



Maryland Sheep & Goat Producer



Vol. 4 Issue 2 - April 2005

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY BY UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
Western Maryland Research & Education Center, Keedysville, Maryland

Inside this issue

Ultrasound Scanning	1-2
U.S. Sheep and Goat Inventory	2
Lamb Check-off Passes	2
Maryland Wool Pool	2-3
Marketing Information	3-4
Scrapie in Goats	4-5
Focus on Research	5-7
UMES Update	5-6
Effect of Dam Breed	6
Maternal Behavior	6-7
Northeast SARE Grants	7
On-farm Euthanasia	7-8
ASI Annual Meeting	9
Featured Web Sites	9
Calendar of Events	10

Have Your Goats/Lambs Scanned for Fat and Muscle on July 6

On July 6, sheep and goat producers may bring up to five lambs and/or meat goat kids to have them scanned (using realtime ultrasound) for back fat and rib eye area. The event will take place between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. at either the Western Maryland Research & Education Center (Keedysville) or the Washington County Ag Expo/fairgrounds (Boonsboro). These are adjacent facilities.

It is recommended that lambs/kids be near market weight. A scale will be available for weighing. Willard Lemaster, 4-H Animal

Science Specialist for Maryland Cooperative Extension, will do the scanning. There may be a small fee charged for each animal. Pre-registration will be required to make sure we have enough animals to hold the event and not too many to scan in four hours. In addition to scanning, blood samples can be collected from animals to use for scrapie genotyping or other disease screening (e.g. CAE or OPP). The activity will include a cook-out. Tours of the research farm will also be conducted. Final details and registration information will be contained in the June newsletter.



Scanning at last year's Festival

Ultrasound Contest at Festival

There will be a Lamb Carcass and Performance Contest at the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival on May 7 at 3 p.m. Carcass data will

Educating People to Help Themselves

Local Governments • U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating

be collected via realtime ultrasound. The contest is open to any breed or sex of lamb. Lambs must weigh at least 80 lbs. and be less than one year of age (i.e. still have all their milk teeth). They should be slick shorn within five days of scanning.

Lambs will be awarded blue, red, and white premiums based on their carcass scores and performance data. The registration deadline for the contest is April 20. The entry fee is \$10 per lamb. Exhibitors will be limited to two entries. Contact Susan or Niki for more information.

Sheep Numbers Increase Slightly; Goats Surveyed for the 1st Time

Sheep numbers increased for the first time since 1990, as the number of replacement ewe lambs increased by 10 percent. The National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS) conducted an annual goat survey for the first time.

All sheep and lamb inventory in the United States on January 1, 2005 totaled 6.14 million head, up slightly from 2004, but 3 percent below two years ago. The inventory has leveled off and is showing a slight increase for the first time since 1990. Breeding sheep inventory increased to 4.53 million head on January 1, 2005, up 1 percent from 4.50 million head on January 1, 2004.

The 2004 lamb crop of 4.10 million head, a record low, was down 1 percent from 2003. The 2004 lambing rate was 113 lambs per 100 ewes one year old and older on January 1, 2004, up 3 percent from 2003.

The average price paid for wool sold in 2004 was \$0.80 per lb., up from \$0.73 per lb. in 2003. The value of U.S. wool sold in 2004 increased 6 percent. The average fleece weight was 7.4 lbs.

The goat inventory in the United States on January 1, 2005 totaled 2.5 million head. Breeding goat inventory totaled 2.1 million head. On January 1, 2005, meat and all other goats totaled 1.97 million head, milk goats totaled 283,500 head, and Angora Goats totaled 274,000 head. The 2004 kid crop was 1.67 million head for all goats. Mohair price was \$1.97 per pound. Average weight per clip was 7.2 lbs.

Source: USDA NASS. January 28, 2005.

Lamb Check-off Passes

Washington DC, April 1, 2005 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced the continuation of the Lamb Promotion, Research, and Information Order. Lamb producers, feeders, seedstock producers, and first handlers of lamb and lamb products participating in a national referendum from Jan. 31 through Feb. 28 voted in favor of the order.

Of the 3,490 valid ballots cast, 2,807 or 80 percent, favored the program; while 683 or 20 percent opposed. Additionally, of those persons who cast valid ballots in the referendum, those who favored the continuing of the program accounted for 84 percent of the total production voted, and those opposed accounted for 16 percent of the total production voted. For the program to continue, it must have been approved by at least a majority of those persons voting for approval who were engaged in the production, feeding, or slaughter of lambs during calendar year 2004 and who also represent a majority of the volume of lambs produced, fed or slaughtered.

