

Wild & Woolly

Maryland's Sheep & Goat Producer Newsletter



Volume XV
Issue II
Spring 2016



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New Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) How does it affect you?

Starting in December 2016, veterinary prescriptions (Rx) will be required for antibiotics (which are important to human medicine) which are included in the feed or added to the drinking water of livestock. In order to get a prescription, a valid Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR) must exist. In other words, the veterinarian must visit and be familiar with the farm. Records will need to be maintained for two years.

The only antibiotic that is currently FDA-approved for inclusion in sheep feeds is aureomycin (chlorotetracycline). It is approved to feed to ewes to prevent abortions caused by vibrio or chlamydia. According to knowledgeable sheep veterinarians, the current labeled dosage is insufficient to prevent abortions. As a result, a higher dose is usually fed. However, the new regulations will not allow the extra-label use of any of the affected drugs. Extra-label includes using a drug at a dosage that is different from the label. Unless the label is changed, aureomycin will need to be fed at the current labeled dosage. Aureomycin is not currently labeled for goats, so it cannot be fed to goats (to prevent abortions or for any other reason) once the new regulations take effect.

Aureomycin is also approved to feed to lambs (not goats) to improve growth and feed efficiency. FDA will no longer allow this practice. In order for these products to be fed, the labels will need to be changed from growth promotion to disease prevention. The American Sheep

Industry Association's Producer, Education & Research (PERC) Council recently approved funds for research and education efforts associated with developing new label claims for feeding antimicrobials to sheep.

The new VFD will also change how some antibiotics are marketed. Certain over-the-counter (OTC) drugs administered through drinking water will be transitioned to prescription (Rx) status. Nothing will change how these drugs are regulated, but producers will need to get a veterinary prescription (and have a valid Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship) in order to use them. Sulfa drugs (e.g. Di-Methox™, Sulmet™) are commonly used to treat coccidiosis in sheep and goats. They will be affected by the new VFD. They will no longer be available OTC. A prescription will be required for their continued use.

The new regulations do not apply to ionophores (e.g. Bovatec®, Rumensin®), coccidiostats (e.g. Amprolium®, Deccox®), anthelmintics (e.g. Cydectin®, Ivomec®, Prohibit®), or antibiotics given by injection, bolus, oblet, or drench. If an antibiotic is fed or put in the drinking water, it is affected by the new regulations. If it is injected, it is not (at least not yet).

The new VFD will have a large effect on some producers and little to no effect on others. Veterinarians may vary in their willingness to write prescriptions, as some veterinarians are not familiar with livestock production practices.

**STARTING NEXT
YEAR, SULFA
DRUGS WILL NO
LONGER BE AVAIL-
ABLE OVER-THE-
COUNTER (OTC)**

New Resources - For Sheep and Goat Producers



Sheep Production Handbook

The 8th edition of the Sheep Production Handbook will soon be available. The Sheep Production Handbook is the "gold standard" of resources for sheep producers. It is a must-have for any serious sheep producer. Goat producers might also find it useful. The handbook is often used as a textbook in sheep production courses in college. Its price is \$90. It may be purchased from the American Sheep Industry Association at <http://www.sheepusa.org/shop>. The new edition also includes a flash drive which contains the contents of the book.

Ram Buyer's Guide

The National Sheep Improvement Program (NSIP) has created a Ram Buyer's Guide to help commercial producers select rams. The guide was produced with funds from ASI's Let's Grow Program. The new 14-page guide contains worksheets that walk producers through the steps of evaluating their flock's performance and setting performance goals. The guide explains how EBVs can be used when purchasing rams. EBVs are a much stronger selection tool than raw data or centralized performance testing. Sample worksheets are included for different types of sheep enterprises and breeds. The Ram Buyer's Guide can be printed from the NSIP web site at <http://nsip.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/NSIP-Ram-Buying-Guide-FINAL-12-21-15.pdf>

United States Lamb Resource Center

The United States Lamb Resource Center (LambResourceCenter.com) was introduced at the 2016 American Sheep Industry Association Convention in Phoenix in January. The web site includes a resource database that can be downloaded as an Excel spreadsheet. The US Lamb Resource Center was developed by the American Lamb Board, which is funded by check-off dollars.

