Maryland Sheep & Goat Producer

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Research Program and Field Day Delayed until 2004

Due to unforseen circumstances, the start of the sheep and goat research program at the Western Maryland Research & Education Center (in Keedysville) will be delayed until next year. In addition, the Goat, Sheep, and Forage Field Day scheduled for Saturday, August 16 (announced in the June newsletter) will not be held until 2004.

AUGUST 16TH FIELD DAY CANCELLED

Alpacas and Llamas

Should the *Maryland Sheep & Goat Producer* newsletter be expanded to include information for producers/owners of alpacas and llamas? The title of the newsletter could be changed to *Maryland Small Ruminant News.* More and more people are raising llamas and alpacas as companion animals, for show, fiber production, or predator control. Llamas and alpacas are small ruminants. They have many similarities with sheep and goats. Let us know what you think.

MPWV[1] Meat Goat Producers Association Update

by Willie Lantz
MPWV 1st Vice President

The 4th Annual Mt. Top Boer Goat Show and Sale was held on Saturday, June 7 at the Garrett County Fairgrounds in McHenry, MD. The show was held in conjunction with the McHenry Highland Festival and is sponsored and conducted by the MPWV Meat Goat Producers Association. The MPWV also operated a food booth at the festival, selling barbecue goat sandwiches.

The show began at 11:00 a.m. with a showmanship workshop and contest for youth. The workshop was conducted by the show judge, Robert Hare from Winchester, OH, and assistant judge, Rachel Free from Smock, PA. Robert Hare has been judging livestock shows for nearly twenty years and has recently received certification from the U.S. Boer Goat Association (USBGA) as an official judge. A market goat class was also held in conjunction with the youth show. The Champion Market Goat was exhibited by Nick Habina, and the Reserve Champion Market Goat was exhibited by Jessica Stoots. Both Nick and Jessica received a bag of goat feed from Nutrena Feeds and a 25 dollar gift certificate to Jeffers, Inc.

Over one hundred (100) animals were registered for the breeding goat show. Angel Kontaxes from Perryopolis, PA exhibited the Champion Percentage Doe. Showing the Champion Sr. Percentage Doe was Taylor Dunmire with Red Barn Boers from Monongahela, PA. Winner of the Full Blood Jr. and Sr. Champion Doe as well as the Jr. and Sr. Champion Full Blood Buck was Dick and Andrea Dixon from Mannington, WV. The annual Boer Goat Production Sale followed the show. Twenty-five (25) animals were offered for sale. Dick Dixon's "Dixons BGF Captain" was the top selling animal, selling to Joseph Evans from Oakland, MD.

Garrett College's Alternative Agriculture Center hosted the 7th Annual Meat Goat Conference held on Sunday, June 8. Approximately forty (40) participants took advantage of the hands-on activities conducted during the morning session. Dr. Heidi Fritz and Susan Schoenian conducted two workshops on worming and fecal sampling. Other workshops included Pasture Management conducted by Don Swartz, Goat Management practices by Willie Lantz, Goat Selection by Robert Hare, and Solving Kidding Problems by Dr. Heidi Fritz.

The MPWV held their annual meeting on the afternoon of June 8. Members elected officers for the upcoming year.

President	Dick Dixon
1st Vice President	Willie Lantz
2nd Vice President	Brenda Mares
Secretary	Barbara Ferguson
Treasurer	Walter Schoenian

The group also discussed next year's show and sale and other meat goat marketing opportunities. If interested in joining the MPWV Meat Goat Producers Association, contact Willie Lantz at (301) 387-3331 or wlantz @garrettcollege.edu. The next MPWV meeting will be Saturday, November 8 at Garrett College in McHenry, MD/

[1]Maryland-Pennsylvania-West Virginia Meat Goat Producers Association.

Frederick County Small Farm and Sheep & Goat Short Course

The Frederick County Extension Office will be holding a short course series on consecutive Wednesday evenings from September 3 through November 5. The first four-week course is designed to provide basic knowledge needed by new farmers as they begin the process of starting their new farming operation. The registration fee is $8 per person. The Sheep & Goat course is for those interested in raising sheep and/or goats. The registration fee is $6 per person. The bonus classes are free to those who register for one or both courses.

