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Wild & Woolly

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Maryland's Sheep & Goat Producer Newsletter

Inside this issue:

With a new Volume comes a new name! The Maryland Sheep and Goat Producer is now ***"Wild & Woolly"!*** *Hope you like it!*

For more information, visit:
www.sheepandgoat.com

Shepherd's Notebook Blog

Biosecurity on Sheep and Goat Farms

by Susan Schoenian

Biosecurity refers to the management practices taken to prevent the introduction and spread of diseases. Healthy animals are the cornerstone of a successful livestock enterprise, regardless of the reasons for livestock ownership.

These days, there is a heightened awareness of biosecurity due to the risks of bioterrorism and the fear of introducing foreign diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease to the United States. Individual states are also interested in keeping diseases from within their borders. Biosecurity is important no matter what size flock or farm you have. It only takes one animal to introduce a new disease and one farm to start a disease epidemic.

Acquisition of new animals

Introduced animals pose the single greatest risk of disease introduction. While they may appear healthy, they could be carrying a wide variety of infectious agents. Anytime a new animal is introduced to the flock or farm, there is a potential risk of that animal introducing a new disease.

Before adding new sheep or goats to your farm or flock, it is important to know the health status of the farm(s) from which you are buying or receiving animals. Don't be afraid to ask questions about the health program and disease status of the farm. Only buy livestock from reputable breeders. Ideally, you should purchase sheep and goats from closed flocks. A closed flock is a flock that has not introduced new animals for the past three or more years. It is best to buy livestock from as few sources as possible. It is not recommended that breeding stock be purchased from a sale barn.

You should not purchase animals from farms in which you observe lameness, abscesses, soremouth, or other clinical signs of disease. While healthy-appearing animals may still be harboring these disease organisms, many diseases can be avoided by thoroughly observing and inspecting the animals you purchase.

(Continued on page 2)

WMREC Update from Susan Schoenian

Second Year Meat Goat Performance Test is Underway

The 2007 Western Maryland Pasture-Based Meat Goat Performance Test got underway on June 9 with 48 goats consigned by 11 farms from Maryland and 4 other states. The test is being conducted at the University of Maryland's Western Maryland Research & Education Center (WMREC) in Keedysville, MD.

Forty-one bucks and 7 wethers averaging 54 lbs. will remain on test until October 6. While on test, they will be evaluated for growth performance, parasite resistance, and carcass merit. They will consume a strictly pasture-diet with no supplemental feed, only free choice minerals. The goats represent several breeds and breed crosses: Kiko, Boer, Kiko x Boer, and Kiko x dairy. Many will be available for sale via private treaty.

This is the second year of the performance test. Male goats, of any breed or breed cross, born between December 15 and March 15 are eligible to participate. You can learn more about the test and follow this year's progress by visiting the blog at: http://mdgoattest.blogspot.com

Biosecurity *(continued from page 1)*

When purchasing mature females, be sure to palpate their udders to make sure they don't have any hard spots, which could be indicative of mastitis. If both halves of the udder are "hard," the likely cause is OPP (in sheep). Examine the teeth to determine age and soundness. Palpate the testicles of rams and bucks. Do not purchase males with any reproductive abnormalities.

To prevent the introduction of OPP (ovine progressive pneumonia) or CAE (caprine arthritic encephalitis) to your farm, try to purchase animals from OPP and CAE-free flocks. Unfortunately, there aren't many farms that have tested and culled for these diseases, despite a study showing that 26 percent of sheep in the U.S. are infected with the OPP virus. Cross transmission is possible between OPP and CAE.

To prevent the introduction of scrapie to your farm, try to purchase animals from USDA certified scrapie-free flocks or enrolled flocks. The purchase of sheep with scrapie-resistant genotypes (RR or QR) will also help to prevent scrapie from occurring on your farm. While the prevalence of scrapie in the U.S. sheep flock is only 1 in 500 sheep, it is 1 in 100 Suffolk or black-faced sheep. Scrapie is rare in goats in the U.S.

