



Herd the News

November/December 2018

The California Wool Growers Association will deliver lasting value to support and grow all segments of the California sheep industry.

American Lamb Flavor Study Completes Chef Panel Phase

The highly anticipated American Lamb Flavor Study is moving into its final stages. This extensive, multi-year research is being funded by your checkoff (the American Lamb Board). The ultimate goal is to identify how various management production practices affect American Lamb flavor.

We know lamb provides a unique flavor, which is key to its consumer demand. The Lamb Board research is gaining in-depth knowledge of the factors which influence it, and how our industry segments can contribute to lamb's consumer acceptance. Differences in production background, days on feed, gender and animal age have all been shown to influence flavor of lamb by altering the composition of lean and fat. Specifically, as lambs mature, and even if lambs are grain-fed for extended/excessive periods of time, there is an increase in the concentration of branched-chain fatty acids (BCFA) resulting in undesirable, "mutton-like" off-flavors (Tatum et al., 2014).

On Monday, November 12, the next critical step in the American Lamb Flavor Study occurred. The American Lamb Board and Colorado State University hosted an American Lamb Flavor Sensory Panel with 20 chefs from the Colorado Chefs Association, a chapter of the American Culinary Federation. Johnson and Wales University was selected for this panel because of its exceptional culinary arts education program.

The chef panelists were very diverse and included both those who frequently cook with lamb and those who are much less familiar. Each chef was given a flight of nine unseasoned ground lamb samples from various dentition groups (lamb, yearling and mutton), gender and production backgrounds. The panelists were asked to quantify lamb flavor intensity, off-flavor intensity and overall acceptability.

Of the 150 randomized samples used for this chef panel, not one sample was too overpowering or unacceptable in lamb flavor intensity. However, there were distinct differences in off-flavor and this led to several questions from chefs on feed background, gender and even geographic region of origin.

Following the panel, ALB and CSU led a discussion on the chef's preferences and overall acceptability from the lamb samples. The overwhelming message from chefs was they want their lamb to taste like lamb. They pay a premium for lamb and it should be distinct from beef or any other protein. For example, if lamb is too mild and undistinguishable from ground beef, that is undesirable.

This is one of the final steps of the American Lamb Flavor Study-Phase 2. Also, in the final steps is the validation of REIMS (Rapid Evaporative Ionisation Mass Spectrometry) technology that could accurately analyze flavor characteristics (metabolites). *Source: American Lamb Board*

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Presidents Message – Dan Macon



Dear CWGA membership,

As I write this during the week of Thanksgiving, the Camp Fire in Butte County continues to burn. Fortunately, we're awaiting the first storm in Northern California since early October. Like all of you, we need the rain – and like all you, I'm sure, I am looking for a way to help the communities near me that have been impacted by wildfire. As the needs of the livestock communities impacted by recent fires become clear, I know all of us will

help out as we can. Keep an eye on the CWGA website (see resources) for donation options.

The fires of the past two years have highlighted the need to prepare my own operation (and my own community) for these kinds of disasters. In my part of the Sierra foothills, county animal control services are typically not equipped to deal with the evacuation of commercial livestock during wildfires or flooding. Evacuation, when it requires multiple trucks (or even multiple gooseneck loads), is much more complicated than moving someone's backyard goats out of harm's way.

In early November, I had the opportunity to attend the West Central States Wool Growers Convention in Casper, Wyoming. On the first afternoon, Scott Cotton (an extension colleague from Wyoming) and our own Erica Sanko gave outstanding presentations on preparing for disasters and responding to foreign animal disease outbreaks. Their talks convinced me of the need for all of us to be proactive with respect to disaster planning.

Over the coming months, I'll be working with commercial livestock producers in the foothills and Sacramento Valley to develop county-level preparation plans. Those of us in the business of raising livestock on rangeland typically have the equipment, skills and local knowledge that are critical during these types of emergencies. Many of us already work together; these community-level plans will help us work more effectively with local, state and federal agencies. I encourage other CWGA members to take the lead on these types of efforts locally. Your local farm advisor can be a great resource! If you're not sure who your University of California Cooperative Extension advisor is in your county, go to <http://rangelands.ucdavis.edu/> and scroll down to "Find a UCCE Rangeland Professional."

