

Manitoba Sheep Association Strategy

The Strategic Plan, approved by the membership at a special general meeting in April, called for revisions to the MSA constitution and the submission of a petition to the Agricultural Producers Organization Funding Agency (APOFA). The petition is for the MSA to be considered the designated organization representing sheep producers in the Province and thus able to administer a refundable check-off.

At its meeting on Saturday, August 17, the Board of Directors approved a draft constitution that will shortly be circulated to members and will be submitted for approval by the membership at the AGM later this year. (Please note that the

AGM has been rescheduled for December 14, 2002 in Portage la Prairie). At the same meeting a draft petition for submission to APOFA was also approved. The petition calls for the check-off to be added to the National ID tag that will become mandatory in 2003.

The Association plans to hold informational meetings throughout the Province to present and discuss both the new constitution and the check-off proposal during the first two weeks of October. A meeting schedule is given on page 7 and in due course details will be published in the agricultural press. All sheep producers should endeavour to attend one of these meetings to ensure that they are fully informed regarding these proposals. It is hoped that following these regional meetings, the check-off proposal will be submitted to a vote of all registered sheep producers sometime in late October or early November 2002. **

Annual Show & Sale 2002 Report

*Brian Greaves, Chair
Show & Sale Committee*

The MSA Annual Sheep and Wool Show and Sale was held at the Virden Auction Mart on August 9th and 10th, 2002. Sheep entries were down this year, which was expected as all the sales in the West were down in numbers and many sheep were not sold.

There were 16 consignors and a total of 75 animals accepted by the culling committee, not counting the entry from the 4H group from Redvers. Prices were down, but we had only three lots passed. The quality of the sheep was very good, and I wish to thank the consigners for supporting the sale.



Getting Judged — Redvers 4-H. Photo by John Hamerton.

The Grand Champion Ewe was a Suffolk ewe lamb consigned by Ward Mortenson. The Reserve Champion Ewe was a Suffolk ewe consigned by Susan Smith. The Grand Champion Ram was a North Country Cheviot ram consigned by

Kim MacDougall. The Reserve Champion Ram was a Hampshire ram consigned by Kim MacDougall.

Three producers entered wool in this year's competition. The Grand Champion Fleece was produced by Meredith Salama. She also won all three wool classes.

There were a couple of new events at this year's Show & Sale. There was a Lamb BBQ held on the Friday evening and a good time was had by all. Redvers 4H Club showed and auctioned off their market lambs.

Dean and Junko Angell of Heavenly Acres, Bangor, SK donated a Canadian Arcott ram that was raffled off. The winner was Tim Allen.

Thanks to **Heartland Auction Mart, Virden** for the use of their facilities; Jim Wilson, who did an excellent job of auctioneering; Betty Wallace for the judging and **CCWG, Lethbridge** for attending with their stockman's supplies and also for sponsoring the wool show.

Items for the draws were donated by a number of enterprises. We thank them for their participation and support.

I would also like to acknowledge the help of our many volunteers who gave their time on the weekend. Without them the show & sale would not be possible. **

WESTMAN REGIONAL REPORT

The Summer Pasture Tour & Seminar, held on a beautiful hot Saturday in early July, included a pasture tour of Silver Bend Suffolks and a series of speakers during the afternoon. Fourteen producers took part in the day.

The next seminar is scheduled for September 28th. For more information, contact regional directors Jerry at 845.2468 or Beth at 845.2445.

The Westman Region has been busy working with Ag Reps from Brandon and Virden to organize producer groups starting in October. It is hoped that producers will drive the agenda for these meetings once they are established. Both Brandon and Virden meetings begin Oct. 15, 7 pm. The topic for Virden is Flock

Health and for Brandon, Winter Feed Program. Again, contact your regional director, or your Brandon or Virden Ag Rep.

