is eligible to participate in the sale. Consignors shall ~~be encouraged to~~ maintain membership in the Association, but the right to sell at any Association sponsored sale will not be guaranteed ~~nor denied~~ because of the consignor's membership ~~or non-membership~~ in the Association. Brent Stroh seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Section 6c Sales Expense. – Nathan Robbins made a motion to SALE EXPENSE – ~~The consignors to various sales sponsored by the Association shall be responsible to see that the sale is at least a break-even sale~~. No funds collected by the Treasurer, as membership fees shall be used to pay the expenses of any sale. Wyman Scheetz seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Ram Test: Dr. Schauer gave the board a brief overview of the Ram Test.

Fargo Sale: Dr. Luther told the board that the consignment letters were sent out to the seedstock producers. The committee would like to get about 40 rams for this sale.

Hettinger Ram Sale: The date is September 16, 2009.

NDSU Facilities: Dr. Luther updated the board on the progress that has been made at the Fargo sheep barn. He stated work continues on the barn and feeding facilities, as well as dirt work and drainage in the surrounding lots. Additional funding will need to be sought to continue the improvements. The Association will go to SBARE to be listed for possible funding. Curt Stanley made a motion to have president Warner draft a letter thanking the people that helped make the progress happen on the NDSU improvements. Nathan Robbins seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Wool Outreach Money: The Association has \$1,711 available for Wool Outreach to be used by August. Curt Stanley made a motion to use \$750 of Wool Outreach money and \$750 of general fund money to buy the Hettinger Research Extension Center a complete teaching shearing unit for future shearing schools. Nathan Robbins seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Consumer Sciences: Brent Stroh made a motion to allocate \$1,500 for a grant program for the consumer science programs in North Dakota. The funds could be used for wool fabrics or lamb meat to be used by students enrolled in these programs. Wyman Scheetz seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Perpetual Flock: A committee was appointed to sort through the applications and narrow it down to 15 applications to present to the board for final selection. The committee will be Wyman Scheetz, Brent Stroh, and Doug Bichler.

Committee Appointments for the 2009 Convention:

Nominating Committee:

Todd Sears, Misty Steaks, and Matt Benz

Auditing Committee:

Nathan Robbins, Curt Stanley, and Mary Scheetz

Resolution Committee:

Brent Kuss, Wyman Scheetz, and Brent Stroh

Curt Stanley made a motion to adjourn. Brent Stroh seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Control of Footrot in Sheep

Mike Neary
Extension Sheep Specialist
Purdue University

OPP and spider lambs seem to receive much attention from sheep producers and in popular sheep press.

However, these diseases affect the average sheep producers' production efficiency much less than the old standby problems of footrot, abortive diseases, coccidia and internal parasites. Footrot is a serious problem in Indiana and surrounding states that has had a strong negative impact on our sheep industry.

Many of the long-time sheep producers in the state will make a statement that "footrot and dogs have driven more people out of the sheep business than any other reason". There is probably much truth to statements like this. Also, how many potential producers have we lost because of these problems? Furthermore, sheep suffering from footrot are less able to compete for feed, forages and are more susceptible to other diseases because of their weakened condition. How many ewes would have twins or triplets versus a single if they were free of footrot? How much more enjoyable and profitable would raising sheep be without footrot?

Causes of Footrot

Contagious footrot is caused by the synergistic action of two anaerobic bacteria. The bacteria *Fusobacterium necrophorum* is commonly present in soil, manure, etc. and colonizes the soft tissue between toes of the sheep. This is followed by penetration of the skin by a second bacteria (*Bacterioides nodosus*). Both bacteria have to be present to cause footrot, along with, proper environmental conditions. There are around 20 strains of *B. nodosus*, with various infective capacity and severity of infection. When controlling footrot, it is the *B. nodosus* organism that most of the attention is focused toward.

Environmental conditions conducive to outbreaks of footrot are warmth, moisture and an anaerobic (no oxygen) state. Conditions that commonly occur in Indiana in spring, fall, and to a lesser extent, winter.