The goal of the program is to strengthen the position of, and to develop and expand the markets for sheep and sheep products. Under the program, producers, seedstock producers (breeders), feeders, and exporters are required to pay an assessment of one-half cent (\$.005) per pound when live sheep are sold. The first handler, primarily packers, will pay an additional 30 cents per head on sheep animals purchased for slaughter. Importers are not assessed.

Maryland-Delaware Wool Pool

The 2005 Maryland-Delaware Wool Pool will be held on June 22 and 23 at the Maryland State Fairgrounds in Timonium. Wool will be received on Wednesday, June 22, from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. The second day of the wool pool will be for packaging the wool only. Volunteer labor is needed to help run the pool and keep the operating costs low.

The only change for this year's pool is that all wool in the "white-faced" or "non white-faced" grades must be at least 3 inches long. Wool shorter than 3 inches will be graded "short." Previously, non-white-faced wool only had to be 2.5 inches long.

Wool should be brought to the pool in large square bales and not burlap "sausage" bags. Smaller consigners can put their wool in plastic garbage bags or carry it loose in their vehicles. Wool should not be tied. Wet wool and black or colored wool will be rejected. The wool pool does not accept "fleeces" from hair sheep or hair x wool crosses. Hair damages the entire clip.

Maryland Sheep Breeders Association dues will be deducted from all wool sales over \$30. There will be no exceptions. For more information about the pool or to volunteer to help, contact Wool Pool manager Dr. Rich Barczewski at (302) 857-6410 or rbarczew@desu.edu.

LDP Wool Reminder

Now that the shearing season is upon us, the American Sheep Industry Association would like to remind producers to go to their local Farm Service Agency office to apply for their wool loan deficiency payments (LDP).

All growers interested in applying for either a loan or a LDP must complete the application prior to losing beneficial interest or selling the wool. Producers who sell their wool the day of shearing should complete a 709 Form prior to shearing to protect their eligibility.

Source: ASI News, Feb. 18, 2005.

Farmers Urged to Comply with Nutrient Management Laws

According to the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), approximately 48 percent of Maryland farmland is being managed in accordance with the Water Quality Improvement Act of 1998, which requires all farmers grossing \$2,500 a year or more or livestock producers with 8,000 pounds or more of live animal weight to run their opera-

tions using a nutrient management plan that addresses both nitrogen and phosphorus inputs. Farmers are required to update their nutrient management plans and take new soil samples a minimum of once every three years.

In mid-April, MDA will begin delivering certified warning letters to those who have not met requirements. Failure to respond to the warning will result in fines. Farm operators who had submitted their nutrient management plan information to MDA before 2005 should have received an Annual Implementation Report and instruction sheet in the mail.

Maryland producers should contact a nutrient management advisor at their local county Extension office for more information about nutrient management planning and compliance with the law.

Source: MDA, 3/21/05.

Marketing Information

Two for a Boy; One for a Girl

By now, most sheep and goat producers are familiar with the two major Muslim holidays in which lamb and/or goat are commonly consumed: Eid al-Fitr (end of Ramadan) and Eid al-Adha (Festival of Sacrifice). But, in addition to these holidays, it is also customary for Muslims to sacrifice sheep and/or goats to celebrate the birth of a baby.

Seven days after a baby is born, a special ceremony called "aqeeqah" is performed as a thanksgiving to Allah (God) and to safeguard the child from anything detrimental or painful. If aqeeqah is not performed, it is believed that the child will grow up to be disobedient to his/her parents. The aqeeqah ceremony includes naming the baby, shaving the baby's head, and sacrificial offerings of lambs or goats.

The baby is named by the mother or father. If there is disagreement, the father has the right to name the baby or give his wife the right. The baby's head is shaved, and it is customary to give the value of the baby's weight of hair in silver



to charity. Shaving the head cleanses the baby of all impurities. A sacrifice is then made; two offerings for a boy and one for a girl.

The sheep or goats should be of good quality, over 1 year of age, but if not, healthy enough to be one year old. The animals should not be weak or deficient in any way. The animals can be male or female. While sheep and goats are preferred, a calf or camel may also be sacrificed. The sacrifice should be done by the father or a close relative. The meat should be divided into three sections, with one third going to charity and the remaining two thirds being distributed among friends and relatives. It is optional as to whether the meat is distributed raw or cooked.