During our annual convention last August, CWGA members created an ad hoc committee to help ensure that targeted grazing is part of the solution to California's wildfire problem. By the time you read this, our committee will have met several times. In 2019, we will be working with state and federal agencies to address funding needs relative to targeted grazing on public and private lands. We'll be developing a list of success stories – examples of where grazing has mitigated wildfire threat (please contact me if you have a success story to share!). And we'll be developing a targeted grazing educational program for producers. Stay tuned – there is a tremendous need for more grazing animals in much of the state – and a tremendous opportunity for us to be part of the solution!

As we wind down the year, I want to encourage all CWGA members to consider a contribution to our new California Guard Dog Fund. Patterned after ASI's fund, the California Guard Dog Fund was established to give all of us a mechanism for supporting important legal efforts on our behalf. In the last several years, CWGA has joined other statewide agricultural organizations in a variety of legal efforts, including support for Wildlife Services, a challenge to the state listing of the gray wolf as endangered, and a challenge to the designation of critical habitat for the red-legged frog. Donations to this fund will be placed in a separate savings account. The fund will be managed by our new Guard Dog Fund Committee, chaired by Ryan Indart. Since the Fund is not formally a 501(c)(3), your contributions are not considered a charitable donation; you should, however, be able to deduct the contribution as a business expense (similar to your CWGA dues). Be sure to ask your accountant if you have questions about this.

Finally, as we enter the Holiday Season (Thanksgiving is just two days away, as I write), I am so thankful to be part of this industry and this organization. Raising sheep, for most of us, is a business – but it's also an avocation! We are so fortunate to get to work with our families doing something we love to do. We're also fortunate to be part of a larger community like the California Wool Growers! I'm grateful for your collective dedication and passion for our industry. Best wishes for a prosperous and green 2019!

*May love, joy, and good tidings be yours in abundance this holiday season.
~ CWGA Officers, Board of Directors, and Staff*



Welcome New Members

CWGA is very pleased to welcome the following new members to CWGA:

Jim Currie, Buckeye Cattle, Dixon, CA

Andy Edomondson, Lazy E Ranch, Loma Rica, CA

Gold Rush Country School, Sonora, CA

Howard Lindaman, Sand Prairie Polypays, Marshalltown, IA

Fred & Maryann Hunt, Sweet Rose Ranch, Somerset, CA

Leila Titus, Titus Farms, Orland, CA

John Vetich, Brentwood, CA

Do You Have Your Eat Lamb...Wear Wool License Plate Frame Yet?

What a great way to show your support for the U.S. sheep and lamb industry by promoting domestic lamb and wool via your vehicle.

Member Cost: \$15.00 each plus tax & shipping.

To order, call the CWGA office at (916) 444-8122 or info@woolgrowers.org.



Don't Forget to Order Your CWGA Merchandise

Purchase your CWGA logo merchandise and support CWGA. All items are ordered from the online store and shipped directly to you. You can choose from a variety of CWGA logo items including hoodies and sweatshirts, headwear, polo shirts, outerwear, work wear, and more. Mens, ladies, and youth sizes available.

Go to www.californiawoolgrowers.org and click on shop/merchandise to access the online store and show your support for CWGA!

Member News

2019 Annual Membership Meeting & Convention ~ August 22 - 24 in Minden, NV

Date: August 22 - 24, 2019

Location: Carson Valley Inn, Minden, NV

Hotel Information: For online reservations go to www.carsonvalleyinn.com (click book online/group sign-in) and enter the following group code: 1528. Or call 800-321-6983 and mention the California Wool Growers Association.

Room Rates: Hotel: Sun/Thurs \$92.00, Fri/Sat \$115.00

Registration: Opens May 2019

CWGA Guard Dog Funds Received

The CWGA Memorial Donation Fund helps to support CWGA in its efforts to support and engage in legal activities related to sheep, livestock, and agriculture in California.

Dan & Samia Macon, Flying Mule Farm, Auburn, CA

Online Registration Open for 2019 ASI Annual Convention

The Crescent City will host the American Sheep Industry Association Annual Convention for the first time, and we invite you to join us When the Sheep Go Marching In on Jan. 23-26, 2019, at the New Orleans Marriott.

The 2019 ASI Annual Convention is shaping up to be one of the best in the association's 154-year history.