"A period of isolation provides an opportunity to detect a disease problem before the rest of your animals are exposed."

Isolate new animals

Newly purchased sheep and goats should be isolated for at least 2 weeks, preferably 30 days, before being co-mingled with other animals on your farm or being turned out to pasture. A period of isolation provides an opportunity to detect a disease problem before the rest of your animals are exposed.

Isolation/quarantine areas should not share the same airspace with the rest of the flock. A distance of at least 100 feet is recommended. The farther the isolation pen is from the rest of the flock, the better it is. The isolation area should be confinement, ideally in another building. If another building is not an option, you should select a corner of your barn for isolating new animals. Isolated animals should not have nose-to-nose contact with the rest of your flock.

While in isolation, new animals should have their hooves trimmed and inspected for footrot and other hoof problems. Making the sheep and goats stand in a footbath of zinc sulfate is a good preventative measure to keep footrot off a farm. Footrot is usually introduced to a farm through the introduction of infected animals.

To prevent the introduction of drug-resistant worms, new animals should be dewormed and have their fecals checked. It will probably take the use of anthelmintics from at least two different chemical families to prevent the introduction of drug-resistant worms to your farm. It will be helpful to learn the deworming history of the farm from which you purchase new animals.

Buying animals at a sale barn

Purchasing animals at sale barns greatly increases the risk of a new disease entering your farm. When you buy animals at a sale barn, there are no guarantees, written or otherwise, that the animals are free from contagious diseases. Since there are no health requirements to sell at a sale barn, it is possible to take animals infected with soremouth, pinkeye, caseous lymphadentis, footrot, or other contagious diseases to a sale barn. These animals can expose healthy animals at the sale barn. Many producers take their cull animals to sale barns. An animal that looks okay may actually be harboring a disease or other problem that will prevent it from being a productive animal.

On the other hand, sale barns can be a source of slaughter animals, feeders, and breeding stock for the savvy producer. Animals should only be purchased for breeding by experienced producers who know what to look for. It is best to purchase virgin animals for breeding since there is less chance of them introducing reproductive problems. If you purchase animals from a sale barn and bring them to your farm, make sure you keep them separate from the rest of your flock. Separate barns and pastures for sale barn animals will lessen the chances that you will introduce a new disease to your farm. If you plan to add sale barn animals to your flock, you should quarantine them for at least 60 days.

The risk of showing

Taking your animals to shows and other exhibitions increases the risk that you will introduce a new disease to your farm. Contact with other animals at a fair can expose your animals to infectious agents. Try to minimize the nose-to-nose contact your animals have with other animals at the fair. While at the fair, try not to share equipment, waterers, or feeders with other exhibitors. If you loan your equipment to someone, make sure it is disinfected before you use it on your animals. When you return from a show, isolate your show animals from the rest of your flock.

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Just for Youth

A Successful Sheep and Wool Skillathon

The Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival hosted its second Sheep & Wool Skillathon on May 6, 2007. Ninety-five (95) youth from six states and nine Maryland counties competed for top honors.

Charlie Sasser was the first place junior (age 8-10). Charlie led his St. Mary's/Calvert County team to a first place finish in the junior team competition. Charlie's team members included Jason Fore and Gabrielle Corey. Dean Bennett from Carroll County was the second place junior. Frederick County had the second place junior team.

Patrick Ranson from Frederick County was the first place intermediate (age 11-13). Doug Megee from Cecil County placed second. The first place intermediate team was the Carroll County team, composed of Brianne and Ryan Hevner and Lukas Zeigler. Frederick County had the second place intermediate team.

Skillathon winners:
Charlie Sasser, Junior (L)
Patrick Ranson, Intermediate (C)
and Claire Bennett, Senior (R)
Photo by: Jeff Semler

In the senior division, Claire Bennett was the winner for the second year in a row. Her Carroll County team was victorious in the senior team competition. Claire's teammates include her brother Troy, Drew Cashman, and Ashley Hevner. Rachel Manning was the second place senior. Her St. Mary's/Calvert County team also placed second.