Beginning a Successful Small Farm Operation: Part II (Sept 3, 10, 17 and 24)

- Cover Crops: Field and Forage Crops on Small Farms (Terry Poole, Extension Agent, MCE[1])
- Farm Financial Management (Dale Johnson, Regional Farm Management Specialist, MCE)
- Soil and Water: Quality/Cost-Share Programs (Mark Siebert, District Conservation, NRCS[2])
- Developing the Perfect Farm Enterprise: Marketing What You Produce (Poole)

Bonus classes (Oct 1, 8, and 15)

- Feeding Livestock (Stan Fultz, Extension Agent, Dairy, MCE)
- Weeds Commonly found in Pastures (Poole)
- A Review of Farm Animal Health Management (Dr. Raymond Ediger, retired regional veterinarian, MDA[3])

Sheep and Goats (Oct 21 and 28, Nov 5)

- Breeds and Breeding (Susan Schoenian, Area Agent, Sheep & Goats, MCE)
- Facilities and Equipment (Schoenian)
- Sheep & Goat Management (Schoenian)

All classes will be held at the Frederick County Extension Office from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Space is limited so early registration is recommended. For more information or to register, contact Terry Poole at (301) 631-3576 or tpoole@umd.edu.

[1] University of Maryland Cooperative Extension
[2] Natural Resource Conservation Service
[3] Maryland Department of Agriculture

Buck Collection and AI Clinic

The Maryland Dairy Goat Association (MDGA) will be sponsoring a Buck Collection Day and AI Clinic on November 29-30 at the Howard County Fairgrounds in West Friendship. The instructor will be Vicki Pardee of Rosenthyme Farm Semen Processing, Poughkeepsie, New York.

Registration forms and deposits are due November 15. There is a $20 reservation fee per buck collected (+$2.75 per straw, 30 straw minimum). The cost of attending the artificial insemination class is $25 per person, $15 for additional family members. The AI clinic will include lots of hands-on activity and a booklet to take home. In addition, the instructor will AI any doe in heat brought to the class for the cost of semen.

For reservation forms and information, contact Vicki Pardee at (845) 485-3165 or vicki@rosethymefarm.com or MDGA president Brent Dietrich at (717) 692-4648 or president@marylanddairygoat.org.

Links
http://www.marylanddairygoat.org/03aiday.html
http://rosethymefarm.com/

Docking and Castrating

by Susan Schoenian

Docking and castrating are management practices that most sheep and goat producers take for granted. However, these practices are coming under increased scrutiny by animal rights and welfare groups, particularly in Europe, but also here in the U.S. Recently, the University of Maryland's popular "Lamb Watch" class came under attack for performing these practices. This is also the first year of the mandatory tail docking policy for 4-H lambs in Maryland.

As producers, we have a responsibility to educate the public as to why we perform these practices. We need to make sure that we dock and castrate in the most humane manner possible. We also need to ask ourselves if it is truly necessary to perform these practices. In some situations, it may not be necessary to castrate ram lambs or buck kids or dock lambs. The decision will vary by producer/operation and will be affected by breed, management, and marketing.

Rationale for docking and castrating

The tail protects the ewe's udder in extreme weather, helping to prevent mastitis. It is also used to spread the feces when the sheep defecates. Tail docking is performed to prevent wool contamination (by feces and urine) and fly strike (which can kill sheep) and to facilitate shearing. To say that it improves the appearance of a lamb is not a valid reason for docking. It is not necessary to dock hair sheep (Katahdin, Dorper, St. Croix, Barbados Blackbelly or Wiltshire Horn) or short-tailed breeds (Finn Sheep, Icelandic, Shetland or Romanov). Tailed lambs may be discounted in the marketplace, because tails, particularly if they are dirty, will reduce carcass yields (i.e. dressing percentage), thus carcass value. However, this is less likely to occur today and in the East where ethnic/religious markets predominate and oftentimes prefer and may require tailed lambs.

