

The North Dakota Sheep Industry

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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 Message

It was very interesting and informative to attend my first ASI Convention, held in San Antonio, TX in late January. Burdell Johnson was installed as President and Burton Pfliger was elected our regions representative to the Board of Directors, Dean Swenson will replace him on the NDLWPA board of directors. NDLWPA members in attendance were: Burdell and Theo Johnson (and all of their children), Burton and Patti Pfliger, Dean and Paula Swenson, Justin Luther, Dick and Jane Horner, Beth Horner, Megan Ternquist and Lyle and Pat Warner. Beth and Megan represented ND in the MIWW competition.



There were three very good sessions I attended that have tremendous impact on all of us as producers: Parasites in Sheep, Sheep Measles, and LRP insurance for lambs. Justin will be addressing these areas of interest in this and future newsletters. I think we can all benefit from these discussions and improve the way we produce our product.

I attended a meeting at Dr. Schulers' office, Federal Veterinarian, where they were accessing our states scrapie compliance verification. One of the staff members reported that in recent spot checks at Farmers Livestock sale barn in Bismarck, on the average, 17 of the producers attending each sale did not have a premise number or scrapie tags. Some of the producers are running as many as 300 ewes. This is a mandatory ID program, unlike the current status of the beef ID program, and will continue to be monitored in the future. If you do not have a premise ID, you can obtain one over the phone by calling Debbie Wanner (701-250-4210). You can also order FREE eartags at the same time. I use these eartags as my lamb tags and the retention rate has been very good. It would make it much easier on the sale barns and save individuals a lot of money if we would make sure all of our sheep were tagged with Federal Scrapie tags when they were delivered to sale barns or other individuals.

Hope everyone is having a successful lambing season. Feed prices are high, but it appears as

though prices should be quite good for spring lambs.

If anyone has any issues they would like the association to address, please call or write. We want to make sure we are meeting your needs.

Lyle Warner
NDLWPA President

Editor's Note

Our industry is on the move! The New LRP-Lamb Pilot Project will be initiated July 1st, 2007. This price risk protection program is available through your crop insurance agents. In preparation, we have submitted a grant to the North Central Risk Management Agency. If funded, the grant will direct our efforts in educating ND sheep producers, crop insurance agents, and agricultural lenders on the mechanics of this new program.



In February, over 30 producers were in attendance at the Carrington Sheep Seminar. Karl Hoppe and I provided presentations on feeding co-products during high corn prices, lambing time management, and implementation of a fall lambing flock into your operation.

In April, Erin Windorski, my graduate student, and I will be starting a collaborative artificial insemination trial with Christopher Schauer and David Pearson of HREC. This project was funded by ND SBARE and will evaluate the use of ViagraTM on pregnancy rates and the number of lambs born per ewe in a fall lambing flock.

This summer our research at the HREC will also be addressing a main topic of concern in the sheep industry. We will evaluate different levels of dried distillers' grains in lamb finishing rations, and attempt to maximize the inclusion rate of this feed stuff.

Stay tuned for more details!

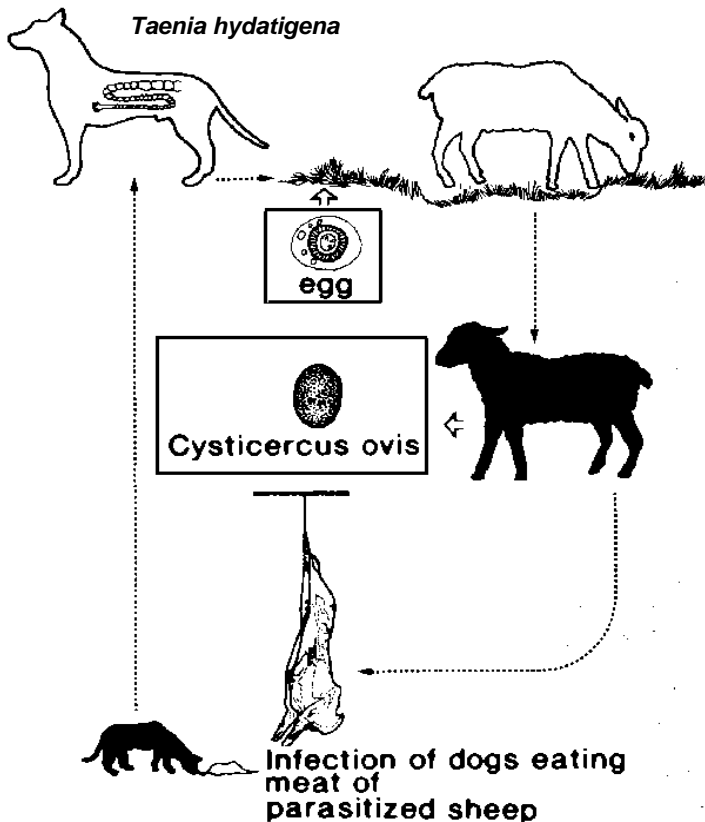
Justin Luther, Ph.D.
NDSU Extension Sheep Specialist