In the Skillathon, youth are tested on their knowledge of sheep and wool. This year, the participants were required to identify feed and forages, breeds, equipment, diseases, and cuts of meat. They judged a class of hay, Romney ewes, and Rambouillet fleeces and took a written test. Senior teams had a group problem in which they had to calculate average daily gain, feed efficiency, cost of gain, and profitability for lambs being fed for market.

Sponsors of the 2007 Sheep & Wool Skillathon included Maryland Cooperative Extension, (http://extension.umd.edu) the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival (a committee of the Maryland Sheep Breeders Association), Greene's Lamb (White Hall, MD), and Ruppersberger & Sons (one of Maryland's largest lamb processors). Numerous extension faculty and volunteers helped to make this year's Skillathon a success.

The Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival (http://www.sheepandwool.org) is always held the first full weekend in May. Next year's skillathon will be held on Sunday, May 4, 2008. It is open to any youth between 8 and 18.

Mid-Atlantic Meat Goat Survey

The Keystone Development Center (KDC) is conducting a survey of meat goat production and marketing capacity. They are asking producers in the Mid-Atlantic area to complete a short online survey. The purpose of the survey is to gather information on the production capacity of meat goat producers, their interest in serving new markets, their plans for future production, and their interest in forming a marketing cooperative.

The survey is being conducted online and takes just a few minutes to complete. All answers to the survey are confidential and responses will be shared only in aggregate with others. Mailed copies of the survey are available to people who do not have or infrequently use email. For more information about KDC, please visit their website at http://www.kdc.coop. Questions about the survey should be directed to Peggy Fogarty-Harnish at peggy@kdc.coop or (717) 733-3202.

The link to the survey is: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=GP8g3OVw1QzzGnpGouh8sg%3d%3d . An alternative method is to visit www.sheepandgoat.com, under the "New Stuff" heading, click on "take online survey."

DSU Update from Dr. Dahlia Jackson

Toxoplasmosis: Common Cause of Abortion in Sheep and Goats

In mid-February, when I first started work at Delaware State University (DSU), they were in the middle of kidding season, and were having quite a few problems. It seems an unknown enemy had attacked. They had noticed a few abortions, one female dying from infection due to reabsorbed fetuses, and numerous weak kids that would die regardless of tube feeding and other interventions. As you can imagine, having just started at DSU, I was very anxious to find out what was happening and what we could do to prevent it from occurring in more does.

We collected blood samples from a number of does including some that had aborted, some that were still pregnant, and some that recently kidded. Samples were sent to a diagnostic lab for a series of tests (abortion screen) and the results indicated that all were positive for toxoplasmosis.

The incidence of abortion in a flock is usually low, varying between 1 and 5%, so if levels occur above this, an infectious abortive agent might be the cause. In this case, the agent was a common parasitic infection of sheep and goats, the protozoan organism known as *Toxoplasma gondii.*

Both sheep and goats can get toxoplasmosis and can experience abortions, stillbirth, fetal mummification, and the birth of weak lambs and kids. Goats also seem to be more vulnerable to *Toxoplasma* infection than sheep. Cats that have eaten infected rodents or birds are a common carrier, with kittens (infected in the womb) spreading the organism in the environment which is then consumed by sheep or goats.

Signs of toxoplasmosis vary depending on when the female gets exposed. Diagnosis of toxoplasmosis is possible by the detection of high antibody titers in the blood. The most conclusive diagnosis requires the isolation of organisms from the placenta or body of a stillborn lamb (store on ice – not frozen- until you can get it to the nearest animal health lab).

To avoid *Toxoplasma* infection (and other problems), cleanliness is important, especially around feeding areas. It is especially important to make try to prevent cats from defecating in hay, bedding, grain, or water that will be fed to pregnant animals. Any fetal membranes and dead fetuses should be disposed of properly (burned or buried) to prevent transmission of infection to more animals, and aborted females should always be separated from the flock. Since kittens are the primary mode of transmission, any cats on the farm should be spayed or neutered.