A large number of volunteers from the Region gave their time for the MSA Annual Show & Sale held in Virden. And two Westman members served on the MSA Constitution Committee. **

Manitoba Markets Weekly Commentaries - August 23, 2002 — SHEEP

*Janet Honey, Manager,
Market Analysis and Statistics, MAF*

Statistics Canada reported that the total number of sheep in Manitoba decreased by 6,000 head or 7.1 percent from July 1, 2001 to July 1, 2002. Manitoba now has 6.2 percent of the Canadian flock. The Manitoba flock was at levels of 200,000-300,000 head during the 1930s and World War II, but slumped to 13,600 head in January 1977. The July 1, 2001 flock of 84,000 head was the largest for the time of the year since 1949. The number of ewes in mid 2002, at 37,200 head, was down by 4.9 percent from the year before, when ewe numbers reached the highest level since the late 1940s. The number of market lambs on Manitoba farms on July 1, 2002 was 30,100 head, a decline of 1.3 percent from a year ago. **



Westman Region Summer Pasture Tour & Seminar, July 6th. The fencing demonstration at Beulah. Photo by Charlie Main.

CANADIAN CO-OPERATIVE WOOL GROWERS LIMITED

WOOL MARKET UPDATE SUMMER 2002

Eric Bjergso, General Manager

There is renewed interest building in the wool market amid concerns of tighter global supplies. Sheep numbers worldwide are decreasing and in particular New Zealand and Australia with the latter forecasting wool production will decline another 5% in 2002/03 to its lowest level in 51 years. Lower sheep numbers around the globe means that current wool production is substantially less than 10 years ago and wool stockpiles worldwide have also been eliminated.

Purchasing activity by China continues to be strong but Europe is relatively quiet due to mill shut downs for summer holidays. Spinners are still resisting buying high priced wool and delaying the take up of contracts but lower available supplies of wool are expected to keep wool prices fully firm.

Mills continue to report that business conditions remain difficult but that there are patchy signs of improvement in new orders. Although global mill demand has fallen due to reduced apparel and textile demand, wool stocks in the processing pipeline are low which means that any anticipated pipeline orders will flow through relatively quickly leading to better activity levels and raw wool demand. It is expected that confirmation of improved mill orders in part awaits the outcomes from both the key fabric fairs in the fall and from the crucial Autumn/Winter 2002/03 retail season.

To receive a free copy of our livestock supplies catalogue

Call 1-800-567-3693

At CCWG we have made some very favourable forward sales to wool markets in Europe, United States and China in 2002. At the present time we expect Domestic wool will be 30 - .50 cents per lb and Range wool .80 - \$1.20 per lb.

If we can assist you with market information on your wool clip or help you get your wool to one of our depots please do not hesitate to contact me at 613-257-2714, our Lethbridge branch at 1-800-567-3693 or any of the Manitoba wool depots listed below.

The CCWG wool collection depots in Manitoba.

For information on the wool depot in your area, contact:

Eric Thornhill, Ile des Chenes, 257-7456

Brian Greaves, Miniota, 567-3509

Clayton Robbins, Rivers, 328-7113

Howard Alexander, Stonewall, 467-9399

Herb Benson, McCready, 835-2556

Leitch Livestock Company, Brandon, 727-5021

Russell Weiss, Ridgeville, 373-2291

MSA Breeding Stock Sale September 21, 2002

Thanks to Grunthal Auction Mart and South East Vet Clinic for their participation.

Space still available in sale catalogue for advertising.

Volunteers still needed to help out at the sale.

For more information, contact Eugene Sabot at 422-2288 or Russell Weiss at 373-2291

CSBA Report

*Eugene Sabot
Manitoba CSBA Rep.*

From all reports, this year's Classic that was held in Richmond, Quebec was a success. The prices varied, as did the quality of animals up for sale. The cold weather didn't dampen the participants' spirits. The Mexican buyers helped bring up prices on some animals.

The CSBA helped getting Mexican buyers to the Classic. These same buyers stayed in Quebec for several days and bought more sheep on farm privately. Getting Mexican buyers to the Classic is part of the CSBA's international promotions.

Next year's Classic will be July 17-19, 2003 in Assiniboia, Saskatchewan. I encourage local producers to support the Saskatchewan Sheep Breeders Association by attending this sale.

Peggy Newman who represents CSBA at the Canadian Livestock Records Corporation has been elected as Chairman of the board of directors.

CSBA's breed standards committee will be reprinting the breed standards brochure to include the new breeds. This brochure will be circulated to all CSBA members.

Members can advertise sheep for sale on the CSBA Web site.