Source: When a Child is Born
(www.inter-islam.org)

Ranchers' Lamb of Texas Closes

Ranchers' Lamb of Texas, Inc., in San Angelo, Texas, closed its doors in late February. Brian May, board secretary of the producer-owned packing plant, indicated the plant shutdown was a result of a diminished supply of slaughter lambs.

The 7-year-old plant dismissed all 45 employees. Employees at the plant were slaughtering about 2,500 lambs a week compared to as many as 8,000 head six years ago. The inadequate supply of animals left the plant unprofitable.

Source: *ASI Weekly*, February 25, 2005.

Editor's Note: Ranchers' Lamb was the first rancher-owned plant of its kind. It was started in 1997 by a group of 300 West Texas investors, including ranchers. The plant also processed goats. I had the opportunity to tour Ranchers' Lamb on several occasions. It was an impressive plant, very modern, with an automatic pelt remover (from New Zealand) and separate chutes and rooms for by-products to be further processed for market. Hopefully, some entity will buy this plant and put it back into production processing lambs and goats.

Scrapie in Goats

The incidence of scrapie in goats in the U.S. is considered to be low. Only thirteen cases of scrapie have been reported in goats since 1990. One new case was reported in 2004. However, the incidence could be higher than we think, simply because we are not looking for it. For example, a sheep slaughter surveillance study conducted from February 2001 to March 2002 revealed a higher incidence of scrapie in the U.S. sheep population than previously thought: 0.20 percent vs. 0.07 percent.

Experts claim that it will be harder to determine the incidence of scrapie in the U.S. goat population since a significant portion of goats are not slaughtered in USDA-inspected plants. According to Dr. Diane Sutton (National Scrapie Program Coordinator, USDA-APHIS) surveillance of goat scrapie will begin in 2006.

The recent discovery of a French goat with BSE¹ (mad cow disease) is putting more emphasis on goats in the BSE/scrapie discussion. The goat, which was slaughtered in 2002, was originally thought to have had scrapie. It was a healthy goat discovered during normal disease surveillance. Another goat that died in 1990 in Scotland may also have had BSE, but this has not been confirmed. It takes several years to confirm BSE.

Beginning in April 2002, the European Union increased its level of testing to determine the prevalence of scrapie in the EU. Since then, over 140,000 goats have been tested using the TSE-rapid test. The results have revealed a very low incidence of TSE in the goat population. Only 134 animals have tested positive for a TSE². In the United Kingdom, where the incidence of sheep scrapie is highest, only two cases of scrapie have been confirmed in goats since 1997. In France, which has a much larger goat population, only 19 positives were recorded among 21,000 goats tested in 2003.

BSE has never been found in a sheep under natural conditions in any country, though it was suspected in sheep in Vermont in 2000 (but never confirmed). In goats, scrapie is similar to sheep, though goats scratch less against fixed objects. They tend to scratch vigorously with their horns or feet.

In sheep genetic testing is being used as a means of scrapie eradication. While scrapie is not a genetic disease, a animal's genotype determines if it will get scrapie if it is exposed to the infective agent. In goats, not much research has been done pertaining to genetic resistance, and currently there is no clear evidence to suggest that there are resistant genotypes in goats. USDA-ARS³ maintains a flock of infected goats and is currently studying the relationship between goat genotype and scrapie incidence. So far, goats get scrapie at a higher rate than sheep in general and a similar rate as Suffolk sheep in the same flock. Goats inoculated with scrapie get scrapie 75-100 percent of the time, so they appear to be quite susceptible (e-mail, Dr. Diane Sutton)

¹Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy

²Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy. TSE's are a family of diseases in man and animals that are characterized by a degeneration of the brain tissue giving a sponge-like appearance. They are always fatal.

³Agricultural Research Service

Focus on Research

Update from UMES

by Dr. Niki Whitley
University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES)

Lambing season is mostly over for UMES. The sires used again this year were Suffolk, White Dorper, Texel, or Katahdin in single-sire groups, though they are different sires this year. We left the rams in with the adult ewes for 21 days so we lambled for exactly 21 days. I like that. I did not like, however, the few problems we had during lambing. At the time, it seemed like we were having a lot of problems, but it was mostly just that they all seemed to occur at the same time.