A successful prevention/treatment of toxoplasmosis can be achieved by adding cocciodiostats such as decoquinate (Deccox®) or monensin (Rumensin®) to the diets of sheep and goats (with a veterinarian's guidance if not labeled for such use). Does and ewes previously infected with the organism, *Toxoplasma gondii*, are likely to be resistant to exposure in subsequent pregnancies; therefore, the highest risk will be in younger females.

Please note that Toxoplasmosis is transmissible to humans, and pregnant women should be especially careful in handling aborted fetal membranes and fetuses (along with cat litter of course). Infection with *Toxoplasma gondii* during pregnancy can result in encephalitis or blindness in human fetuses. It can also be transmitted to humans via the consumption of sheep and goat milk so care should be taken by pasteurizing or boiling milk before consumption.

Now that we know what was causing all these problems during kidding, we plan on adding a coccidiostat to our meat goat ration during pregnancy the next go-around. This should assist in preventing future abortion storms and make our kidding experience next spring easier and less stressful.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at djjackson@desu.edu or (302) 857 6490.

Reference: Sheep and Goat Medicine by D.G. Pugh

Dr. Dahlia Jackson is the new small ruminant specialist at Delaware State University. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

Texel Lambs Excel in Carcass Contest

A Texel lamb exhibited by Beverly and Sherman Pearsall from Thurmont, Maryland, was the champion carcass lamb at the 2007 Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival. Texel lambs have typically won the carcass contest at this annual Maryland event.

The winning 105 lb. ram lamb had the largest ribeye in the class at 3.17 square inches. His backfat measurement was 0.145 inches, resulting in a yield grade of 1.9 and a predicted 50.42 percent of boneless closely trimmed retail cuts (BCTRC). The Pearsalls also had the lamb with the second highest percent BCTRC at 50.33 percent. It was a 93 lb. Texel.

Ribeye area and backfat thickness were determined by real-time ultrasound. Ultrasound scanning is a way to determine carcass characteristics, without sacrificing the lambs. This year the scanning was done by Jim Pritchard, a certified scanner from West Virginia University.

The lamb with the highest lean rate-of-gain was a 112-lb. Hampshire exhibited by Tammy Holler from Oakland, Maryland. Its lean rate-of-gain was 0.37 lbs. per day. It won this honor because of its exceptional growth rate: 1.43 lbs. gained per day.

Fourteen lambs competed in this year's carcass contest. They represented a diversity of breeds and crosses: Hampshire, Southdown, Suffolk, Texel, and various crosses. Most of the lambs were very young. They averaged 87.4 lbs. Average backfat was only 0.13 inches, resulting in an average yield grade of 1.65, while the average ribeye measurement was 2.10 square inches.

The lamb carcass contest at the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival is open to any breed or breed cross of lamb, of any sex, weighing at least 80 lbs. The Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival (www.sheepandwool.org) is always held the first full weekend in May and is sponsored by the Maryland Sheep Breeders Association.

Featured Breed

Nigerian Dwarf: A Little Breed with a Lot to Offer

Photo source:
Avolino Farm, Sudlersville, MD
www.avolinofarm.com

The Nigerian Dwarf is a miniature goat of East African origin. Its conformation is similar to that of the larger dairy goat breeds.

The ideal weight of a Nigerian dwarf goat is only 75 pounds. Typical height is 17 to 19 inches for does and 19 to 21 inches for bucks. By way of comparison, a mature Nubian doe should weigh at least 135 pounds and stand at least 30 inches at the withers. The hair of the Nigerian Dwarf is soft and should be of short or medium length. Their noses should be straight and their ears erect.

Pygmy goats and Nigerian Dwarves have similar origins, but are two separate and distinct breeds. Pygmies are bred to have the conformation of a meat goat: blocky and heavy-boned, whereas Nigerian Dwarfs are bred to have the conformation of a dairy goat.

Besides their small size, color is one of the factors that make Nigerian Dwarves so popular. Any color or combination of colors is acceptable. The main colors of Nigerian Dwarves are black, chocolate, and gold. White markings are common, as are spots and color combinations with red, white, gold, and black. You never know what to expect when Nigerian Dwarf kids are born.