Feel free to contact me about any of your purebred concerns. **



2002 MANITOBA LIVESTOCK EXPO SEMINAR AGENDA KEYSTONE CENTRE BRANDON

Thurs., Nov. 14	Fri., Nov. 15	Sat. Nov. 16
10:00 The Use of Hay Preservatives in Forage Production Dr. Karin Wittenberg University of Manitoba	10:00 TB & other Disease Management for Manitoba Dr. Allan Preston Manitoba Agriculture & Food	10:00 Fertility Management for your forage crops Don Green Manitoba Agriculture & Food
11:00 Haying Equipment & Drying Strategies Richard Keiper PAMI	11:00 Respiratory Diseases Prevention Dr. Pete Knight Pfizer Animal Health	10:45 Insect Pests of your forage crop John Gavloski Manitoba Agriculture & Food
1:00 Riparian Projects for your farm Kevin Teneycke Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation	1:00 Focus on Forage Markets Kevin Yaworski Manitoba Agriculture & Food <i>Producer Panel</i>	11:15 Analyzing your feed John Popp Manitoba Agriculture & Food
2:00 Using Manure as a Soil Builder Mitchell Timmerman Manitoba Agriculture & Food	1:45 Forages for Export Garry Halwas Sunridge Forages 2:15 Marketing Horse Hay Jim Lintott Oak Bank, Manitoba	1:00 Alternate Pasture Water Systems Richard Pasquill Manitoba Water Services Board 2:15 Pasture Water Projects Myles Kopytko Little Saskatchewan Conservation District

Introducing Morris Beauvais CCWG Wool Services Manager, Lethbridge, Alberta

As an introduction to the readers of your publication, my name is Morris Beauvais, who has replaced Tony Haley at the Lethbridge branch of the Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers Limited.

My background to wool is quite extensive. I was born and raised on a farm in New Zealand where with my fathers interest in wool, I also became interested in wool to the extent that wool has become a life time passion.

After leaving high school, I attended Lincoln University where I gained my certificate in wool classing. From there, I spent five years working for a stock firm that also acts as a wool broker for their clients. That is where I really learnt my trade but one never stops learning about wool.

The opportunity then presented itself to class wool on the farms mainly in the high country of the south island where the flock size varied between 10 to 20,000 sheep. A flock of 10,000 sheep would average about 250 bales weighing approximately 180 kg each. The average time spent at each farm shearing would be 7 to 10 days. After ten years classing wool on the farms, I transferred to Dunedin where I worked for another stock firm, Reid Farmers. While there, I classed wool, attended wool sales, wrote reports about the clips that were requested and spent time advising the farmers on how to prepare their wool and stock as well as assessing wool for the wool sales.

After spending 20 years in Dunedin, I transferred to Timaru where I worked for a wool testing firm that handled both pre-

sale and side sample testing. I was mainly involved with the collection and testing of the side samples from Merino sheep.

As the Merino industry evolved with testing and other factors, Merino New Zealand created a testing system which included both classing and assessing each fleece which was identified with the results being related back to each individual animal. The results from this testing method enabled the farmers to improve the wool production from each sheep as well as keeping the micron within the required limit that suited each farmer.

From that position I then moved to Canada where I find the wool industry interesting but a little different in its operation.

I have observed that some of the wool produced in Canada is as well grown as the wool produced in New Zealand, but the wool preparation in Canada is absolutely shocking. The farmers here are always commenting on the wool prices but how can you gain a better price for your wool when each fleece still contains the dags and pizze stain. To simply improve the wool that's produced in Canada without any effort, if these two faults were removed as the sheep are being shorn the wool preparation would show a vast improvement.

If any farmer requires any advice about his wool or selection of sheep, I can be contacted at the Lethbridge branch of the Canada Co-operative Wool Growers Limited. Tel: 1-800-567-3693 **

WESTMAN REGION SHEEP PRODUCER GROUPS

Tues., Oct. 15, 7 pm, Virden Ag Office — Flock Health

Tues., Oct. 15, 7 pm, Brandon Ag Extension Centre — Winter Feed Program

CONTACT: Virden meeting — Jon Crosson, Ag Rep 748-1111, Jerry at 845-.2468, Beth at 845-.2445
Brandon meeting — Stephanie Cruickshanks, Ag Rep 726-.6482