Footrot is caused by the introduction of sheep into a flock carrying the disease, by carrier sheep that have a relapse or by contaminated premises. Since the *B. nodosus* organism will live in soil for only 14 days, the major means of contamination is by sheep to sheep contact. Footrot bacteria can live in cracks, crevices, etc. of sheep's feet for an extended period of time, thus, a sheep can serve as a carrier of footrot without showing symptoms. This becomes a very important consideration when trying to prevent footrot.

Other conditions related to footrot are foot abscesses and foot scald or gald. Abscesses can be caused by puncture of sharp objects and are not always related to footrot. Foot scald is often a precursor to footrot.

Preventing Footrot

Based on the causes of footrot, the most logical, least expensive method of controlling footrot is to prevent its' introduction into clean flocks. Overwhelming, the most common cause of introducing footrot to a flock is by the introduction or co-mingling of new sheep to the farm. When buying sheep, they should be isolated from the rest of the flock and be treated as if they have footrot or other infective diseases.

Treating Footrot

There are now more techniques available to treat footrot than we have ever had available. Zinc sulfate, footrot vaccines and portable handling equipment have helped tremendously in the fight against footrot. However, fighting footrot is still a hard, long battle.

Since the footrot organism is anaerobic, the introduction of oxygen to its environment will help in eradicating it. Thus, it is important to keep sheep's hoofs trimmed. Elimination of overgrown hoof tissue will result in less mud and manure packing, which aids in environmental conditions conducive to footrot development.

When treating footrot, the first thing one should do is to separate the affected sheep from the sheep not showing symptoms. Next, one would need to trim feet on all sheep, whether infected or not. Be **careful** to not spread footrot from infected to non-infected sheep through hoof trimmers, pocket knives or other equipment. After foot trimming, the use of regular soaking in a footbath of a zinc sulfate solution (10% w/v) can greatly help in eradicating the disease. For best results, sheep should stand in a footbath for at least five minutes at least two to three times weekly. Also, when trimming feet, be sure to trim fairly severely on infected sheep to allow the zinc sulfate to penetrate the hoof area.

Vaccination of flocks with a history of footrot can help in prevention and in treatment of current cases. However, just because a sheep is vaccinated for footrot does not mean it is immune to infection. The vaccine does not cover all the strains of footrot. Producers with clean flocks can control footrot more economically by prevention rather than vaccination.

Antibiotics can also be used to help treat cases of footrot. Penicillin can be particularly effective on a short-term basis.

Be wary of carrier sheep in your flock. Cull severely infected sheep that do not respond to treatment. If the same few ewes or rams are always the first ones to show footrot symptoms, they are probably carriers and need to be culled.

There can be a genetic susceptibility to footrot. Research by Dr. Charles Parker at the Dubois, Idaho sheep research station has shown that some sheep are more susceptible to footrot than others. Also, there can be breed differences in susceptibility to footrot. Thus, families of sheep that have a resistance to footrot should be propagated, while, susceptible families should be culled. Taking notes and referring to records can help in identification of these types.

Summary

To control footrot the following considerations can be helpful:

- 1) Prevent footrot by controlling exposure to outside animals.
- 2) If outbreak occurs, separate infected animals.
- 3) Use foot triuning and soaking in zinc sulfate solution.
- 4) Vaccinate if a persistent problem.
- 5) Cull chronic individuals or those that are suspected carriers.
- 6) Keep records on sheep susceptible to footrot.

SHEEP PESTS

Lee Townsend, Extension Entomologist
University of Kentucky College of Agriculture

Sheep Keds

Sheep keds are wingless, reddish brown biting flies that resemble, and are sometimes called, ticks. They use piercing- sucking mouthparts to feed on blood. Although sheep are the primary host but keds may feed on goats. This irritation makes the animals restless. Consequently, growth and weight gain, especially of lambs, can be reduced. Scratching to relieve the itching at feeding sites may damage wool quality. Heavily infested animals also may be more susceptible to diseases and other stresses. In addition, ked bites can cause hard nodules on the skin, a defect known as "cockles." These pimple-like blemishes cannot be completely flattened or covered with dyes.

This insect has a very unusual life cycle. At about weekly intervals, a single egg hatches inside the body of the female and the maggot-like larva grows in her body. The

mature larva is expelled and glued to the animal's fleece. It forms a chestnut brown bean-shaped pupa that can be found stuck to the wool on the belly, shoulders, or thighs. About three weeks later, the adult fly emerges. Adults live three to four months and produce about 10 to 12 offspring.