Last year, we had to pull a few and graft a few but that was all; it was relatively peaceful, especially considering we lambled over 100 ewes. The year before that was wrought with C-sections, uterine prolapses, and abortions, and that was with only 56 ewes bred. This year was not as smooth as last year, but nothing like the year before. We lambled 75

ewes (9 ewe lambs bred later are due in April). We had a couple of C-sections this year, 2 or 3 ketosis cases that are doing fine now, some lambs we pulled and, because I was too busy to deal with grafting when we would still end up with a few bottle babies to feed anyway. We now have 10 or so bottle babies.

A few of our bottle babies are triplets that a ewe tried to steal and the "real" dam wouldn't take it back after the thief ewe had her own triplets. Instead of letting the thieves raise quads, we made them bottle babies. I gave up trying to give back a black Suffolk-cross twin stolen by a ewe who then had her own solid white Dorper-cross twins. That thief ewe wanted that lamb so badly that I didn't have the heart to take it from her when she had plenty of milk for the three. So we have a ewe raising a nearly solid black lamb with her 2 white lambs (she loves them all the same though, unlike a ewe that had 2 brown babies and refused to take her own white baby). A couple of the bottle babies were lambs I took from ketosis ewes who recovered enough to raise one but not three, and a couple were ones that I felt the dam did not have enough milk to raise.

We had a set of quads this year and only 3 singles. The rest were twins and triplets. The total was 176 total born with 7 still-births/deaths just after birth so we had 169 live born. The average was 2.25 born live per ewe lambing. We lost 1 ewe in mid-gestation, so we have to count her as not lambing, so we had 2.22 born live per ewe exposed. The average birth weight was 9.6 pounds per lamb. The average age of the ewes is 3 years and the average parity (counting this one) is 3.

Well, that's the update on lambing at UMES. I hope your lambing season is going (or has gone) smoothly.

Kidding Season

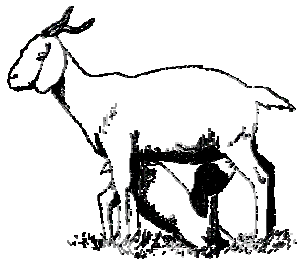
All the does left at UMES are purebred or fullblood Boer, except one super-producing Myotonic (Fainting Goat). This year, we kidded the first part of January so that we could have the goats finished before we began lambing. We had 18 adult does exposed 22 days in August. Half the does were exposed to a fullblood Boer buck loaded with "Eggs" genetics in his sire's pedigree while the other half

were exposed to a fullblood Boer buck that had Pipeline in his grandsire's genetics.

Beginning November 1, 2004, the same time we put the ram in with the ewe lambs, we put the doe kids in with the adult does and exposed them all to the "Pipeline" buck. This allowed "clean up" (breeding) of any does not bred the first time and breeding of the doe kids when they were 8-9 months old. We did the same thing with our ewe lambs/ewes, but all ewes had been bred in the first 21-day breeding period, while 2 does did not get bred in the 22-day period when we first exposed them.

One adult doe acted cystic (she was "always" in heat), and we did not treat her, so she did not get bred during either time period. One adult doe was missed the first time but got bred during "clean up" (she is due any time now), and one adult doe died of listeriosis before kidding (the lab said she had triplets in her). So out of 17 does, 15 kidded in January. One died shortly after we pulled a kid from her (we always had problems with her during kidding and should have culled her 2 years ago).

We had singles from 2 first timers, a 9-year old doe, and one other doe. There were 28 live kids and the one stillborn we pulled. That's only 1.6 live kids per doe exposed (18 exposed), but 1.9 live kids per doe kidding in January.



We are collaborating with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture on their meat goat marketing project aimed at youth, so all the males were castrated within a week of birth (what a shame, they are gorgeous). All the kids will be sent to New Jersey except a few that will be kept for showing at the Somerset County Fair Open Livestock Show July 23 (come out and see them).

The progeny (offspring) of both bucks all look great and are very similar. They have been raised indoors because foot scald prohibits us from leaving the does out on muddy pastures. The kids were creep fed beginning at a couple of weeks of age with Southern States 15% Meat Goat pellet with Deccox. We have not weaned them yet, so we do not have

weights on them. On March 18, we weighed 4 of the "biggest," and they ranged from 40-46 pounds.