Classified Ads

FOR SALE — RIDEAU ARCOTT Yearling Rams. Selected stock, records available. Registered. Also Canadian and Rideau Arcott ewe and ram lambs available later in 2002. A few Charollais x Canadian F1 ram lambs also available. Queen's Valley Sheep Farm, phone:204-866-2627, FAX 204-866-3764, E-mail john.Hamerton@umanitoba.ca

FOR SALE — DORSET EWES. 100 purebred, not registered. Born January to March 2002, \$250.00 each. Thistlestone Farm (Ontario) For information: Ph: 519-853-1975 or e-mail lamont@sentex.net

SAVE THOSE EWES

Some producers in drought-ridden Alberta are selling ewes as culls at very low prices. Some of these ewes are being housed at Silver Bend Suffolks. Producers are asked to let Brian Greaves know of their interest to purchase packages of 10 or more of these 3 & 4 year old Dorset/Suffolk cross ewes at very reasonable cost, your pick. Please contact Brian at 204.567-3509. Roy Leitch's feedlot is also full of good cull ewes, and Roy is prepared to work with producers to resolve the situation.

FOR SALE — North Country Yearling and Two Year Old Rams. Clifford Flynn, (204) 733-2410.

FOR SALE — Ram Lambs, ½ Ile de France. Also Maternal Cross ewes and ewe lambs. Call Seine River Shepherds 422-8723, Ste. Anne, MB



Brian Greaves on the Westman Region tour of his farm, Silver Bend Suffolks. Photo by Gerry Oliver.

THANK YOU

Items for the draws at the MSA Annual Show & Sale on Aug. 10 & 11 were donated by a number of businesses and agencies. We thank them for their participation and support.

Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers Ltd.
Chevron Canada Resources
Eastman Feeds
Farm Credit Corporation
G Rannie Rambouillets
Heartland Auction Mart, Virden

Meyers Norris Penny
Newton Hill Stock Farm
Royal Bank – Russell
The Manitoba Sheep Association Inc.
Twin Valley Co-op
Virden Animal Hospital

Virden Credit Union

NOTICES AND COMING EVENTS

Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers

For information on the wool depot in your area contact:

Brian Greaves
Miniota Tel. 567-3509

Clayton Robins
Rivers Tel. 328-7113

Howard Alexander
Stonewall Tel. 467-9399

Herb Benson
McCready Tel. 835-2556

Leitch Livestock Company
Brandon Tel. 727-5021

Russell Weiss
Ridgeville Tel. 373-2291

To receive a free copy of our livestock supplies catalogue call 1-800-567-3693

WANTED

Person to represent Manitoba Sheep producers on the Provincial Exhibition Board. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, please contact Clayton Robins, 204.328.7113

WANTED

Submissions for the next issue of Sheep Sense. Photos, recipes, etc. are most wanted. Please email your contribution before December 15th to bpeers@mts.net

MEETINGS NOTICE

The MSA will hold a series of meetings throughout the province to explain a check-off proposal and the required constitutional changes. The meetings will be from 7:00 - 10:00 pm. The MSA will try to have a local director at each of the meetings.

Sept. 30, **Roblin**, MAF Board Rm, 117-2nd Ave. NW
Oct. 1, **Dauphin**, Canway Inn, 1601 Main St. South
Oct. 2, **Brandon**, Brandon Ag Centre, 1129 Queens Ave
Oct. 3, **Portage la Prairie**, Portage Fair Grounds on the Island
Oct. 4, **Morden**, The Friendship Centre, 306 North Railway St
Oct. 7, **Teulon**, MAF Board Rm, 77 Main St
Oct. 9, **St. Pierre**, Club Jolys, 595 Jolys East Av

For further information, contact Eric Thornhill at 204.257.7456 or Wray Whitmore at 204.945.7676

This is the official publication of the Manitoba Sheep Association. It is the MSA's intention to publish this newsletter three times per year (April/May, August/September and December/January).

Deadline for next issue is December 15th. Please email your contributions to Beth at bpeers@mts.net.

Items wanted in particular are photographs and graphics. As well, if anyone has some useful resources (books, Internet sites, etc.) that he or she wants to share with others, please submit them as I would like to create a special place for them in every issue of Sheep Sense.