First and foremost, the Annual Convention provides an opportunity for the entire American sheep industry to come together to handle important business. ASI will be joined in New Orleans by the American Lamb Board, American Goat Federation, ASI Women, National Lamb Feeders Association, National Livestock Producers Association, National Sheep Improvement Program, National Sheep Industry Improvement Center, Sheep Heritage Foundation, Sheep Venture Company and Western Range Association.

Throughout the week, important meetings involving ASI's councils and committees, as well as these ancillary groups, will tackle important topics of discussion as the sheep industry heads into the coming year.

The Make It With Wool National Finals will also be conducted during the week and wrap-up on Saturday evening with the MIWW Banquet and Fashion Show.

For registration information visit - <http://www.sheepusa.org/>.

Livestock Owners Asked to Weigh in on Fire Impact

Preparing a farm for wildfire is more complicated when it involves protecting live animals.

To assess the impact of wildfire on livestock production, University of California researchers are asking livestock producers to participate in a survey. People raising cattle, sheep, goats, poultry, swine, horses, llamas, alpacas, aquaculture species or other production-oriented animals in California who have experienced at least one wildfire on their property within the last 10 years are asked to participate in the FIRE survey.

Your participation is essential to helping develop the risk assessment. The survey will take about 15-30 minutes of your time, depending on the number of your properties that have been affected by wildfire.

To learn more about the survey go to - https://ucdavis.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6P6Uy695cEbcYgl.

Industry Resources Available to Help Improve Your Operation

ASI's Let's Grow Your Flock Program



A variety of resources and materials focusing on how to improve the productivity of your sheep operation have been funded through the American Sheep Industry's Let's Grow campaign. These materials include webinars, articles, factsheets, and other items focusing on a wide-range of topics including genetic selection, nutrition, parasite management, and ewe performance.

All information including webinars, articles, and factsheets are available on the Let's Grow website at http://www.sheepusa.org/Growourflock_Resources_EducationalWebinars.

ASI Website Resources



The American Sheep Industry (ASI) website offer a wealth of information on the sheep, lamb and wool sectors including lamb market reports, research on animal health issues, wool quality programs, and much more.

To access information on the ASI website visit www.sheepusa.org and scroll over Research & Education, and Issues & Programs.

Lamb Industry Resource Center



The Lamb Resource Center is your one-stop shop for industry resources and information. This site has a number of resources including best practices factsheets that address a variety of production related topics (e.g. animal handling, reproduction management), customizable marketing materials for direct to consumer marketing, an ethnic marketing retail toolkit, lamb meat pricing calculator and much more.

Visit www.LambResourceCenter.com to access these materials.

National Sheep Improvement Program



The mission of the National Sheep Improvement Program (NSIP) is to provide predictable, economically important genetic evaluation information to the American Sheep industry by converting performance records into relevant decisions making tools.

By using breeding stock with genetic predictability, all types of flocks have a foundation of genetic information upon which to build a superior and more consistent product to their customers, whether this be a feeder, packer or consumer. This genetic predictability is achievable through NSIP's Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs).

For more information about the NSIP program visit www.nsip.org.

UC Rangelands – California Grazing & Drought Resources



The mission of UC Rangelands is to develop and advance science-based knowledge to diverse management and policy stakeholders to promote agricultural and environmental sustainability on California's grazing lands. The UC Rangelands Drought Hub, which features research and extension information for producers and rangeland managers.

For more information and resources from UC Rangelands go to - www.rangelands.ucdavis.edu.

Legislative Update

California Voters Approve Prop. 12, Bad for Farmers, Consumers Says NPPC

California voters approved Proposition 12, an initiative that bans, starting in 2020, the sale in the state of pork and veal from animals raised anywhere in the country in housing the state banned through a 2008 ballot initiative. (In 2010, the California Legislature banned the sale of eggs from hens housed in so-called battery cages regardless of where they are raised.) Prop. 12 also requires egg-laying hens in the state to be cage free.