Influence of Maternal Breed on Meat Goat Carcass Traits

At Tennessee State University, Spanish x Boer (n=16) and Spanish x Kiko (n=18) wethers (7 months of age) and bucklings (5 months of age) were slaughtered to evaluate the effect of dam breed on carcass traits of crossbred kids. Boer and Kiko dams originated from five and seven seedstock farms, respectively. Each dam was purebred or fullblood (93.75% to 100%). They were bred to Spanish billies.

Kiko kids were heavier than Boer kids: 56.3 lbs. vs. 50.5 lbs. Hot carcass weight, cold carcass weight, and dressing percentage tended to be greater for Kiko than for Boer F1 kids. Kids out of Boer dams had similar live conformation scores as Kiko kids. Carcass grade scores tended to be better for Kiko F1 kids. Edible meat yields and meat-to-bone ratios from shoulder, loin, and hind leg were not affected by breed of dam.

The results suggest that breed of dam may affect carcass traits from crossbred kids.

Source: *Journal of Animal Science*. Volume 82, Supplement 1.

Ingestion of Afterbirth May Promote Maternal Behavior

A behavior neuro-scientist at the University of Buffalo (UB) contends the ingestion of afterbirth by a mother, a feature of pregnancy in nearly all non-human animals, not only relieves postpartum pain, but optimizes the onset of maternal behavior by mediating the activity of specific opioid activity circuits in the brain.

In 1986, Mark Kristal, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology at UB, discovered an opioid-enhancing molecule he called the Placental Opioid-Enhancing Factor of POEF. POEF is found in amniotic fluid and afterbirth. Dr. Kristal believes that POEF operates on two specific brain centers to influence maternal behavior. Increased opioid activity in the ven-

tral tegmental area facilitates the onset of maternal behavior, whereas increased opioid activity in the medial pre-optic area, disrupts maternal behavior. Dr. Kristal's hypothesis is that ingestion of the afterbirth modifies specific opioid-receptor systems in these two brain systems, but in different ways. His test subjects are mice.

Dr. Kristal's research could lead to novel ways to treat addiction and pain in humans. It is not known what affect POEF would have on human mothers, since humans do not ingest the afterbirth.

Source: University of Buffalo News Services.
February 11, 2005.

Northeast SARE Grants Awarded to Sheep Producers

John Hall, of Chestertown, MD, received a Northeast SARE grant to use ultrasound scanning and performance testing technology to increase loin eye area in lamb. A New York producer received a grant to develop management strategies for improving aseasonal reproduction of sheep.

The Northeast SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education) Program has a competitive grants program for farmers-growers. Grants are typically between \$1,000 and \$15,000 and are used to conduct research, marketing, and demonstration projects and share the results with other farmers.

For information about SARE and farmer-grower grants, visit www.uvm.edu/~nesare/.

On-Farm Euthanasia of Sheep and Goats

By Gerrit Rietveld
Animal Care Specialist
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food

The decision to humanely end the life of an animal may be necessary in cases of severe injury or disease or as a result of disasters such as fire or flood. On-farm euthanasia may be the most practical and humane way for a livestock producer to relieve an animal's pain and suffering if it is unfit to

travel or to prevent drug residues from entering the food supply.

Whenever possible, livestock producers should consult with a veterinarian before deciding to euthanize an animal. A broken leg with exposed bone or exposed internal organs are examples of severe conditions that might call for euthanasia. The following questions will help in deciding whether to treat, slaughter, or euthanize an animal that is injured, extremely weak, or disabled.

- Is the animal in pain or distress? If yes, consider treatment.
- Is the animal likely to recover? If yes, consider treatment.
- Does the animal have the ability to access feed and water? If yes, consider treatment.
- Have medications been administered? If yes, check withdrawal period.
- Have drug withdrawals been cleared? If yes, consider slaughter.
- Can the animal be humanely transported? If yes, consider slaughter; you will need a veterinary certificate to transport the animal.
- Does the animal show any clinical signs that you don't recognize or that you recognize as a reportable disease? If yes, you must contact your veterinarian.

Methods of Euthanasia

Euthanasia must be performed in a way that minimizes fear and anxiety in the animal. Good stockmanship practice dictates that producer have an ethical and moral responsibility to provide a humane death for animals in their care, without causing additional pain or suffering.

There are three basic methods appropriate for on-farm euthanasia: overdose by barbiturate; stunning with a penetrating captive bolt, followed by bleed-out; and gunshot. Each method has advantages and disadvantages. Euthanasia by barbiturate overdose must be performed by a veterinarian. Producers who choose the captive bolt pistol or gunshot method must take precautions to prevent serious injury to themselves and others.