FEED SHORTAGES AND YOUR SHEEP — EWE MAINTENANCE RATIONS

- The maintenance period is when ewes are not pregnant or lactating. Body condition is being maintained without loss or gain. If ewes are thin rations need to be adjusted.
- Sheep are ruminants. They are fairly adaptable and can utilize a wide variety of feeds. They are designed to eat forage (grass/hay/silage/greenfeed). The higher the level of concentrate (grains, supplements) in the ration the more carefully the rations must be managed. To avoid digestive upsets, feed grains whole. Introduce grain slowly, increase levels gradually over ten days to two weeks.
- Feed no more than 1 to 1.5 pounds of grain per head at one feeding.
- Mature ewes need at least 1.5 to 2 pounds of forage to keep their rumens functioning well. Acidosis, bloat and founder are a risk on high concentrate rations.
- **As you know this year is anything but average. A \$35.00 feed test can save you \$100's of dollars in supplement costs and, more critically, save you from a lambing wreck if some nutrient is missing from the ration. With drought conditions plants are under stress – high levels of nitrates can be an issue.**
- Minerals:
 - 18:18 is usually salt free, containing 1 part calcium to 1 part phosphorus; either a trace mineral (TM) sheep salt or loose blue salt needs to be fed
 - 16:16 usually contains salt with 1 part calcium to 1 part phosphorus and additional vitamin A levels in some brands. Nothing else needs to be fed with this product.
 - Greenfeeds and straws have almost no calcium. A salt/limestone 50:50 mix must be fed to supply calcium.
- Rations are given in weight of feed required per head per day.
- Rations are based on the requirements of average sized ewes – 175 lb.
- Mineral and limestone/salt intake levels are based on free choice intake. When feeding a complete salt/mineral mix, don't supply any other sources of salt.
- **These rations were developed as samples to be used as guidelines only.** The sample rations are based on average feed analyses, not on your particular feeds or flock. **For specific ration questions talk to your feed company nutritionist.**

Sample Rations:

Ration #1		Ration #2	
Alfalfa hay	1.8 lb / day	Grass hay	3.8 lb / day
Barley straw	2.0	16:16 mineral	0.01
16:16 mineral	0.02		
Ration #3		Ration #4	
Barley silage	8.0 lb / day	Oat greenfeed	3.8 lb / day
Limestone	0.01	limestone	0.01
Ration #5		Ration #6	
Straw	2.2 lb/ day	Straw	2.75 lb / day
Barley grain	1.0	Corn	0.5
32% supplement	0.3	32% supplement	0.5

Information prepared by: Susan Hosford, Alberta & Wray Whitmore, Manitoba

August 2002 **

President's Message

Eric Thornhill – President, MSA

There are very few people who welcome change, and I am probably one of them. Upon analysis of this reluctance in my own life, I found it to boil down to a few reasons. The first is the work change usually entails, not to mention the unknown problems that are bound to arise. Finally, there is no guarantee of improvement anyway. However, changing direction in most peoples' lives is inevitable and the best we can hope for is a positive result.

I am, of course, referring to the proposed changes intended and thought necessary by the MSA Board of Directors for the future viability of the association.

The government's intention to mandate Permanent ID to facilitate a trace back system, such as the HACCP program, is just one of a number of reasons that there has to be a change of direction. The other proposed changes, - Check-off and a new Constitution- are more carefully explained in this newsletter by John Hamerton and Randy Eros.

The sheep industry, just like any other agricultural commodity, is a risky business. There are so many unknown factors, such as weather, disease, markets, and so on.

At this moment in time, I think that we in most of Manitoba feel sympathy for our fellow sheep producers caught in the severe drought areas in Alberta and Saskatchewan. I am short of workable ideas on how to help, so any input on this difficult situation would be welcome. Do we have, here in Manitoba surplus pasture, surplus winter feed, housing, etc? If so, how much and where?

Some western producers who are farming in the stricken areas are so desperate to reduce their numbers, that whole or part flocks are being sold as culls

at very low prices. Rather than these good ewes being slaughtered, is there an opportunity for some Manitoba producers to expand their flocks at a very reasonable cost?

If there is any interest in this idea, Brian Greaves and myself would organize and facilitate as much as we are able.