Sheep Measles: A Hot Topic

by Dr. Justin Luther
NDSU Extension Sheep Specialist

Ovine Cysticercosis, more commonly known as "Sheep Measles", was discussed at the 2007 ASI Convention in San Antonio, Texas by Dr. Cleon Kimberling of Colorado State University. Unbeknown to many of us, sheep measles have a significant economic impact on the U.S. sheep industry. For example, carcass condemnation, due to sheep measles, costs a lamb slaughter plant in Colorado approximately \$40,000 per year (\$0.10 per lamb). When multiplied by the 2,800,000 lambs slaughtered in the U.S. each year, sheep measles causes an estimated annual economic loss of \$280,000.

Sheep and goats are intermediate hosts of the dog or coyote tapeworm *T. Ovis*. As the tapeworm develops in the small intestine of the dog, end segments will break off and be passed through the feces. A large number of eggs are contained in each segment and they will develop into larvae known as *C. Ovis*. When ingested by sheep, the larvae will travel through the blood stream to the heart and muscles. Two weeks after infection small cysts (1.0 mm in diameter) will appear in the muscle tissue and grow to reach maturity by about 12 weeks (10.0 mm in diameter). After reaching maturity, the cysts may calcify and appear as white granules in the tissue (termed sheep measles), causing severe aesthetic damage to the lamb meat and possible condemnation of the carcass. The pelt



of severely infected animals may also become worthless. Although ingestion of the cysts will not cause infection in humans, it will cause infection in dogs and coyotes, thus completing the parasites life cycle (see figure).

There are no known symptoms for sheep in the chronic cystic stage; however a blood test can be performed to determine infection. Since vaccines are not available in the U.S. other preventative measures should be taken. It is recommended to treat tapeworm infestations in dogs and / or prevent contact between sheep and infected dogs. It has been suggested to take the following preventative measures:

- Do not allow dogs to feed on sheep carcasses.
- Deworm dogs at least 2 times per year, and up to 4 times per year for high exposure dogs (i.e. working and guard dogs).
- Require hunters to deworm their dogs before coming on your property.

If you have any further questions about sheep measles contact myself (701-231-7993), Dr. Charlie Stoltenow, NDSU Extension Veterinarian (701-231-7522), or Dr. Cleon Kimberling of CSU (970-214-2142).

Secretary's Minutes

by Brent Kuss
NDLWPA Secretary

The most recent North Dakota Lamb and Wool Producers Association meeting was held at the Seven Seas in Mandan on February 6th, 2007.

The meeting was called to order by President Lyle Warner.

Brent Kuss read the minutes from the annual convention. Burton Pfliger moved to accept the minutes as read. Paula Swenson seconds the motion. Motion carries.

Mark Sheppard presented the treasurer's report. The balance of all funds was \$33,332.36. Mark also presented a tentative budget for 2007 and a total of state and ASI members to date. Brent Stroh made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Burton Pfliger seconds the motion. Motion carries.

President Warner then asked for any input on the budget and discussion followed.

There was discussion on some up coming events in North Dakota. The National Katahdin Sheep Convention will be in Fargo on September 20-23rd,

2007. The NDLWPA will sponsor a meal at the convention.

There was also discussion on the ASI Executive board meeting on July 13th-14th, 2007 in Medora. They would like for the association to help fund tickets for the musical and pitch fork fondue. They are estimating about 20 people attending.

Burton Pfliger made a motion to add \$2000.00 to the budget for the above two events. Wyman Scheetz seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Burton Pfliger made a motion to accept the budget. Paula Swenson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

President Warner called for old business:

ASI Convention updates by Burton Pfliger. Burton stated there was some discussion on tagging lambs with scrapie tags. The lamb feeders want to have all lambs tagged with a scrapie tag. The motion was not adopted due to the amount of opposition. Burton also informed the board that the wolf print donated by the NDLWPA brought \$600.00 and then was donated back to ASI and will hang in the ASI headquarters.

Paula Swenson gave the board some highlights of some of the sessions she attended at the ASI convention.

Dean Swenson attended the convention on behalf of the goat producers and discussed some of the goat issues.