To choose the most appropriate method for your operation, consider human safety, animal welfare, required skills, costs, and other factors.

Penetrating Captive Bolt and Gunshot

An experienced person can produce rapid unconsciousness in an animal using a penetrating-type captive bolt or shot from a firearm which is aimed at the correct target site and penetration angle for the species and age of the animal. The same anatomical targets and penetration angles are used for both a penetrating captive bolt pistol and a firearm.

Penetrating Captive Bolt

1. Ensure the animal is well restrained.
2. Use the appropriate cartridge strength for the animal (refer to the manufacturer's manual).
3. Place the captive bolt pistol firmly against the animal's head on the target site, and shoot.
4. Be careful to avoid injury from thrashing limbs when the animal collapses.
5. Cut both the carotid arteries and jugular veins in the neck with a sharp knife to bleed-out the animal after stunning. These arteries and veins are on both sides of the throat.

Gunshot

- Ensure the animal is well restrained.
- Plan to shoot outdoors when possible.
- Have a backstop (e.g. an earth berm, manure pile, or something that will stop the bullet if you miss or it over-penetrates) behind the area you are aiming at.
- Use a firearm and ammunition that are appropriate for the size, age, and type of animal. The ammunition to euthanize an animal must be powerful enough to make the animal immediately unconscious and to penetrate the head deeply enough to destroy the areas of the brain that control breathing and circulation.
- A .22 caliber firearm, using a "long-rifle" hollow-nosed ammunition, or a .38 caliber firearm can be used to successfully euthanize sheep and goats.
- Hold the firearm 5-25 cm (2-10 in.) from the target site. To avoid personal injury, do NOT place the firearm muzzle against the animal's skull. Aim the shot down the line of the spine so that the bullet will enter the brain stem (the beginning of the spinal cord) and shoot.
- Be careful to avoid injury by thrashing limbs when the animal collapses.

Target Site and Penetration Angle

The target site for euthanizing sheep and goats without horns is at a point on the forehead at the mid-line, just above the eyes. The shot must be directed at an angle down the

line of the spine and into the bulk of the body (or where the body would be if the animal were standing normally).

Heavily horned sheep and goats should be shot behind the poll, directing the shot in a path downward just behind the eyes and toward the nose.

Confirmation of Death

It is essential that you confirm the animal's death directly following euthanasia. A standing animal should immediately collapse. Its muscles may involuntarily contract, usually for no longer than 20 seconds. After this, it may show some poorly coordinated kicking or paddling movements before muscles completely relax.

Check the animal for breathing, heartbeat, and blinking response (corneal reflex). There should be none. The eyes should be fixed and dilated. To check the blinking response, touch the surface of the animal's eye (the cornea). Any eye movement or blinking shows sustained or recovering brain activity. If there is any sign of breathing, heartbeat, or blinking, repeat the euthanasia method or use an alternate procedure.

Disposal of Mortalities

The proper disposal of livestock mortalities is critical in preventing environmental contamination and the spread of disease.

Reprinted with permission of author.

Max Q® Tall Fescue Lawsuit

Pennington Seed (Georgia) and Ag-Research Limited (New Zealand) were victorious in a lawsuit protecting their patent rights to MaxQ® technology. MaxQ® is a tall fescue with a non-toxic endophyte. MaxQ® eliminates fescue toxicosis, which causes health problems in horses, cattle, and other grazing livestock.

Due to the outcome of the lawsuit, the defendants will no longer be able to market ArkPlus™ tall fescue, another tall fescue that contains the novel endophyte. Pennington Seed will once again be the sole source of friendly or novel, endophyte-infected varieties of tall fescue. Seed prices will likely remain high as a result.

ASI Annual Meeting

The American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) and National Lamb Feeders Association held a joint annual meeting on January 26-29 in Reno, Nevada. There was great enthusiasm for the sheep industry at the meeting, which was attended by more than 360 persons.

Maryland sheep producer David Greene concluded his term as ASI Director for Region I (Southeast, which includes Maryland, Delaware, and south). He was replaced by Bill Sparrow, Jr. from Durham, North Carolina. Region II (Northeast, Pennsylvania, and north) is represented by Brant Miller from Bowdoinham, Maine.