New Fact Sheets: Best Practices to Increase Your Lamb Crop

Productivity improvement is one of the four goals of the Sheep Industry Roadmap Project, and increasing reproductive efficiency of US sheep flocks has been identified as a priority of productivity improvement. A set of Productivity Best Management Practices, which focus on increasing the US lamb crop, are currently being developed. Best Practices to Increase Your Lamb Crop is the first fact sheet to be published. It highlights twelve best management practices that will help sheep producers gain efficiency and improve profitability. Because production systems vary, it is suggested that most sheep producers should be able to adopt at least three best management practices. Each of the best management practices will be the focus of a more detailed fact sheet that will be available in 2016 from the US Lamb Resource Center at LambResourceCenter.com

A Guide to Katahdin Hair Sheep

Katahdin Hair Sheep International (KHSI) has published a special edition of its magazine (*The Katahdin Hairfold*). It is "A Guide to Raising Katahdin Hair Sheep." This guide was compiled by Katahdin Hair Sheep International's Publications and Promotions committees. It has 40-plus pages of information on raising sheep, including common health concerns, registering Katahdins, managing, and selecting, along with frequently asked questions. Printed copies are available for individual use or for handing out to buyers. To obtain copies, send \$3 each to KHSI Operations, PO Box 778, Fayetteville, AR 72702. The guide can also be downloaded from the KHSI web site at <http://www.katahdins.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/A-Guide-to-Katahdin-Hair-Sheep-2016.pdf>.

The Shepherd's Guide

The Shepherd Magazine recently published a "The Shepherd's Guide," a supplement to its monthly magazine. The 46-page guide has sections on flock management, breeding, lambing, problems, caring for sheep, wool, and guardian animals. Contact Shepherd Magazine to get a free digital copy or to order single (\$5) or bundled print copies of the guide.

<http://www.theshepherdmagazine.com/theshepherdmagazine@me.com>

A Comparison of Sire Breeds - Terminal Sire Breeds for Katahdin Ewes

Terminal sires have the potential to improve growth rates and carcass merit of Katahdin lambs, but which breed makes the best terminal sire and will the use of terminal sires on Katahdin ewes have a negative effect on the parasite resistance of crossbred lambs?

In the feed lot

Researchers from West Virginia University (WVU) and Virginia Tech looked at the effects of terminal sire breed on gain, carcass characteristics, and parasite resistance of crossbred Katahdin lambs. Katahdin ewes at Virginia Tech were mated with either Katahdin, Texel, and Suffolk rams. Lambs were born in confinement, then transitioned to a feed lot diet at the WVU animal science farm. During the study, the lambs were twice dosed with 10,000 *Haemonchus contortus* larvae. Upon completion of the 90-day study, five lambs from each sire group were selected for carcass analysis.

Upon slaughter, no differences in worm burdens were observed; however, during the parasite challenge phase of the experiment, Katahdin lambs had higher fecal egg counts (757 epg), than either the Suffolk (266 epg) or Texel-sired lambs (462 g). However, it is worth noting that all fecal egg counts were low, as *Haemonchus* is a very prolific egg-layer.

No difference was found in growth rate among the three sire groups; however, Suffolk-sired lambs tended to have a greater ADG than Katahdin lambs, but not Texel lambs. Ultrasound and direct carcass measurements showed no differences among Suffolk and Texel lambs, while Katahdin lambs had smaller rib eyes. Leg circumference scores also favored Suffolk and Texel-sired lambs.

Conclusion

In a feed lot finishing system, the gain and carcass merit of Texels-sired lambs is equivalent to Suffolk-sired lambs. Neither terminal sire impacted the parasite resistance of the crossbred rams. Either breed makes a



(Hair X Wool Lambs)

suitable sire of crossbred Katahdin lambs in a feed lot finishing system.

On Pasture

In another experiment, the performance and parasitism of purebred and crossbred lambs were evaluated from birth through a 90-day grazing season. Katahdin, Suffolk, and Texel rams were randomly mated to Katahdin ewes at Virginia

Tech's Southwest Agricultural Research & Education in Glade Spring, VA. Ewes and lambs were managed on fescue pasture until weaning (70 days), at which time lambs were moved to ungrazed fescue pasture and supplemented with a concentrate pellet at 2% bodyweight for the duration of the 90-day grazing season.