Dr. Justin Luther discussed briefly on the Lamb Risk Management Insurance program and stated that it is to start some time in July of 2007.

Lyle Warner discussed the seedstock meeting at the ASI Convention. Many of the seedstock producers feel they are disconnected with commercial producers. The seedstock producers would like a way for the commercial producers to understand the value of carcass traits in the market lamb.

Dr. Justin Luther discussed the ram and ewe sale. The board is going to have a ram sale in the eastern part of ND this year. Possible locations are Fargo and Edgeley. A possible time would be the first week in Aug. so it won't be competing with the Hettinger ram sale. Discussion followed.

Burton Pfliger made a motion to have an East sale at NDSU's Shepherd Arena, with RR rams and ewe

lambs and Justin Luther as sales manager. The motion was second by Nathan Robbins. Motion carries.

Paula Swenson made a motion to have the board pay \$305.00 for Burton Pfliger's registration fee for the ASI convention. Motion passed.

President Warner called for new business:

Phil Maestrangelo addressed the board on current issues with Wildlife Services and budget concerns.

Lyle Warner discussed animal ID in ND and the lack of producers in compliance and not having premise numbers.

Mark Sheppard addressed the board on an Ag. in the Classroom event at the Lisbon Expo. They are expecting 400-500 4th graders to attend. Mark Sheppard and Nathan Robbins will represent the NDLWPA as the students learn about ND agriculture.

The Junior Membership has asked for \$350.00 to sponsor the Breeding Sheep class. Wyman Scheetz made a motion to give \$350.00 for the breeding class. Brent Stroh seconds the motion. Motion carries.

President Warner adjourned the meeting.

Board members in attendance: Lyle Warner, Mark Sheppard, Brent Kuss, Nathan Robbins, Burton Pfliger, Wyman Scheetz, Paula Swenson, past president Brent Stroh, Dr. Justin Luther, extension sheep specialist, and guests Dean Swenson and Phil Maestrangelo.

North Central Meat Goat Conference

The first annual Meat Goat Expo / Conference will be held on October 5th and 6th in Aberdeen, SD. The event will target new and experienced goat producers from South Dakota, Minnesota and North Dakota. Dr. Richard Browning of Tennessee State University will be the featured speaker. Browning initiated meat goat breed evaluation research at TSU in 2001. The major focus of his 200-doe research herd is to assess fitness and reproductive output of various meat goat breeds under pasture management conditions for commercial production. Over the last four years, the primary objective has been to study the hardiness and reproductive / maternal traits



among straightbred Boer, Kiko, and Spanish does raising straightbred and F1 kids. Other topics of the conference will include:

- Goat Marketing
- Multi-Species Grazing and Control of Invasive Plant Species with Goats
- Fighting the Parasite Battle in Goats
- Goat AI and Reproductive Management
- Goat Health Issues
- Equipment and Facilities for Goats

If you would like to learn more about the 2007 Meat Goat Expo please call your North Dakota contacts: Dr. Justin Luther (701-231-7993) or Curt Stanley (701-222-0148).

Spring Ram Test

by Dr. Justin Luther
Extension Sheep Specialist

Christopher Schauer, David Pearson and I will once again provide you with the annual Spring Ram Test. The 2007 test will be 85 days in length and start prior to May 1st. Rams will be weighed every 28 days, and carcass data (ribeye area and fat thickness) will be collected via ultrasound at the end of the test. If you are interested in consigning one or multiple rams (no

limit) to the 2007 Spring Ram Test please contact Dr. Christopher Schauer (701-567-4323) or I (701-231-7993) before March 30th and we will mail you a consignment package.

A specific 2007 Spring Ram Test mailing will not be sent out this year due to a general lack of interest. In the last two years, Spring Ram Test rams have sold slightly lower than rams brought directly from the producers operation. As a sheep production specialist and animal scientist this puzzles me. A performance tested ram with data on average daily gain, ribeye area, and fat thickness should theoretically bring more money, and have more value, than a ram without data that was brought from the same producer's operation.

There could be two possible reasons for the lack of demand for performance tested rams at the Hettinger Ram Sale. 1) North Dakota ram buyers do not place value on performance data, and/or 2) North Dakota ram buyers simply feel that the rams consigned to the Spring Ram test are below average. Although it scares me, I am convinced that reason number 1 is the main problem. Ram buyers need to understand that progeny of the better performance tested rams should be faster growing, more feed efficient, and have more desirable carcasses. Yet buyers at the Hettinger Ram Sale will pay less money for a performance tested ram versus a non-performance tested ram, even if both rams come from the same seedstock producer.?

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