California Pork Producers Associatoin (CPPA) and the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC), which strongly opposed it, maintains that the initiative violates the U.S. Constitution's Commerce Clause and that it will be costly for farmers and consumers. NPPC is supporting federal legislation that would prohibit states from regulating agricultural production practices outside their borders and is backing lawsuits – now pending before the U.S. Supreme Court – filed by attorneys general from nearly two dozen states against California's egg sales ban and a 2016 Massachusetts ballot measure that banned the sale of eggs, pork and veal from animals raised in housing prohibited by the same measure. *Source: National Pork Produces Council, www.nppc.org*

Vote on 2018 Farm Bill Could Come By Year's End

Congressional lawmakers have discussed a possible “lame duck” vote on the 2018 Farm Bill. (A lame duck session is the period between congressional elections and the start of a new Congress.) A conference committee, reconciling Senate- and House-passed legislation, was expected in late November to approve a final bill, which would need to be voted on by the Senate and the House. While the details of the conference committee bill aren't known, the legislation is expected to include some mandatory funding for animal health and disease preparedness. If a vote on the 2018 Farm Bill does not occur before the end of the current Congress, it is likely the 2014 Farm Bill, which expired Sept. 30, would get a one-year extension, and new Farm Bill legislation would need to be introduced in the 2019 Congress.

USDA, FDA Agree to Joint Oversight of Cell-Cultured Foods

USDA and FDA officials announced last week the agencies have agreed to a joint regulation approach for cell-cultured food products.

The decision follows on last month's public meeting held in Washington to discuss how best to regulate the use of livestock and poultry cell lines to develop cell-cultured products.

Taking that feedback into account, USDA and FDA officials discussed the issues and concluded both agencies should oversee production of cell-cultured food products derived from livestock and poultry.

Under this framework, FDA will manage cell collection, cell banks, and cell growth and differentiation. USDA will take over during the cell harvest stage, and then will oversee production and labeling of cell-based meat products.

Meanwhile, the agencies say they're ironing out technical details such as how the two agencies will collaborate and share information while carrying out their respective roles.

In a statement, Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue and FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb said, “USDA and FDA are confident that this regulatory framework can be successfully implemented and assure the safety of these products. Because our agencies have the statutory authority necessary to appropriately regulate cell-cultured food products derived from livestock and poultry the Administration does not believe that legislation on this topic is necessary.”

The public comment period has been extended to Dec. 26. Visit www.regulations.gov and follow the online instructions for submitting comments to docket FSIS–2018–0036.

Source: Meatingplace, www.meatingplace.com

Legislative Update

Gray Wolf Delisting Passes in U.S. House

On a vote of 196-180 on Friday, Nov. 16th the House of Representatives approved bipartisan legislation introduced by Reps. Sean Duffy (R., Wis.) and Dan Newhouse (R., Wash.) to return management of gray wolves to state control.

Management of gray wolves was transferred from the state to the federal level following two 2014 U.S. district court decisions that reinstated gray wolves under the protections of the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

While listed under the ESA, wolves cannot be properly managed by state wildlife agencies, which supporters say best know how to balance healthy ecosystems with the needs of local communities and changing conditions on the ground. These designations leave farmers and ranchers in those states without a legal avenue to protect their livestock from wolves.

“The recovery of the gray wolf is a success story for the Endangered Species Act, and the best available science must determine whether species remain listed,” Newhouse said. “States are best equipped to effectively manage gray wolves and respond to the needs of the ecosystem and local communities. I am pleased that this bipartisan legislation to return management of the gray wolf species to the states, as requested by the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife and as proposed by the Obama Administration, has been approved by the House. I urge prompt consideration in the Senate.”

Newhouse stated during his floor speech, “On June 13, 2013, under the Obama Administration, the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service published in the Federal Register a proposed rule that would have removed the gray wolf from the 'List of Endangered & Threatened Wildlife.' This determination was made after Fish & Wildlife evaluated the classification status of gray wolves currently listed in the contiguous United States under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 and found, and I quote, the ‘best available scientific and commercial information indicates that the currently listed entity is not a valid species under the act.’”

The Public Lands Council (PLC), National Cattlemen’s Beef Assn. (NCBA) and American Sheep Industry Assn. (ASI) praised the passage of H.R. 6784, the Manage our Wolves Act, and asked the Senate to take it up before the lame-duck session ends. Prior to the vote, PLC, NCBA and ASI, along with 37 additional livestock and agricultural organizations, sent a letter of support for the bill to House leadership.