Birthweight was greater for Suffolk-sired lambs compared to Katahdin lambs, but no differences in lambing difficulty were noted. Death loss from birth to weaning was highest for Suffolk lambs. There was no difference between Katahdin and Texel lambs. Adjusted weaning weights were highest for Texel-sired lambs. Suffolk lambs were intermediate. Texel lambs were the heaviest at the end of the 90-day summer grazing period and exhibited greater ADG than the Katahdin lambs. While fecal egg counts varied over time, there were no sire differences for fecal egg count. There was a tendency for a greater percentage of Suffolk-sire lambs to require deworming.

Conclusion

In a pasture-finishing system, Texel sires will increase body weight of Katahdin lambs, while maintaining parasite tolerance. As compared to Suffolk, Texel sires may be a more suitable terminal sire for Katahdin ewes in a production system in which lambs are finished on pasture.

Source: Book of Abstracts, American Society of Animal Science, Southern Section (2016).

Editor's note: The studies described above will be repeated to see if the results are repeatable.

At the University of Maryland Eastern Shore

Several years ago, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) conducted a similar experiment with Suffolk, Texel, and Dorper sires. The purebred and crossbred weaned Katahdin lambs were grazed at the Western Maryland Research & Education Center, with no supplementation. The Suffolk-sire lambs grew fastest, but required the most deworming. The Texel-sired lambs required the least deworming. The Dorper and Katahdin lambs were intermediate in their need for deworming.

Part II: Some Diseases That Affect Sheep

Sheep can be affected by many diseases. This is the second part of an article that gives an overview of some of the most common diseases of sheep.

Ovine progressive pneumonia (OPP)

Ovine progressive pneumonia (OPP) is a viral infection that affects many body systems and causes a variety of symptoms in sheep. It is a common cause of wasting in ewes.

Hard bag is another symptom that is frequently observed. Hard bag is mastitis that affects both sides of the udder, usually resulting in little or no milk being produced from an otherwise healthy-appearing udder. The primary cost of OPP is lost production and premature culling of affected ewes. OPP is transmitted laterally from infected sheep to uninfected sheep. It is also transmitted to offspring via the milk from infected dams.

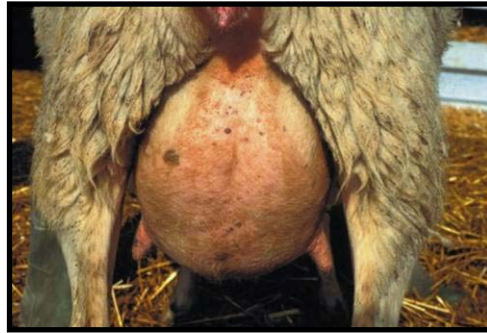
There is no treatment or cure for OPP. It is difficult to control and/or eradicate. Ewes can be blood tested for OPP and positives can be isolated or culled. Another strategy is to remove lambs from infected dams and feed them heat-treated colostrum and milk. Scientists recently discovered genes which code for reduced susceptibility to OPP. Use of rams with desired haplotypes should reduce incidence of OPP in an infected flock and offers an alternative to the more draconian measures of culling and/or rearing lambs artificially.

Pregnancy toxemia

Pregnancy toxemia is the most common metabolic disease of pregnant sheep. It is caused by a deficiency in the intake of energy during late pregnancy, when fetuses are making their most rapid growth. Pregnancy toxemia is most common in ewes carrying multiple births. Ewes that are over-conditioned are also more prone to the disease, as the breakdown of their fat reserves produces toxic ketone bodies. Treatment of pregnancy toxemia depends upon the progression of the disease and varies from the oral administration of glucose (usually propylene glycol) to a caesarian section. Pregnancy toxemia is usually a flock issue, indicative of a wider feeding problem.

Respiratory disease

Respiratory disease (e.g. pneumonia) is usually only second in importance to diseases of the digestive tract. Respiratory disease may have many causes: viral, bacterial, or environmental. Affected animals are usually depressed and go off feed. They may cough and show some respiratory distress. A fever ($>104^{\circ}\text{F}$) is common, but not always observed. Death may appear sudden or the disease may progress over a course of several days.



(Hard bag)

Respiratory disease is usually treated with antibiotics (usually Rx) and anti-inflammatory drugs (Rx). Unfortunately, the sheep industry lacks effective vaccines for respiratory disease. Anything that strengthens the animal's immunity (e.g. adequate intake of colostrum) will improve its resistance to respiratory disease. For housed sheep, proper ventilation is a must.