The ASI Board of Directors approved increases in ASI dues for FY 2006-2007. Stock sheep will be assessed \$0.035 (up from \$0.03). Member dues will increase from \$6 to \$8 per member. The minimum state dues will be \$400. The result of the dues increases will be a 22-percent increase in funding for ASI.

ASI is a national trade organization supported by 42 state sheep associations, benefiting the interests of nearly 67,000 producers. Delaware was reinstated as a member of ASI after a several year's absence. Members of the Maryland Sheep Breeders Association are automatic members of ASI. Other states, such as Virginia and West Virginia, offer combined state/ASI memberships.

Source: *ASI Weekly News*

Open Sheep and Goat Show at Somerset County Fair

The Somerset County Fair (MD) has added a one-day open show for livestock on Saturday, July 23. There will be classes for hair and wool sheep, dairy and meat goats, dairy and beef cattle, and pigs. Premiums are \$15, \$10, \$5, and \$2 for 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th places, respectively. Entry fees are \$5 per animal, double for animals registered the day of the show. For more information, contact Dr. Niki Whitley at (410) 651-6194 or nwhitley@umes.edu.

The Somerset County Fair will be held July 18-24 at the Somerset County Fair-

grounds in Princess Anne, MD. A class listing and registration form will be available on the web at <http://www.usda.gov/nais>

Featured Web Sites

USDA Launches ID Web Site

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) launched a new web site to inform producers about the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). The Web site is available at www.usda.gov/nais on the World Wide Web.

It is the intent of the site to be a one-stop resource for facts about NAIS. In addition to providing national news, contact information for state and tribal animal health authorities can be accessed. Over time, APHIS plans to add to the new site resources targeted to specific species and industry-segment groups. It is the goal of the NAIS to provide a 48-hour trace-back system for all animals and premises that have had contact with a foreign or domestic animal disease of concern.

<http://www.usda.gov/nais>

Source: ASI News, 2.11.05.

List Your Farm/Flock on the Internet for FREE

[National Sheep and Goat Producers Database](http://www.sheepgoatmarketing.info)
(The Maryland Sheep & Goat Directory is being incorporated into the National Directory.
www.sheepgoatmarketing.info
Click on Producer Directory

[Mid-Atlantic Small Farm Success](http://www.smallfarmsuccess.info)
www.smallfarmsuccess.info
Click on Farmer Web Sites graphic

[Maryland Agriculture](http://www.marylandagriculture.com/site_form.cfm)
www.marylandagriculture.com/site_form.cfm

[U.S. Sheep Breeders Online Directory](http://www.nebraskasheep.com/directory/)
www.nebraskasheep.com/directory/

[Boer Goat Breeders](http://www.jackmauldin.com/Breeders.htm)
www.jackmauldin.com/Breeders.htm

Calendar of Events

May 7-8

Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival
Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship,
MD. Info: (410) 531-3647 or sheepandwool.org.

June 3-5

Meat Goat Judging School and USBGA Eastern
Region National Boer Goat Show (June 4)
Garrett County Fairgrounds, McHenry, MD.
Info: Willie Lantz at (301) 334-6960 or
wlantz@umd.edu. Web site: www.meatgoat.biz.

June 22-23

Hair Sheep Workshop
Virginia State University, Petersburg, VA.
Info: Stephan Wildeus at (804) 524-6716 or
swildeus@vsu.edu

June 22-23

Maryland Wool Pool
Maryland State Fairgrounds, Timonium, MD.
Info: Rich Barczewski at (302) 857-6410 or
rbarczew@desu.edu.

July 6

Ultrasound Scanning Day in Western Maryland
Info: Susan at (301) 432-2767 x343 or
sschoen@umd.edu.



The *Maryland Sheep & Goat Producer* is published bi-monthly by the 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. Contributors include Dr. Niki Whitley from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, tel. (410) 651-6194, e-mail: nwhitley@umes.edu; and Willie Lantz, Garrett County Extension Agent, tel. (301) 334-6960, e-mail: wlantz@umd.edu). To receive the newsletter, the Western Maryland Research & Education Center, 18330 Keedysville Road, Keedysville, MD 21756, tel. (301) 432-2767 ext. 343 or 315, fax (301) 432-4089; e-mail: sschoen@umd.edu or smorren@umd.edu.. The cost of receiving the newsletter by mail is \$10 per year, payable to the University of Maryland or free if accessed over the Internet. Internet users can be added to a list to receive an e-mail message 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.

Susan Schoenian
Area Agent, Sheep and Goats
W. MD Research & Educ. Center