Ked numbers in a flock are lowest during the summer and highest during the winter. They usually are spread from animal to animal by direct contact, but keds can crawl to a new host. Keds can only survive off of the animal for about a week.

Sheep keds are readily controlled with insecticide dusts or sprays. Treatment is recommended immediately after shearing. About half of adult keds and most of the larvae are removed with the fleece and better coverage is obtained on shorn animals. See **ENT-22 "Insecticide Control on Sheep and Goats"** for a list of current products. Keeping the flock free of keds requires isolating and treating newly purchased animals before they join the flock.

Sheep Nose Bots

Adult sheep bot flies are hairy yellow-brown insects about the size of a bumble bee. They follow sheep on warm, still, sunny days from late spring until autumn. The flies dart at the sheep's head and deposit newly-hatched larvae near the nostrils. When under attack, sheep may shake their heads, stamp their feet, snort, and push their noses in the dust or between other animals or run.

The small, spiny bot larvae work their way up the nasal passage, feeding on mucus secretions as they go. They end up in the sinuses or other hollow spaces in the head where they can produce severe inflammations. The excess mucus, along with dust drawn into the air passages, causes sneezing, labored breathing, and predisposes animals to bacterial infections.

The bots remain in the head until they are fully grown, although they may migrate from cavity to cavity. They then work their way out through the nostrils or are sneezed out to the ground where they bury themselves and pupate in a few hours. In 3 to 6 weeks, adult flies emerge from the pupae. The length of time the larva spends in the head is dependent upon the season. Usually the first generation in the spring remains in the head of sheep for 2 to 3 months. The adults from these (second generation) will deposit young in the fall and these will over winter in the head until the first warm days of spring. Research has shown that over 90 percent of the sheep in Kentucky are infested with bots from

October through February. The highest bot levels are seen in November and December.

Weight reductions of up to 4 percent have been attributed to bot infestations in some studies. Harassment by adult flies and the irritation caused by bots in the nasal passages are likely to affect production.

A systemic insecticide formulation containing ivermectrin is available to control this pest. See ENT-22 for more information.

Fleeceworms

Wool soiled by urine, scourings, or matted with blood from cuts or wounds is an attractive egg-laying site for several kinds of flies. The maggots that hatch from these eggs can develop in the soiled wool and, in some cases, attack skin or muscle tissue. If the infestation continues, the resulting vile odor will attract more flies. Maggots working in the skin or in the wool next to the skin may loosen large patches of wool which either slough off or can be easily pulled off, exposing raw, maggot-infested flesh. If infestations are not checked immediately, a considerable amount of flesh and wool will be lost and the animal may develop an infection and die.

Infestations of wound maggots can be minimized by removing hazards that result in flesh wounds, such as barbed wire fencing, and by removing other sharp objects from pens, yards and pastures. It is not economically feasible to apply insecticides as preventive treatments.

Flesh wounds, as well as castration and birthing wounds, should be dressed or protected against maggot infestation. Sheep should be checked periodically during warm, wet weather when these flies are active. Infestations can be treated with insecticide sprays, foams, or dusts, as necessary.

Revised: 10/95

CAUTION! Pesticide recommendations in this publication are registered for use in Kentucky, USA ONLY! The use of some products may not be legal in your state or country. Please check with your local county agent or regulatory official before using any pesticide mentioned in this publication. Of course, **ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW LABEL DIRECTIONS FOR SAFE USE OF ANY PESTICIDE!**

Mark Your Calendar for North Dakota's Top Ram Sales!

Free lunches will be provided!
Contact Lyle Warner at 701-220-1203

3rd Annual Fargo Ram Sale
shepherd Arena, NDSU

40 Rams
All RR



20 Purebred
Ewe Lambs

Saturday, August 8, 2009 @ 1:30 p.m. CDT
Katahdins will be included in this year's sale!

Hottinger Ram Sale
Adams County Fair Barn

200 Rams
QR & RR



34th Annual

Wednesday, September 16, 2009 @ 1:00 p.m. MDT

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