Scrapie

Scrapie is an always fatal disease that affects the central nervous system of sheep (and goats). It is in the family of diseases called transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs), which also includes bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE, mad cow disease), chronic wasting disease (CWD), and Creutzfeldt Jakob's Disease (CJD).



(Scrapie)

Scrapie develops very slowly, taking years before symptoms appear. Scrapie is not known to occur in animals under 14 months of age.

(Continued on page 10)

Highlighted Events

2016 JUNIOR SHEEP & GOAT SKILLATHON

The 2016 Junior Sheep & Goat Skillathon will be held on Sunday, May 8 in conjunction with the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival. The Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival is always held the first full weekend of May at the Howard County Fairgrounds in West Friendship, Maryland. There is no entrance fee to the festival and parking is free.

Registration for the skillathon starts at 8 a.m. The contest starts at 9 a.m. Awards are given at approximately 1 p.m. A donation is requested to cover the cost of lunch (pizza + sodas). The event is usually over by 2 p.m.

The skillathon is open to youth between the ages of 8 and 18. Individuals and teams (of 3 or 4) from any county or state may participate. Youth compete according to their age as of January 1st of the current year (4-H age). Youth ages 8 to 10 compete as juniors; youth ages 11 to 13 compete as intermediates; and youth 14 to 18 compete as seniors.

The Maryland Sheep Breeders Association provides ribbons and premiums to the top ten individuals in each age division and festival t-shirts to the members of the top three teams in each age division. Additional awards are provided by the University of Maryland Extension Small Ruminant Program.

Pre-registration (especially for teams) is requested by May 1. To register, send names and ages to Susan Schoenian at sschoen@umd.edu or (301) 432-4089 (fax).

ONLINE FAMACHA® TRAINING & CERTIFICATION

As part of a Northeast SARE grant, the University of Rhode Island will be offering online training for FAMACHA® certification.

Online FAMACHA® certification can be obtained through a 4-step process:

1. View 2 hour video on Integrated Parasite Control and 30 minute video, Why and How To Do FAMACHA® Scoring.
Complete an online post-video summary
2. Practice the Cover, Push, Pull, POP! technique.
3. Record and email a video of your FAMACHA® scoring technique.
4. Follow-up by phone and/or email as needed. Live video sessions can be utilized if needed.



Once this certification process is complete, you will be able to purchase a FAMACHA® card. Visit the website for detailed instructions including contacts for more information, <http://web.uri.edu/sheepngoat/famacha/>.

For those producers that are already FAMACHA® certified, the online videos serve as an excellent refresher on integrated parasite management as well as the FAMACHA® system including hands-on demonstration of the proper scoring technique.

Shepherd's Workshop at Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival and Certification

The Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival has an excellent line-up of Shepherd's Workshops this year. Each workshop costs \$20 to attend. Pre-registration is required. To register, go to <http://www.sheepandwool.org/2016-festival/shepherd-workshops/>.

Keeping Parasites at Bay *with Dr. Andrea Loar*
Thursday, May 5, 8:30-10:00 am.

Best Breeding Practices *with Dr. Andrea Loar*
Thursday, May 5, 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon



(Continued on page 8)

Nomination Period for Western Maryland Meat Goat Test

The nomination period for the 2016 Western Maryland Pasture-Based Meat Goat Performance Test is from April 15 until June 1. 2014 and 2015 consignors will receive nomination packets in the mail. Additional packets can be requested by contacting Pam Thomas at (301) 432-2767 x315 or pthomas@umd.edu. All of the documents in the nomination packets can also be downloaded from the blog (right hand column) at <http://mdgoatstest.blogspot.com>. There is a \$20 fee for each goat nominated. The \$20 nomination fee is applied towards the total testing fee of \$120 per goat.



Goat breeders from any state may nominate up to five male goats to the test. At least two is recommended. Half-sibs (same sire) are encouraged. Male goats of any breed or breed cross are eligible. There are no registration requirement. Goats must have been born between January 1 and March 15, 2016. They must weigh between 40 and 70 pounds upon delivery to the test site on June 24. They must have been weaned for at least two weeks prior to the arrival day and have received two vaccinations for *clostridium perfringens* type C & D and tetanus (CDT). The goats will be vaccinated for soremouth upon arrival. Health papers are required for entry into the test. Any goat showing signs of ill thrift or disease will be rejected.