Like Pygmy goats, Nigerian Dwarf goats possess outstanding reproductive qualities. They reach puberty early, breed year-round, and are very prolific. They produce a surprising amount of milk for their size, up to 3 to 4 pounds per day, with 6-10 percent butterfat (higher than the larger dairy goat breeds).

Nigerian Dwarves are typically raised as miniature dairy goats. They can be raised along side other goats, usually without any special accommodations. Nigerian Dwarves are commonly kept as pets.

Web sites:

- Nigerian Dwarf Goat Association – www.ndga.org
- American Nigerian Dwarf Dairy Association – www.andda.org

UMES Update from Dr. Niki Whitley

Lambing and Kidding

Well, the lambs are weaned and the kids are almost ready for weaning, so I guess it is time for the promised lambing and kidding update. Of the 30 ewes lambing, the average birth weight was 10.8 lbs. with 2.4 lambs per ewe lambing. The average weaning weight (youngest was 90 days old, oldest was 113 days old) was 76 pounds.

We bred our Katahdin ewes to a black-headed Dorper, Suffolk or Katahdin ram. All of the lambs were not weaned at the same time, so the number of lambs included in the weaning weight data will be noted as appropriate. Specific information by breed type (only includes ones from purebred Katahdin ewes) is as follows: Dorper cross lambs weighed 10 lbs. at birth with 2.5 lambs born per ewe lambing and 26 lambs weighed an average of 74 pounds at weaning; Suffolk cross lambs weighed 11.7 lbs. at birth with 2.4 lambs per ewe lambing and 22 lambs weighed an average of 80.5 lbs. at weaning; Katahdin lambs weighed 10.7 lbs. at birth with 2.2 lambs born per ewe lambing and 20 lambs weighed an average of 73 lbs. at weaning.

Kidding was relatively easy this year, with only 13 does kidding. Congrats (again) to Shannon Uzelac for having the doe she artificially inseminated at the AI workshop in November kid with cute triplets (Nubian sired)! The kids weighed an average of 10.2 lbs. at birth with 1.9 kids born live per doe kidding.

I can be contacted at 410-651-6194 or nwhitley@umes.edu.

What are Sheep "Measles?"

Sheep measles, otherwise known as cysticercosis, are small cysts found in the meat of sheep and goats. The consequence of these "measles" is partial or whole-carcass condemnation at the processing plant.

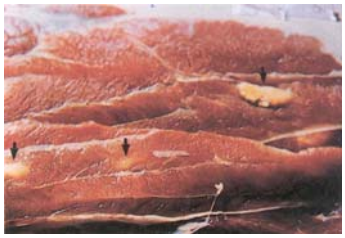


Photo source: Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations

The cysts are found throughout the meat. Only a small portion are on or near the surface. Cysts are most easily seen in the diaphragm, heart, jaw muscles, and tongue. They are not known to pose a human health risk.

So, where do these cysts come from?

From man's best friends -- dogs! Sheep measles are caused by the tapeworm *Taenia Ovis*. The definitive host for this tapeworm is the dog, meaning the adult form of the worm lives in the dog's digestive tract. There it grows and reproduces to the point that one dog can shed up to 250,000 eggs per day!

Like many internal parasites, this worm then goes through a larval form in an intermediate host – sheep. The sheep graze contaminated pastures or feed, ingest the eggs, which hatch into larva and migrate through the lamb's body, eventually becoming encysted in the skeletal and heart muscle.

So, what can a producer do to prevent this life cycle?

Generally, tapeworms do not cause clinical illness in dogs (or sheep), so a healthy-appearing dog does not mean it doesn't have tapeworms. Guardian dogs and herding dogs should be on a deworming program for tapeworms.

Tapeworms are the hardy sort and the over-the-counter dewormers that work on other worms are NOT effective against tapeworms. The only readily available and effective treatment for tapeworms is Praziquantel.