Ram lambs and buck kids are castrated to prevent unwanted pregnancies and indiscriminate breeding. Castrated males are easier to manage, especially as they mature. Castration enables later weaning of lambs and kids, which is common with pasture-based production systems. Castrated males can remain with their dams and female flock mates for a much longer period of time than intact males, which should be separated from females by the time they are three months of age. Castrated males can be fed along side females in the feed lot without risk of pregnancy or reduced weight gains due to sexual activity. Males sold as grazers or pets should always be castrated.

Like tailed lambs, ram lambs may be discounted in the marketplace, especially those marketed after July 1 and showing secondary sexual characteristics. However, this is less likely to occur today and in the East where the ethnic/religious markets oftentimes prefer and may require intact males. In addition, even if ram lambs are discounted, it may still pay to leave them intact, since they grow faster and more efficiently than wether lambs. In fact, if rams can be marketed by the time

they are six months of age, it makes sense to leave them intact. There is no difference between the meat from young ram lambs and wether or ewe lambs. With goats, the intact male is almost always preferred by the buyers, which are almost all ethnic/religious. There is a particularly good demand for large, older bucks. However, most youth shows require buck kids to be castrated in order to be shown in market goat classes.

Humane docking and castrating

There is disagreement among producers and scientists as to which method(s) of tail docking and castrating causes the most or least amount of pain or distress. Surgical castration (using a knife or scalpel to remove the testicles) has been shown to increase levels of cortisol in the bloodstream of lambs the most (an indication of pain), whereas banding causes greater behavior changes. Pain can be alleviated by using a general anesthesia for surgical castration or a local anesthetic (e.g. lidocaine) for banding. The use of a clamp or "burdizzo" to crush the spermatic cords prior to placement of the band will also help to reduce pain when castrating. The use of a local anesthetic at the site of banding is effective in reducing the pain associated with tail-docking. Docking with a heated cautery iron (electric docker) produces the least changes in behavior and cortisol levels. However, this piece of equipment is no longer commercially available.

Since it is not practical for most producers to use a local anesthetic when docking and/or castrating, elastrator (rubber) rings/bands should only be used on lambs and kids that are less than 7 days of age. In fact, all techniques of docking and castration should be performed on lambs/kids at an early age (less than 2 weeks). Though lambs/kids should not be castrated during their first 24 hours of life, as this interferes with mothering and bonding and may affect newborn vigor. In the United Kingdom (UK), it is against the law to use elastrator bands on lambs that are more than 7 days of age, and lambs that are three months of age and older must be docked and castrated by a veterinary surgeon under anesthesia. New Zealand animal welfare standards recommend that lambs be docked and castrated during the first six weeks of life.

Short tail-docking

Extremely short (cosmetic) tail docking has been associated with increased incidences of rectal and vaginal prolapses, due to muscle and nerve damage. In fact, research has shown that there is a 10-fold increase in the incidence of rectal prolapses in feed lot lambs that have been docked excessively short, as is common among show lambs. In the UK, the length of tail must be left long enough to fully cover the ewe's vulva and the rams' anus. Animal welfare standards in Australia and New Zealand make the same recommendations. The American Veterinary Medical Association recommends that lamb tails be removed at the point of the distal end of the caudal tail fold. The new tail docking policy in Maryland (and some other states) only requires that lambs have a tail that can be "lifted" with a #2 pencil when the lamb is in the free-standing position. The primary purpose of these mandatory tail docking policies is to eliminate "surgical" tail docking. These policies probably do not not go far enough in improving the welfare of lambs.

Proper placement of band.
Photo by West Virginia University.

Docking/ Castrating Practices in the US

	U.S.	East
% lambs docked	91.7	81.2
% lambs castrated	77.4	
Avg. age of castration	22.3 days	

Source: USDA-APHIS National Animal Health Monitoring System, July 2002.

Treating Foot Scald and Foot Rot

by Dr. Scott Greiner
Extension Animal Scientist, Virginia Tech

The extremely wet weather that has persisted in the Mid Atlantic region this spring has been conducive to foot rot and foot scald in sheep (and goats). Foot scald is caused by a soil bacteria that is present in most environments and manifests itself during very wet conditions. Foot scald causes lameness, frequently on the front feet, and lesions are found between the hooves.