After a 13-day adjustment period, the test will last for 84 days. The goats will be managed as a single group on pasture. They will be rotationally grazed among six ~2 acre paddocks planted in various warm and cool season grasses and legumes. While grazing, they will be supplemented with whole barley. The goats will handled every two weeks to collect data and fecal samples. Towards the end of the testing period, they will be scanned to determine carcass traits. They will also be evaluated for reproductive soundness and structural correctness.



The 10 top-performing bucks will be selected and recognized. Selection criteria will include growth performance (ADG), parasite resistance (fecal egg counts), and parasite resilience (FAMACHA© scores and need for deworming).

The Bluegrass Performance Invitational Premier Buck & Doe Sale (September 2-3, Frankfort, Kentucky) will feature bucks from the test, along with does consigned by consignors from the buck test.

New for 2016: Goat Performance and Carcass Contest

The 2016 goat test will feature a performance and carcass contest. Consignors who consign at least one goat to the test are eligible to enter a goat in the carcass contest. Consignors who consign five bucks to the test and enter a goat in the carcass contest will receive a \$20/head discount for test goats. There is no cost to enter the carcass contest. The requirements for the contest goats are the same as the test goats. The contest goats will be fed in a pen. They will be limit-fed an alfalfa-orchard grass hay and whole barley. At the end of the feeding period, they will be harvested to collect carcass data.



The procedures for the performance and carcass contest can be downloaded from the blog.

The Importance of Calcium and Phosphorus

Sheep and goats require both macro and micro minerals in their diets. Macro minerals are required in larger amounts, whereas micro or trace minerals are required in very small amounts. Two of the most important macro minerals are calcium (Ca) and phosphorus (P).

Calcium is the most abundant mineral in the body. Ninety-nine percent is found in the skeleton. Calcium supports muscles and protects organs and tissues, including bone marrow. It is required for growth and reproduction. Phosphorus is the second most abundant mineral in the body. About 80 percent of it is found in the bones and teeth. The formation of bone is the most important function of phosphorus.

Prolonged calcium deprivation can manifest itself in a variety of ways, depending upon stage of growth. In lambs and kids, a calcium deficiency usually results in rickets, whereas osteomalacia and milk fever are common in ewes and does. Rickets can also be caused by a deficiency of vitamin D. Changes in bone structure that result from phosphorus deprivation are the same as calcium.

Calcium is generally not regarded as a toxic element, because excess calcium is excreted in the feces. According to the National Research Council, the maximum dietary level of calcium is 1.5 percent. The greatest concern for phosphorus may be related to the ratio of calcium to phosphorus. High phosphorus diets predispose sheep and goats, especially males, to urinary calculi (kidney stones). Urinary calculi occurs mostly with high concentrate diets and can be prevented by maintaining a proper ratio of Ca to P in the diet, usually between 1:1 and 2:1. Excess dietary phosphorus also represents the greatest potential for environmental pollution.



(Cereal grains are low in calcium and high in phosphorus)

Forages are generally satisfactory sources of calcium, particularly when they contain leguminous species. Alfalfa contains 3 to 4 times more calcium than grasses and usually contains more than most ruminants need. Cereals are low in calcium. Vegetable protein sources are richer in calcium, but do not contain adequate calcium when blended with cereals. Kelp contains a similar amount of calcium as alfalfa leaf meal (~2.7%).

Cereals are rich in phosphorus, most of which is stored in the seed head. Vegetable protein sources are richer in phosphorus than cereals. The phosphorus content of forages varies and is influenced by the phosphorus content of the soil. Grazing animals generally prefer pasture components that are rich in phosphorus.

Milk and milk replacers, of animal origin, are rich in calcium and well-absorbed by young ruminants. The calcium in soy-based replacers is less absorbed. Milk is an important source of phosphorus for the young. Colostrum is richer in phosphorus than the main milk.



(Legume hays are a good source)

When balancing rations for small ruminants, it is important to make sure the animals' requirements for calcium and phosphorus are being met and that the minerals are being provided in the proper ratios. Rations should be balanced for calcium and phosphorus in the same manner in which they are balanced for protein and energy.

It is seldom necessary to supplement ruminant diets with phosphorus, whereas calcium may be deficient, if poor quality forages and/or high grain diets are being fed. Phosphorus is one of the most expensive nutrients, whereas calcium is one of the least expensive. The most common calcium supplement is ground limestone. It contains 38% calcium.