The next step a producer can take to reduce the risk of cysticercosis is to not feed dogs raw sheep meat. Controlling scavenging of sheep carcasses by domestic dogs, as well as the wild canids in the area is also necessary. Producers should restrict access of other dogs to their property, unless the dogs have been dewormed for tapeworms.

Prevention of the tapeworm in the dog is key to preventing sheep measles. There is no treatment for the larval form in sheep.

Tapeworms: Problem or Folklore?

There is no definitive and confirmed evidence in scientific literature that tapeworms cause any ill effect to sheep or that removing them gives a beneficial effect. Folklore blames tapeworms for all manner of problems, but none of it is substantiated.

Tapeworms have what is known as an indirect lifecycle. To become infective to sheep or goats, the eggs need to first be eaten by a mite that lives in the soil or on pasture. These mites are more active during the summer months. To complete the lifecycle mites containing tapeworm eggs are eaten by sheep/goats.

Tapeworm segments in fecal matter

The mites get digested in the animals gut and the eggs are released to go on and develop into adult tapeworms in the animal's gut. The preferred site of adult tapeworms in the sheep or goat is the small intestine, where it attaches to the inner surface using strong, muscular suckers found on the head of the worm.

Tapeworm segments can be visible in the feces, with a white rice grain-like appearance. Adult worms, often up to a meter or more in length, can also be seen on post-mortem or, when expelled, as passed in the environment, typically in yards or other areas where sheep and/or goats are concentrated. Tapeworm eggs in fecal samples can be detected using the standard worm egg count procedure.

It is not possible to justify the treatment of sheep/goats solely for tapeworm as there is no definitive and confirmed research that shows tapeworms have any negative impact on sheep even very young lambs. If you feel you must remove tapeworms, use a drench containing praziquantel. Albendazole aids in the removal of tapeworm segments but will not kill the head of the worm.

Source: Australian Wool Innovation LTD (http://wormboss.com.au)

Note: Sheep "Measles" are cysts caused by two different tapeworms, spread by dogs. They are an important cause of carcass condemnation.

Participate in an Online Survey on Foot and Mouth Disease

http://www.cadms.ucdavis.edu/

The Center for Animal Disease Modeling and Surveillance (CADMS) in the School of Veterinary Medicine at UC Davis, has launched a nationwide research study aimed at protecting the livestock industry from the devastating consequences of foot-and-mouth disease.

Livestock producers throughout the nation are asked to participate in an online survey to gather data on animal movements and husbandry practices that will be used in a simulation model to predict the duration and magnitude of a foot-and-mouth disease outbreak, as well as determine the best strategies for containment.

Foot-and-mouth (FMD) is one of the most highly contagious diseases affecting cloven-hoofed animals such as cattle, swine, sheep, goats and deer. FMD is on the top of the Department of Homeland Security's list for a bioterrorist attack on U.S. agriculture. With no recent cases of FMD in the U.S. to use as an example (the last was in 1929) it is hard to predict how an outbreak might spread in today's globalized environment.

CADMS guarantees that all the information will be kept confidential and will only be used for modeling purposes. The online survey can be found at: http://www.cadms.ucdavis.edu. For more information please contact Pelayo Alvarez at: (530) 554-2988.

Biosecurity *(continued from page 2)*

Shearing

Some diseases can be introduced and spread by shearing. Of particular concern is caseous lymphadentis, an infectious, contagious disease that is the third leading cause of carcass condemnation (in cull ewes). To prevent infections from being introduced and/or spread, shearers should disinfect their equipment between flocks and between animals. Shearing the youngest animals first will also prevent the spread of diseases.

Limiting access to your farm

Some diseases can be spread by contaminated footwear and vehicles. By limiting access to your farm and livestock, you can limit the risk of introducing and spreading diseases. When people are given access to your livestock, they should not have been on another sheep or goat farm for the past several days. They should be required to wear plastic boots or clean their shoes before entering your livestock raising areas. Persons who have been in foreign countries within the prior 5 days should be denied access to your farm and livestock. If you travel to a country that has foot-and-mouth disease, it is best to leave your protective clothing and shoes there.