The tissue between the toes of a sheep/goat with foot scald are generally blanched and white, or red and swollen. Foot scald is much easier to treat than foot rot. Many times, placing sheep/goats on drier footing and out of mud will alleviate the problems of the disease. Foot scald may also be treated topically by applying a solution of copper sulfate (Kopertox). The simplest and most effective treatment is use of a footbath containing 10% zinc sulfate solution (8 pounds zinc sulfate to 10 gallons water). The frequency and severity of foot scald infection will decline as drier weather returns.

Foot rot is a much more serious disease, as treatment intervention is necessary to eradicate the disease. Foot rot is a highly contagious disease that is caused by anaerobic bacteria that invade the sole of the hoof, causing deterioration and separation of the horny tissue. Infected feet are characterized by grayish-white matter and a strong foul odor. The foot rot organism thrives under warm, moist conditions and may spread through the flock through contaminated ground, manure, and bedding. Foot rot is typically introduced into a flock through the purchase of an infected animal or exposure of the flock to infected facilities. Persistently infected animals may carry the organism, which spreads to the remainder of the flock when environmental conditions are favorable.

Since foot rot infects the hoof itself and is highly contagious, treatment protocols are more extensive compared to foot scald. Treatment programs include foot trimming and foot baths, and isolation of clean from infected sheep within the flock. Research has demonstrated that the foot rot vaccine is also useful in eradicating the disease from the flock (sheep).

Source: Virginia Livestock Update, July 2003.

Focus on Research

Ralgro Implants Increase Performance of Feeder Lambs

Researchers at Angelo State University in San Angelo, Texas, investigated the effects of ralgro (zeranol hormonal implants) on the performance of feeder lambs. One hundred and twenty Rambouillet lambs (wethers and ewes, avg. wt. 65 lbs., avg. age 195 days) were randomly assigned to three treatment groups: 1) no implant; 2) implant; and 3) double implant. On day 0, all lambs were weighed, vaccinated for overeating disease, and dewormed. Lambs in treatment groups 2 and 3 were implanted. Lambs in treatment group 3 were re-implanted at day 56. Lambs were weighed on days 28, 56, 84, and overall and slaughtered when end weights of 119 pounds were reached.

Average daily gain was higher for implanted lambs as compared to non-implanted lambs. Days on feed was less for implanted lambs. The feed-to-gain ratio was lower for implanted lambs on day 56, 84, and overall. Carcass characteristics were similar for treatment groups, though non-implanted lambs had a lower dressing percentage, and double implanted ewe lambs had a lower percentage of choice grade carcasses and higher percentage of no grades. Implanted ewe lambs also had a higher incidence of prolapses. Implanted wether lambs had a higher value and profit margin than implanted ewe lambs and control lambs based on actual purchase price, feed cost, and carcass value.

	No implant		Single implant		Double implant	
Sex	%	&	%	&	%	&
No.	40		40		40	
ADG	0.53		0.64		0.65	
DOF	106		96		92	
FE	6.4		5.8		5.5	
NG	0	1	4	1	1	7
Value	$88.01	$89.88	$85.33	$97.66	$78.27	$93.00
Profit	$14.12	$15.99	$11.07	$23.40	$5.21	$19.94

No. = number of lambs in treatment group
ADG = average daily gain (overall), lbs./day
DOF = days on feed (until 119 lbs. was reached)
FE = feed efficiency, lbs. feed/lb. gain
NG = Number of carcasses which received no grade
Value = average sale value of carcasses (minus discounts)
Profit = Carcass value minus (lamb cost + implant cost + cost of gain)

Implications:

- Implanting wether lambs will increase feed lot performance.
- Implanting wether lambs will increase profit.
- Re-implanting lambs proved to have no benefit over a single implanting.
- Implanting ewe lambs will decrease carcass value and economic returns as compared to implanted wethers and non-implanted lambs.

Source: *Journal of Animal Science*, Volume 81, Supplement. Additional data provided by Dr. Mike Salisbury, Angelo State University.