“Since 2011, the best scientific and commercial data available has supported removing gray wolves from the 'List of Threatened & Endangered Species.' It is encouraging to see the House of Representatives take this important step to make the Endangered Species Act work the way it was intended,” NCBA president Kevin Kester said.

In addition to requiring the Fish & Wildlife Service to reissue the Obama Administration-era rules, H.R. 6784 would require further rule-making to remove ESA protections for gray wolves across the contiguous U.S. Current and emerging science continues to find that wolf populations have been fully recovered nationwide.

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) urged the Senate to reject the legislation.

“This legislation is just the latest in a string of over 50 previous congressional attempts to undermine federal wolf protections. For a handful of legislators to not only remove federal protections for iconic wolves but also undermine citizens’ rights to hold their government accountable is unacceptable,” said Kitty Block, acting president and chief executive officers of HSUS.

Source: Feedstuffs, www.feedstuffs.com

Note: In California, the Gray Wolf is listed as an endangered species under California law. If the gray wolf is delisted from federal law, it will still be protected under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA).

Member Spotlight: Naturally Colored Fiber at Blue Barn Farm

In a steep and sunny, five-acre hillside in El Dorado County, Catherine Lawson tends to her flock. They are some of the most luxurious wool-producing ungulates around, Merino sheep and Cashmere goats, and here, they live in many colors.

The Merino grow fleeces of white, tan, and black (which really looks like chocolate-silver, Catherine explains). They wear coats throughout the year to protect their fleece's quality and cleanliness. Once shorn, the sheep are given the smallest size coat, which is then changed 3-4 times a year as the wool grows back and slightly larger coats are needed. The cashmere goats, however, have no need for coats. The "guard hairs" (the coarser, thicker hairs that aren't suitable for spinning) protect the fine undercoat. "It's like your dog shedding. You comb their hair and then pick out the guard hairs by hand. Once you've done that, you have the softer fibers that you can comb to make into roving." After learning just how labor intensive it is to get the usable material, plus the preparation and comparatively low yield of fiber from the goats, it's no wonder cashmere is as expensive as it is.



"A black goat will never give you black cashmere" states Catherine. "Everything you buy in the store that is black cashmere has been dyed. A producer I know in the Midwest said she has a baby goat that looks like it might give off true black cashmere, and if so, that's game changing." Black cashmere goats will actually produce a taupe or a tan wool (but their body is black); and the whites will produce white. Catherine points out a beautiful pregnant goat standing under the oak tree with brown and white coloring, "This girl with the badger face, she has an ivory color fiber."

After walking the sloped pasture, Catherine ducks inside the blue barn, the very one her farm is named after. She emerges with a precious two-day-old doeling. The most remarkable thing, besides the undeniable cuteness of a tiny baby goat, is her color. "I was so shocked I almost fell over when I saw her color," exclaims Catherine, "because this apricot is absolutely like nothing I have here. I have white and black. I do not have any red animals." Her best guess was that her white buck Kristoff, who so far has thrown 100% white kids (even with the black does), may be the carrier of the recessive apricot gene. When paired with a certain doe, somehow this never-before-seen recessive color emerged. With an apricot orange coat and baby blue eyes, she's a pure wonder.

The next subject becomes grass, food, and soil. The land the animals have been on is well grazed; Catherine supplements with hay while a lush field of grass sits just beyond the cross-fence line. Catherine is waiting for help to have a part of the fence at the bottom of the hill repaired, so that she can enable her cross-fencing system and rotate grazing. In looking at how tall the grass has grown, she determines the timing of when to move the animals. "The way that grass grows," states Catherine, "it gets taller very slowly at first, and then, as there's more blade to absorb sunlight and create chlorophyll, the second part of growth is much more rapid. Once the grass gets a certain height, maybe halfway, it will then get taller much faster until going to seed." She reseeds the grass every year, and supplements with hay as needed. Catherine is also studying her soil quality.

"Here in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, the earth is all rock with a little clay in between. We don't really have soil. You've got to take the rock and clay and improve it somehow." She's currently engaged with taking soil samples with the assistance of Fibershed's Citizen Science program, and learning how she can best improve it for her animals, her future gardens, and to assist with the erosion issues that come from grazing on a steep slope.