This article originally appeared in The Delmarva Farmer

More Information On Sheep & Goats Can Be Accessed At:

<http://www.sheepandgoat.com/>

<http://www.acsrpc.org> or wormx.info

<http://mdgoatquest.blogspot.com>

<http://www.sheep101.info/>

<https://www.facebook.com/MDSmall>

<http://issuu.com/mdsheepgoat>

<http://mdsheepgoat.blogspot.com>

<https://twitter.com/MDSheepGoat>

Shepherd's Workshop at Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival and Certification

(continued from page 5)

Differences among sheep breeds for growth, carcass, and meat quality traits *with Dr. Kreg Leymaster*
Thursday, May 5, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

New Approaches to Eradicate Ovine Progressive Pneumonia *with Dr. Kreg Leymaster*
Friday, May 6, 8:30 to 10:00 a.m.

Get greater genetic improvement with cooperative breeding schemes *with Dr. Kreg Lemaster*
Friday, May 6, 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon

What are the production limits for easy-care sheep? *with Dr. Kreg Leymaster*
Friday, May 6, 1:30 to 3 p.m.

All the workshops will be held in the show ring.

About the speakers

Dr. Andrea Loar is a 2014 graduate of Cornell University. She is owner of Windy's Legacy Livestock Reproduction Services, LLC, a practice specializing in food animal and small ruminant reproduction and neonatal care. She also works for the Mountain View Animal Emergency Clinic in Hagerstown, Maryland. She grew up raising market lambs in Howard County.

Dr. Kreg Leymaster joined the USDA, Agricultural Research Service (ARS) at the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (in Clay Center, Nebraska) in 1978 and has led sheep and swine genetic research. Dr. Leymaster's sheep research has emphasized evaluation of dam and sire breeds in terminal crossbreeding systems, estimation of genetic parameters, investigation of mutations affecting muscle development, and genetic resistance to disease.

Working Dog Liability Insurance

The Working Dog Liability Insurance (WDLI) was unveiled at the recent ASI Convention in Phoenix. The insurance is for livestock producers who use guardian and herding dogs to protect their livestock from predators and other risks, and to assist in the management of the flock or herd.

Frequently, producers have no liability protection from incidents related to guardian or herding dogs. Most farm and ranch insurance policies exclude working dogs or dogs which "may show aggressive tendencies." WDLI is managed and serviced by Food and Fiber Risk Managers. They understand the business and know that livestock production is your livelihood. They have your best interest at heart.

Annual premium rates for the first guardian or herding dog can be as low as \$100 depending on each producer's situation. Additional dogs can be as low as \$25 each.

According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, and the National Canine Research Council, more than \$400,000,000 is paid annually in all dog liability claims in the US. Most working dogs owned and used by sheep and livestock producers are excluded from the typical farm and ranch, or home owner's insurance policies. Having WDLI will protect you from liability.

To learn more, go to <http://workingdogliabilityinsurance.com/>.



(A member of the herd)

2016 US Sheep & Goat Inventory

On January 26, 2016, USDA released the Annual Sheep & Goat Inventory Report. The news was mixed. The sheep inventory was up 1 percent, while the goat inventory was down 1 percent. It was the second year in a row that sheep numbers increased by 1 percent.

The sheep and lamb inventory totaled 5.32 million head on January 1, 2016. This is up 1 percent from 2015. The breeding sheep inventory also increased 1 percent, from 3.94 to 3.97 million head. The 2015 lamb crop of 3.44 million head was unchanged from a year ago. The 2015 national lambing rate was 111 lambs per 100 ewes. It was also unchanged from a year ago.

Texas remains the state with the most sheep and lambs. It is followed by California, Colorado, and Wyoming. The states with largest increases in inventory were North Dakota (114%), Kentucky (110%), Other States (110%), Pennsylvania (109%), Tennessee (109%), and West Virginia (109%). The states with the highest lambing percentage were Minnesota (168%), Minnesota (154%), Iowa (145%), and West Virginia (145%).