Goats More Tolerant of Copper Than Sheep

Researchers at North Carolina State University evaluated the effects of feeding free choice minerals containing three different levels of copper on the copper status of lactating does and their offspring. Fifty-one (51) pregnant does (Boer and ¾ Boer) were separated into six equal groups 6 weeks prior to kidding and assigned to one of three treatment groups: free choice minerals containing either 0, 1,000, and 3,000 mg Cu/kg DM (dry matter). Does were fed a hay/grain mix for 4 weeks and were then grazed on perennial pastures two weeks prior to kidding until weaning (July 8). Intake of minerals was monitored weekly. Jugular blood samples were taken from 24 does prior to kidding and from the same does at weaning and from 15 kids at weaning. Kids were harvested at weaning to determine liver copper concentrations.

From the start of the trial until the end of kidding, does consumed daily 22.3, 20.1, and 20.9 grams free-choice minerals, corresponding to respective copper intakes of 0.0, 20.1, and 62.6 mg/day. While grazed with nursing kids, does consumed daily 22.4, 23.4, and 21.9 g free-choice minerals, corresponding to copper intakes of 0.0, 23.4, and 65.7 mg/d, respectively. Blood plasma copper concentrations of does at the start of the trial, at weaning, and of kids at weaning was not affected by treatment. Birth weights, weaning weights, average daily gain, and carcass traits of kids was not affected by treatment. Liver copper concentrations increased linearly with increasing dietary copper, but liver lesions were minimal and not affected by treatment. Feeding these amounts of copper for six months was not detrimental to nursing does and their kids and did not affect kid performance.

Source: *Journal of Animal Science*, Volume 81, Supplement.

Farmer/Grower Grants Available

Northeast SARE[1] conducts a Farmer/Grower Grant Program to support producers who want to try something new on their farm – a technique for adding value, a new crop, or a method of direct sales, for example. The goal of the program is to help farmers explore sustainable and innovative production and marketing practices that are profitable, environmentally sound, and beneficial to the community.

There are three types of farmer/grower grants: 1) farm trial (adopt new practices); 2) grassroots (experimental); and 3) agroforestry (combining trees or shrubs with crop and/or livestock production. All projects must have a technical advisor, such

as a country extension agent, university specialist, or NRCS staff.
In 2003, the average grant size was $5,200. In 2004, the cap will be $10,000.

Any farmer in the Northeast SARE region can apply. The region is made up of Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C. (SARE programs are also conducted in other regions of the U.S.) You do not have to be a full-time farmer to be eligible for a grant, but your operation should have an established crop or animal product that you sell on a regular basis. Applications and more information about the requirements of the Farmer/Grower Grant program are available on the Northeast SARE web site at www.uvm.edu/~nesare/. You can also call 802/656-0471 to request a printed application. The proposal deadline is December 8, 2003.

[1] Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Program

A Comparison of Dorper, Texel, and Suffolk-Sired Lambs

by Dr. Niki Whitley

The objective of this preliminary study was to compare growth, lamb survival, parasite resistance, and carcass traits of Dorper, Texel, and Suffolk-sired Katahdin crossbred lambs that are raised primarily on pasture. Late last fall, 53 Katahdin ewes were injected intramuscularly with 7.5 mg PGF2" (Lutalyse; 1.5 cc) for estrus synchronization and grouped for mating with either a Dorper (20 ewes), Texel (16 ewes), or Suffolk (17 ewes) ram for 28 days. At lambing, birth weights of the lambs were recorded, and at approximately 10 days after lambing, ewes and lambs were moved to pasture. Animals were moved to new pasture (all pastures were fescue/clover or orchardgrass/clover) when grass height was reduced to less than 6 inches. Ewes were supplemented from 30 days before lambing to approximately 50 days after lambing.

Lamb body weights were measured at approximately 33, 51, and 75 days of age and were corrected to 30, 50 and 70 days and adjusted for type of birth and rearing, age of dam, and sex of lamb. Fecal samples for fecal egg count determination were collected at approximately 75 days of age and again at weaning (approximately 96 days of age). Body weight (adjusted for 90 days) and ultrasound measurements of rib eye area (muscling) and back fat thickness were collected at weaning so that comparisons can be made among the breed crosses.