When asked what inspires her to do this work, Catherine relates, "Oh, this isn't work. This is what I do for fun." As for her work, Catherine is a full-time practicing attorney. Now her flock totals about 25 Merino sheep and 25 Cashmere goats, from whom Catherine collects and sells raw fiber, roving and batts in a variety of colors.

Source: Fibershed, www.fibershed.com

Member Spotlight: Sheep to Shawl: Elkus Ranch Offers Chance to See from Where Wool, Food Comes

Of the numerous coastal farms along the winding hills of Half Moon Bay, the nonprofit Elkus Ranch stands out as an educational resource.

Children have the opportunity to learn first-hand how food and fibers are produced through Elkus Ranch's edible garden tour and by interacting with farm animals.

The Richard J. Elkus Ranch was once a commercial dairy and cattle farm spanning across 600 acres. In 1975, Richard J. Elkus donated the facility to the University of California in hopes of spreading awareness about the everyday necessities we often overlook, said Kathi Baxter, environmental science educator at Elkus Ranch. The educational programs started in 1978 and continued throughout the years, even as the farm dwindled to a more manageable 125 acres, Baxter said.

The ranch welcomes about 8,000 kids a year, most third grade or younger. But the mission of the ranch has always been to provide these types of experiences to all ages, including high school students, adults and those with special needs, Baxter said.

In early June, Elkus Ranch hosted its annual Sheep to Shawl event that allowed the public to wander about and marvel at the facilities while watching wool be sheared, spun and knit.

"The majority of children don't know where their clothing fiber or food actually originates from. So, when they're here and they see the wool comes right off the sheep, then it's through a process that's knitted and made into something they can wear, there's that strong connection," Baxter said.

Elkus Ranch is primarily supported by donations and grants from the University of California and individuals. The funds from events like Sheep to Shawl go toward providing transportation for low-income students to visit the ranch and participate in their educational programs, Baxter said. Elkus Ranch representatives seek out low-income schools to which they can provide scholarships, Baxter said. Being able to waive program fees is why donations are so critical, Baxter said.

Scholarship programs are typically held from the middle of November to late February. Tours tend to be fully booked from March to June, sometimes hosting 90 kids a day, Baxter said. Elkus Ranch has also begun to host birthday parties and Girl Scout camps.

Participants can visit with Elkus Ranch's 30 chickens, 20 sheep, 10 goats, five cows, three rabbits, two horses and a llama. The children are taught about life cycles and food chains. By touching fur pellets and animal bones, they learn about birth and decomposition. There are also lessons about the differences between prey, predators and scavengers, Baxter said.

The dedication of the Elkus Ranch staff, volunteers and community members allows the facility to prosper. The reactions and support they receive from those who visit their farm helps solidify their mission to educate, entertain and enrich the lives of future generations.

"When they're eating broccoli and they see that it's growing and they relate that to the broccoli their mom bought in Safeway, they make that connection that there's something important about the land and the work that's gone into producing that food," Baxter said. "We'd like them to leave with a sense of stewardship, that they have some control over how they treat the land and the water, because it's necessary to produce all of this." For more information visit www.ucanr.org/sites/elkus_ranch or call 712-3151.

Source: The San Mateo Daily Journal



Children touch the wool they've just seen sheared from a sheep at Elkus Ranch.

‘Grazing Geeks’ Adapt Technology for Ranching Use

A group of self-described "grazing geeks" showed during a University of California field day how they've been able to adapt different technologies—often cheaply—to help their ranching operations.

With some of the technology they use to manage livestock and grazing, the ranchers increasingly borrow ideas and tools from overseas and other industries to improve what they do: That was a main thrust of what they shared during the UC Cooperative Extension field day in Placer County last week.

"The technology follows the dollar," said Nevada County rancher Brad Fowler (*CWGA member*). "There's not enough money in a lot of what we do to drive the economics of the tools we use."

That means sometimes "ponying off of other industries" for products and solutions that could work well in ranching, he added. One example is his portable livestock water system, an idea he said he got from the cannabis industry, which "has to move water to a lot of their plants." As someone who runs a contract grazing business, Fowler said his biggest struggle is moving water inexpensively to his livestock.

"I couldn't take half of my contracts if I didn't have the ability to get water," he said.

His system consists of hooking an inexpensive pump to a water wagon trailer and drafting water through a 1-inch black poly pipe, which allows him to push water to wherever it needs to go. The water flows into an all-purpose water trough with a float valve, both made in New Zealand.