Good farm management

Rodents, cats, and other wildlife can harbor infectious agents. Some method of rodent control should be employed on the farm. Often, this is cats. To prevent ewes and does from becoming infected with Toxoplasmosis, a major cause of abortion, young cats should be kept away from stored hay and grain. It is best to neuter any cats on the farm and maintain a healthy, stable, adult population of cats.

Dead carcasses, and placenta and fetal tissues should be removed immediately from the livestock-raising areas to prevent the introduction and/or spread of diseases. Composting is often the best way to dispose of waste products. Under no circumstances should carcasses and other waste products be left for wild animals to eat. This attracts predators and scavengers and can spread diseases. Sheep measles (cysts in the meat) is perpetuated when dogs and other canines are allowed to consume sheep or goat carcasses.

Preventative health management

A vaccination program provides cheap insurance against common diseases. It is generally recommended that all sheep and goats be vaccinated for *clostridium perfringins type* C & D (overeating disease) and tetanus. The use of other vaccines will depend upon the perceived disease risk and diagnosis of particular diseases in the flock.

Vaccines are available for soremouth, caseous lymphadentis, footrot, vibrio and chlamydia abortion, epididymitis, and rabies. Many of these vaccines (e.g. soremouth, caseous lymphadentis) should not be used unless the disease is already present on the farm because vaccination will introduce the disease to the farm. These vaccines are advocated to reduce the incidence of disease, not prevent it in its entirety.

Gastro-intestinal parasites are the primary health problem affecting sheep and goats raised in warm, moist climates. A parasite control program that integrates pasture and grazing management and selective deworming (using the FAMACHA© system) should be implemented. Regular deworming of all the animals in the flock is NOT advocated due to the widespread emergence of drug-resistant worms. Fecal testing (fecal egg count reduction test or DrenchRite®) should be conducted to determine which anthelmintics are effective on the farm. Natural dewormers should not be trusted to control parasitism until their effectiveness has been proven under controlled circumstances.

When a ewe or doe experiences an abortion, she should be isolated from the rest of the flock. The dead fetus(es), placenta, and fetal tissues should be removed immediately and buried or composted. The lambing and kidding area should be disinfected. Antibiotics should be given (fed or injected) during an abortion storm to prevent further losses. Including monensin (Rumensin®) or Decoquinate (Deccox®) in the feed or mineral during the last third of pregnancy may help to prevent abortions caused by toxoplasmosis.

Maintaining a closed flock/herd

The best way to maintain a healthy flock is to maintain a closed flock. Once the ewe flock or doe herd has been established, replacement females should be selected from within the flock and new acquisitions should be limited to rams and/or bucks. Unfortunately, artificial insemination is not a practical option for most U.S. shepherds, making ram introductions usually necessary. It may be possible for large flocks to select their own ram and buck replacements, but for most shepherds, outside ram and buck purchases are necessary to avoid unacceptable levels of inbreeding. Fortunately, rams and bucks spread considerably fewer diseases than females. While males can still introduce soremouth, footrot, pinkeye, or caseous lymphadentits to a farm, they are not likely to introduce vibrio or chlamydia. They are not believed to transmit scrapie, though the use of RR rams will ensure the birth of lambs that are all scrapie resistant.

You should not loan males to other farms, unless the health status of the other farms is equivalent. You should not allow other producers to bring ewes or does to your farm for breeding, unless the health status of their flocks is equivalent. There are other ways to help new sheep and goat producers besides making your farm and animals available to them.

Source: www.sheep101.info/201

Wool Pool Update by Dr. Rich Barczewski

Higher Wool Pool Prices for 2007

The 50th Annual Maryland Wool Pool will be held on Wednesday, June 20, 2007 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. As in past years, we will have three lines to accommodate consignors. Two lines will be for loose wool and the third for individuals who bring their wool baled. Producers are expected to unload their own wool.

On a positive note, prices are up from last year by about 15 to 20 cents per pound due to global market forces. This years' pool has been purchased by Lempriere USA, Inc., of Jamestown, South Carolina.