There were no differences in birth weights (average 8.36 lb.) or number of lambs born per ewe lambing (1.8 lambs per ewe) between the three sire groups. Sire breed had no influence on early pre-weaning growth performance with body weights averaging 26 lbs. on day 30 and 42 lbs. on day 50 of age. On day 70, the Suffolk-sired lambs were 6.4 lbs. heavier on-average than the Texel and Dorper-sired lambs (which were similar in weight). Body weight at weaning for Suffolk-sired lambs (averaged 72 lbs.) was approximately 6.8 lbs. higher than for Texel-sired lambs, but was not really higher than Dorper-sired lambs, which were 68 lbs. Texel and Dorper-sired lambs were statistically similar in body weight at weaning. Lamb survival to weaning (lambs born alive minus lambs weaned) was similar between the three groups averaging 97 percent. There was no influence of sire breed on fecal egg counts at 75 days (averaging 112 egg per gram) or at weaning, though FEC's were higher at day 96, averaging 1,225 eggs per gram.

Editor's note: this research is being funded by a NE-SARE Research and Education Grant.

Ewe Lamb Payments Delayed

Producers are eligible to receive payments for ewe lambs they retain or purchase, as part of year 4 of the Lamb Meat Adjustment Assistance Program (LMAAP) which ended on July 31. Applications for ewe lamb payments are due to FSA offices by August 15. However, FSA will not process checks/ payments until all applications through the end of the period have been submitted. Thus, payments will be delayed until late September. In addition, in the event that FSA receives more

applications than it has available funding, payments will be pro-rated to a lesser amount. Producers will receive a maximum of $18 per ewe lamb.

The American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) is seeking to extend the LMAAP for an additional year. Payments are also available for feeder and slaughter lambs that meet specific criteria.

Ultrasound Carcass Evaluation to be Held at Festival

One of the lesser known competitions of the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival is the Live Animal and Carcass Contest, which takes place the Sunday and Tuesday prior to the Festival. To increase participation in the contest and give the contest more visibility at the Festival, the contest will be changed from a live animal/carcass contest to a live animal evaluation using real-time ultrasound technology. Contest results will be based on two ultrasound carcass measurements: back fat thickness (measured between the 12th and 13th rib) and rib eye area.

Though the details of the contest have yet to be worked out, there will be a market lamb contest and a young sire evaluation. The market lamb contest will be open to any breed or crossbreed of lamb weighing between 80 and 120 pounds. There will also be an award given to the exhibitor of the lamb with the largest rib eye (adjusted to 100 lbs.). The young sire evaluation will be open to ram lambs of any breed or breed cross. There may also be a competition for people whereby youth and adults will handle the lambs to estimate back fat and rib eye.

Featured Breed

The South African Dorper

by Susan Schoenian

The Dorper is a South African hair sheep, imported into the U.S. in 1995 via embryo form from Canada The breed was developed in the 1930's by crossing Dorset Horn sheep with desert fat-tailed sheep (Black-headed Persians) in an attempt for South Africa to regain export markets lost to New Zealand's "Canterbury" lamb.

Dorpers are an easy-care sheep that require minimal labor. A purebred has a white body with a black head and neck and is more common (in South Africa) than a White Dorper, which has white hair all over its body. The skin of the Dorper is covered with a mixture of hair and wool, which sheds naturally during warm weather and does not require shearing. The Dorper has a thick skin (hide) which protects it during harsh conditions. The skin is the most sought after sheep skin in the world, and in South Africa is marketed under the name "Cape Glovers."

Dorpers are well adapted to a variety of climatic and grazing conditions, though they were originally developed for arid regions. They do well under intensive feeding conditions, but may be best suited to pasture-based production systems. Dorpers have a long breeding season and under good forage conditions and good management, can produce three lamb crops in two years. Dorper lambs grow rapidly and attain high weaning weights. They have excellent carcass traits.

Many universities, including the University of Maryland Eastern Shore and Virginia Tech, are conducting research with Dorpers to determine their potential for use in commercial lamb production systems. At the University of Wyoming, Dorper-sired lambs compared favorably with Suffolk-sired lambs, producing heavier-muscled carcasses. Dorper sires were found to have a positive effect on lamb production in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Studies conducted at Virginia Tech and the University of Idaho have shown that Dorper lamb is more tender than

¾ Dorper x ¼ Katahdin Ram

the lamb from wooled sheep (Dorset, Suffolk). Research conducted at Virginia Tech showed that while Dorpers lack the parasite resistance (ability to limit infection) common to other hair sheep breeds, they may possess a higher degree of parasite resilience (ability to withstand infection) as compared to wooled sheep.