Shorn wool production was 27.1 million pounds, up 1 percent from 2014. 3.68 million head of sheep were shorn. The average fleece weight was 7.4 lbs., compared to 7.3 lbs. in 2014. Nevada sheep had the heaviest fleeces (9.8 lbs.). The average price of US wool in 2015 was \$1.45 per pound. Nevada producers received the highest price for their wool (\$2.10/lb.). The total value of US wool production was \$39.3 million, up 1 percent from 2014. California produced the most wool of any state.

The goat inventory on January 1, 2016, was 2.62 million head, down 1 percent from a year ago. The breeding goat inventory declined 1 percent to 2.62 million head. The 2015 kid crop was 1.68 million head. It was 2 percent less than 2014.

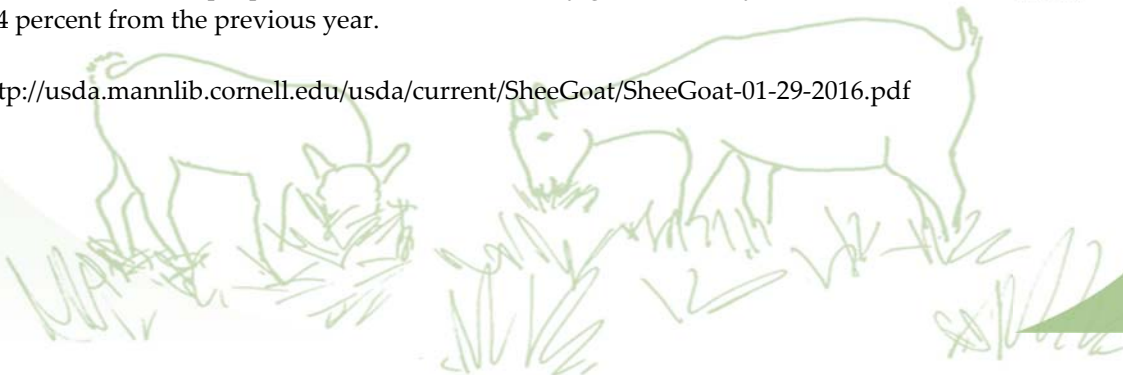
The majority of the US goat herd is meat (and other) goats. Their inventory was 2.10 million head on January 1, 2016. Compared to 2015, the meat goat herd declined by 1 percent. There were 375,000 dairy goats on January 1, a 3 percent increase from 2014. The Angora goat herd declined another 6 percent to 150,000 head. Mohair production in 2015 was 765 pounds. The average price of mohair in 2015 was \$5.35 per pound. The value of US mohair production in 2015 was \$4.05 million.

States with the most dairy goats include Wisconsin, Iowa, California, and "other states." States with the most meat (and other) goats include Texas (by far), "other states," Tennessee, and Oklahoma. Eighty-six percent of Angora goats are raised in four states, with Texas being the largest producer (by far). Texas still has more goats than sheep.

In Maryland

A few years ago, USDA stopped reporting data for Maryland sheep. Maryland is now lumped in with "other states." The sheep and lamb inventory for "other states" was 160,000 head on January 1, 2016. This was an increase of 10 percent, as compared to 2015. USDA also does not report data for Maryland goats. As with sheep, Maryland is lumped in with "other states." The inventory of meat (and other) goats for "other states" was 180,000, up 1 percent from 2015. The dairy goat inventory for "other states" was 33,600 goats, up 4 percent from the previous year.

Source: <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/current/SheeGoat/SheeGoat-01-29-2016.pdf>



Part II : Some Diseases That Affect Sheep *(Continued from page 4)*

The disease is transmitted during lambing via infected placenta. While it is not a genetic disease, a sheep's genotype determines if it will become infected if it is exposed to the infective agent (believed to be a prion). Sheep can be blood-tested to determine if they are carrying susceptible genes.

While the incidence of scrapie in the US is low, the sheep industry is committed to eradicating the disease for reasons of public health and perception. In fact, as a result of mandatory tagging requirements (all sheep must carry official USDA scrapie ID) and other efforts, the US is getting close to eradicating (classical) scrapie. Producers can help find the "last" cases of scrapie by submitting the heads (for necropsy) from sheep over 14 months of age (that die).

Soremouth (orf)

Endemic to the sheep industry, soremouth is the most common skin disease affecting sheep (and goats). It is caused by a virus in the pox family. Soremouth is characterized by lesions (or blisters) on the mouth, lips, noses, and sometimes other areas of the body. Young animals are most susceptible to the disease and its effects. If soremouth occurs during lambing season, lambs may spread lesions to the udders and teats of ewes, possibly resulting in mastitis.