The price you receive for your wool will be the price indicated in the table minus a deduction for pool expenses (usually between 5 and 8 cents per pound). We will do everything in our power to keep these costs as low as possible. **Black and gray wool and wool from hair sheep or hair sheep crosses will not be accepted!**

Grade	Price per lb.
Choice whiteface	0.75
Medium whiteface	0.55
Coarse whiteface	0.49
Non-whiteface	0.41
Short	0.35

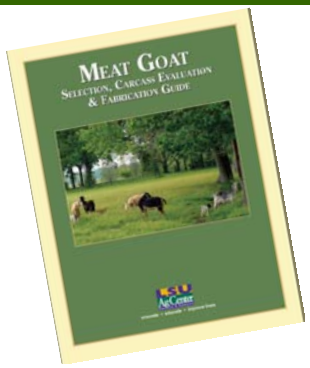
Wool care: Be sure your sheep are dry when shorn. Wet wool cannot be accepted. We are now using nylon square packs to ship our wool in. Any producer bringing wool to the pool in the nylon square packs weighing 250 pounds or more will receive a 5 cent per pound bonus payment for their wool. A new wool pack will be issued with each pack containing 250 pounds or more.

Smaller lots of wool can be delivered in plastic trash bags (clear bags preferred) or loose in your vehicle. Never use polypropylene feed bags and please avoid using burlap bags. Wool delivered in polypropylene bags will be refused and wool delivered in burlap will be deducted 3 cents per pound.

If you have any questions regarding the Wool Pool, please contact me at rbarczewski@desu.edu, (302) 857-6410 (daytime), (302) 659-1211 (evening before 9 p.m.).

Dr. Barczewski is the Wool Pool Manager as well as Chair of the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Delaware State University.

Meat Goat Resources Available



Meat Goat Selection, Carcass Evaluation, and Fabrication Guide

Single copies are free - call for shipping charges - multiple copies available
Published by Louisiana State University
LSU AgCenter Meat Laboratory
School of Animal Sciences
Francioni Hall
Baton Rouge, LA USA 70803-4210
For more information call (225) 578-3439

PLEASE NOTE:
The only methods of payment accepted for both publications are checks or money orders.

Meat Goat Production Handbook

$50 - includes shipping & handling
Published by Langston University
MGPH
Langston University
Box 730
Langston, OK 73050 USA
For more information contact Jerry Gipson at (405) 466-6126

Calendar of Events

June 20 - Maryland Wool Pool
Maryland State Fairgrounds, Timonium, MD
Contact: Dr. Rich Barczewski at (302) 857-6410 or rbarczew@desu.edu

June 21 - The Basics: What You Should Know About the Sheep and Goat Industry
6:30 p.m., Frostburg Library, Frostburg, MD
Contact: Derrick Bender at (301) 724-3320 or dbender@umd.edu

July 21 - WV Performance Test Ram Sale & Field Day
(includes FAMACHA training & Quality Assurance program)
WVU Reymann Farm, Wardensville, WV
Contact: Brad Smith at (304) 257-4688 or brad.smith@mail.wvu.edu

August 4 - PA Ram and Buck Performance Tested Sale and Invitational Ewe and Doe Sale
PA Livestock Evaluation Center, Pennsylvania Furnace, PA
Contact: Glenn Eberly at (814) 238-2527 or geberly@state.pa.us

August 25 - VA Performance Tested Ram Lamb Sale
Shenandoah Valley AREC, Steele's Tavern, VA
Contact: Dr. Scott Greiner at (540) 231-9159 or sgreiner@vt.edu

Sept. 1 - 8th Annual Virginia Tech Sheep Ctr. Production Sale
Alphin-Stuart Arena, Blacksburg, VA
Contact: Dr. Scott Greiner at (540) 231-9159 or sgreiner@vt.edu

For additional events, visit http://www.sheepandgoat.com and click on the "Upcoming Events" link on the right.

MARYLAND COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
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More information on sheep and goats can be accessed at http://mdsheepgoat.blogspot.com and http://www.sheepgoatmarketing.info.

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