Because Dorpers are still relatively new to the U.S., they can still be quite expensive, especially White Dorpers, which seem to be preferred in the U.S. As a result many producers use fullblood Dorper rams to upgrade their flocks or they purchase percentage Dorpers (e.g. ¾ Dorper x ¼ Katahdin).

http://www.dorperamerica.org/

International Involvements

From August 29 through September 27, Susan Schoenian will be in the former Soviet republic of Kazakhstan. The University of Maryland received a grant from the U.S. Department of State to develop a pilot extension program in Kazakhstan, after having carried out a similar program in neighboring Uzbekistan. Susan previously traveled to Kazakhstan in 1994 with fellow Maryland shepherd David Greene and Eldon Gemmill. Our trip was sponsored by Winrock International and involved working with the sheep industry in southern Kazakhstan.

Susan has also been asked to speak at the 2nd International Symposium on Sheep and Goat Production for Meat in João Pessoa, Brazil from September 30 through October 3. In March, Dr. Niki Whitley traveled to Jamaica to discuss collaborative research between UMES and the Bodles Research Center in Jamaica.

Featured Web Site: Merck Veterinary Manual

The 8th edition of the *Merck Veterinary Manual* is online at http://www.merckvetmanual.com. Calling itself "the single most comprehensive reference for animal care information," the manual includes over 12,000 indexed topics and 1,200 illustrations. It is searchable by topic, species, speciality, disease, or keyword. The manual is also available as a book or CD-ROM for those lacking internet access or preferring these mediums.

http://www.merckvetmanual.com

Calendar of Events

August 15
Deadline to sign-up for ewe lamb retention payments. Contact: local FSA offices

August 22-September 1
Maryland State Fair
State Fairgrounds, Timonium, Maryland
For information about the 4-H/FFA Meat Goat Show contact: Susan Schoenian at (301) 432-2767 ext 343 or sschoen@umd.edu.

August 23
Virginia Performance Tested Ram Lamb Sale
Steele's Tavern, VA. Contact: Scott Greiner at (540) 231-9159 or sgreiner@vt.edu.

September 1-November 5 (see article)
Small Farm (part II) and Sheep & Goat Short Course
Frederick County Extension office
Contact Terry Poole at tepoole@umd.edu.

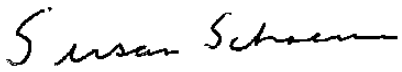
September 27-28
ABGA Sanctioned Boer Goat Show (27) and ESMGPA Open Meat Goat Show (28). New York State Fairgrounds, Syracuse, NY. Contact: Kay Kotwica at (315) 363-7545 or kotland@dreamscape.com.

October 15-19
Katahdin Hair Sheep International Annual Meeting
Pineland Farm, Maine
Info: http://academic.bowdoin.edu/bio/sheep/

November 8
MPWV Meat Goat Producers Association Quarterly meeting, Garrett College, McHenry, MD.
Contact: Willie Lantz

November 29-30 (see article)
MDGA Buck Collection Day and AI Clinic
Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship
Contact Vicki Pardee at vicki@rosethymefarm.com.

The *Maryland Sheep & Goat Producer* is published bi-monthly by University of Maryland Cooperative Extension. It is written and edited by Susan Schoenian, Area Agent for Sheep and Goats at the Western Maryland Research & Education Center. Dr. Niki Whitley (UMES/(410) 651-6194, nwhitley@mail.umes.edu) and Willie Lantz (Garrett College/(301) 387-3331, wlantz@garrettcollege.edu) are regular contributors to the newsletter. To subscribe, contact Susan at the Western Maryland Research & Education Center, 18330 Keedysville Road, Keedysville, MD 21756, (301) 432-2767 x343, fax (301) 432-4089; e-mail: sschoen@umd.edu. In lieu of receiving a hard copy of the newsletter in the mail, you can be added to the e-mail list to receive e-mail notification when the latest newsletter has been posted to the web at http://www.sheepandgoat.com/news/. Comments and suggestions regarding the newsletter are always welcome and appreciated.



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