Soremouth is highly contagious to both animals and people. There is no effective treatment, though there is antidotal evidence that it may help to spray the lesions with WD-40. The disease usually runs its course in a matter of a few weeks. Soremouth vaccine can be given to control the timing and location of infection. However, the vaccine should not be used on farms which have never experienced soremouth, as vaccination will introduce the disease to the premises, as it is a live vaccine.



Soremouth

To read full article, go to <http://www.sheepandgoat.com/#/overviewsheepdiseases/c1p19>. For a more complete list of sheep diseases go to <http://www.sheep101.info/201/diseasesa-z.html>.

COME TO THE TWILIGHT TOUR & TASTING

The 2016 Twilight Tour & Tasting will be held Friday, July 8, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Washington County Agricultural Education Center in Boonsboro, Maryland. Similar events were held in 2013 and 2014.

The tasting part of the event will include a sampling of dishes made with lamb and goat (meat) and cheeses made from sheep and goat milk. All the dishes will be prepared by a local chef (Todd Morren). The cheeses will be provided by local small ruminant dairies. Cheese will be available for sampling and purchase. Joe Fiola, the university's viticulturist, will also be on hand to talk about choosing the right wine for different meats and cheeses. There will be demonstration using the fibers produced by sheep and goats.



The tour part of the event will include a wagon tour of the Western Maryland Pasture-Based Meat Goat Performance Test. The test site is located on the adjacent property of the Western Maryland Research & Education Center. 2016 is the 11th year of the test, which aims to identify top-performing meat goat bucks. Attendees will also learn about how goats and sheep can be used to control unwanted vegetation.

The purpose of the event is to showcase everything about sheep and goats. The event will be open to the general public. Pre-registration is required to make sure there is enough meat and cheese for everyone to sample. To register, please contact Pam Thomas at pthomas@umd.edu or (301) 432-2767 x315. The registration deadline is July 1.

Upcoming Events

May 7-8

Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival
Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship,
Maryland
Info: www.sheepandwool.org

May 8

Junior Sheep & Goat Skillathon
Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship,
Maryland
Info: <http://www.sheepandgoat.com/#!skillathon/c21eg>
Register: Susan Schoenian at sschoen@umd.edu or (301) 432-2767 x343

May 24

ASI Let's Grow Webinar: Value of Genetic Traits
(Dr. Ron Lewis)
Info: <http://www.optimalag.com/>

June 3-4

West Virginia Purebred Sheep Breeders Association Show & Sale
Tri-County Fairgrounds, Petersburg, Virginia
Info: <http://www.sheepwv.org/WVPSBA.html>

June 22

Maryland Wool Pool
Maryland State Fairgrounds, Timonium, Maryland
Info: Emily Chamelin-Hickman at aeriedairy@yahoo.com or (443) 244-2702

June 24

Goats delivered to test site
Western Maryland Pasture-Based Meat Goat Performance Test, Keedysville, Maryland
Info: <http://mdgoattest.blogspot.com>

July 8

Twilight Tour & Tasting
Washington County Ag Education Center, Boonsboro, Maryland
Info: Susan Schoenian at sschoen@umd.edu or (301) 432-2767 x343
Register: Pam Thomas at pthomas@umd.edu or (301) 432-2767 x315

July 19

ASI Lets Grow Webinar: Nutrition and Supplementation (Dr. Dan Morrical)
Info: <http://www.optimalag.com/>

August 4-6

Katahdin Hair Sheep International Expo
Tennessee Tech University, Cookeville, Tennessee
Info: www.katahdins.org

August 6 (tentative)

Pennsylvania Performance Tested Ram Lamb & Buck Sale
Pennsylvania Livestock Evaluation Center, PA Furnace, Pennsylvania
Info: <http://www.livestockevaluationcenter.com/Default.aspx>

August 20

West Virginia Performance Tested Ram and Buck Sale
WVU Animal Science Farm, Morgantown, West Virginia
Info: <http://sheepandgoats.wvu.edu/>

August 27

Virginia Performance Tested Ram Lamb & Replacement Ewe Sale
Shenandoah Valley Research & Education Center, Steele's Tavern, Virginia
Info: <http://www.apsc.vt.edu/extension/sheep/va-ram-program/>

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