The MSA Show and Sale in Virden has been and gone. It was a very well organized event and a special thanks go to Brian Greaves and a worthy band of helpers (you know who you are).

Grunthal Auction Mart will once again be the venue for East Manitoba's Sale. Russell Weiss, Eugene Sabot and some others are working hard to ensure another good day.

At long last wool prices are improving, with at least double the amount being received from last year. Let's hope this trend continues.

As I have mentioned before, in Eastman district, you can store your wool at my farm until the pick up truck comes by. I don't need to remind you that this service by MSA helps our finances considerably, due to a handling charge that MSA receives.

For the past 8 months, we have enjoyed having a Sheep and Goat specialist. Wray Whitmore has been well received by Manitoba producers. He has eased the responsibility of the MSA board by putting out extension services and sharing the workload. This has been vital in keeping the industry thriving throughout the province.

Please don't forget that MSA board members, Wray and myself are only at the other end of the telephone should you need advice or information. Best regards for the rest of the season. **

MSA Annual Show & Sale Note: Winner of the Westman Region stick draw (co-sponsored by Pat and Lesley Barott, Kaniwi Korral) was Peter Askew of Miniota.

What You Feed Sheep Is Not Necessarily What They Eat

Information supplied by: Susan Hosford, AAFRD & Wray Whitmore, MAF / Summer 2002

Producers of livestock in drought areas are looking at feeds they normally wouldn't have considered canola greenfeed, grass straws, poplar saplings, even talk about poplar shavings has been bandied about. Odd and unusual rations need to be used carefully when wintering a breeding flock. Some will work, others will not.

The first factor is what nutrients are in the feed. Always feed test. Build rations from the feed test to make up for missing essential nutrients. A ration that is short on energy, or protein, or calcium, or vitamin A can result in serious losses in late pregnancy and lambing. After sampling and testing a feed, you need to consider whether or not your sheep will be able to eat it and get the nutrients from it. What are some of the factors that affect how much a sheep will eat?

The second factor is feed intake, or whether the sheep can or will eat the feed. When looking at intake, an important factor is feed quality. The two most important qualities of forage quality are its digestibility and intake. To estimate digestibility we measure ADF (acid detergent fibre) and to estimate intake we measure NDF (neutral detergent fibre). Relative Feed Value (RFV) is calculated using the ADF and NDF values. The higher the quality of the feed, the less space it takes, the more the sheep can eat. Low quality and high fibre forages, straws and some greenfeeds, take up more stomach space. Sheep will not eat more if their 'gut' is full.

Sheep chew their cud (ruminate) to break feed into smaller particles. When the particles are small enough, the feed will move from the rumen, to the lower digestive tract for digestion and then finally, out onto the ground. Low quality feeds require more rumination and are digested more slowly than high quality feeds. This slows down feed intake. Some feeds just take up too much stomach room and offer too little nutrients to sustain a pregnant ewe.

Another factor that affects how much a sheep will eat is the size of the feed 'particles'. Grinding and pelleting of forages reduces the amount of cud-chewing necessary and speeds the movement of the feed through the rumen, which increases the intake of feed. This processing of high fibre forages allows for blending of various quality forages and concentrates into a total mixed ration. Grinding feeds too finely, however, will reduce intake. Finely ground feeds are dusty and there is an increase in the risk of bloat and impaction. Grains should be left whole.

Other factors affecting feed intake are:

- Moldy feed and unpalatable feed (doesn't taste good) reduce the amount of feed sheep will eat.
- Silages with a high percentage of water will also be consumed less. The drier the silage the more will be eaten.
- Forage consumption will also decline when grain is fed.
- Consumption of forage is affected by what is out in the pasture to eat. In overgrazed pastures sheep will spend much of their day grazing to try to fill their stomachs.
- Pregnant ewes will consume less forage – they have less space in their rumens.
- Consumption of forage will also be reduced if there is inadequate bunk/feeder space.
- Hot weather or lack of water decreases feed intake.
- Feed intake decreases when animals are sick.
- Age, body size requirements - there are big differences in the amounts of feed a Suffolk ewe and a Romanov ewe lamb can eat.

There can be a big difference between what you feed your sheep and what they need/eat. Consult Wray Whitmore or your feed company nutritionist if in doubt about feeds and rations. **