As a "frugal sheep guy," Dan Macon, a UC livestock and natural resources advisor (*CWGA President*), demonstrated how he turned an exercise GPS tracker into a homemade collar that could be used to track the behavior of guard dogs and livestock. Commercial GPS collars typically cost \$500 to \$700, he noted, whereas his setup is about \$89. The tracker itself is about \$50, but cellular service at about \$19 a month is needed for real-time locations on a smartphone for tracking.

"I think when we're dealing with predators, these types of collars might be an interesting way to track what's going on," he said.

When the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced it would no longer provide free metal serial or flock ID ear tags to sheep and goat producers, Macon evaluated whether an electronic identification system would make sense for his small operation. He looked to United Kingdom-based Shearwell Data, which sells radio-frequency ID ear tags for about a dollar apiece. Whereas the old scrapie ear tags have an 85 to 88 percent retention rate, the Shearwell tags are rated at 99.5 percent, according to the manufacturer.

"What we've discovered are some significant labor savings in using this system," Macon said.

The key is in the electronic tag reader, which costs about \$2,400 and can save data associated with the tags. This allows him to scan an animal and find information such as its body-condition score without having to flip through pages of handwritten records, he said. The smallness of the tags also allows him to put one tag on during lambing and eliminate a second tag that usually goes on during weaning.

"For sheep, it's a big deal," he said. "The fewer times you have to bring them in, the less labor you have, by a long shot."



Roger Ingram, UC livestock and natural resources advisor emeritus, demonstrates how he uses a drone to take aerial photos and videos of rangeland to help improve livestock handling.

Regarding smartphone apps, Fowler, who runs sheep and goats in Placer, Nevada and Yuba counties, shared his experience using Planimeter, a land-surveying app he uses to map pastures and measure distance, perimeter, bearing, angle and GPS coordinates.

"We use it a lot with our contract grazing when you're trying big jobs and need to know exactly how big they are," he said. "We also use it in fence building."

He said he also likes OnX Hunt, a GPS mapping tool originally made for recreational hunters but that could be helpful to ranchers. The maps on the app detail public and private property boundaries and provide landowner names.



Dan Macon, a UC livestock and natural resources advisor, right, shows ranchers at a grazing technology field day what an electronic ear-tag reader can do.

Another mapping app called PastureMap allows Nevada County rancher Rob Thompson to map his ranch and keep better records on grazing movement, vegetation, soil and other information, he said. Cost is \$500 a year for up to 500 head of cattle, with different rates depending on the number of animals. He said the app is worth it for him because he tends to fall behind on recordkeeping and grazing charts, but the app on his phone simplifies the process and makes retrieving the records easier. A similar app is MaiaGrazing.

Roger Ingram, UC livestock and natural resources advisor emeritus (*CWGA member*), described how he uses Google Earth Pro—a free download—with a paper spreadsheet to prepare grazing plans. He records every paddock move and then enters the information in Google Calendar, because it has better searching capabilities.

Another free app that could aid pasture management is GrassSnap, which allows users to snap photos and enter data associated with the photos, Macon said.

Ingram talked about using drones to take aerial photos and videos of rangeland to help improve livestock handling. The better visuals, he said, could help ranchers monitor forage. For those who do targeted grazing, the images could be helpful when bidding on jobs to show what could be done, or to show landowners how the property looks before and after grazing.

Placer County ranchers Connie and Albert Scheiber, who run cattle in Lincoln, talked about using single-wire electric fencing to help manage rotational grazing. They used to use electric fencing mainly to keep cattle out of certain areas, but now they're using the single-wire system for cross-fencing as they rotate cattle around the field. They started with three wires, which they said took too much time and work, and have found that one wire works well enough to keep animals in their boundaries.

Spencer Tregilgas (*CWGA member*), who runs grass-fed lamb, cattle, pigs and chickens in El Dorado County, spoke about the K-Line pod irrigation system, which could help ranchers use water more efficiently on irrigated pasture. The advantage of the system's aboveground sprinkler design is that the pods and tubing could be moved in minutes without disturbing grazing livestock. Cost of a five-pod line is \$1,200 to \$1,500, with the pipes guaranteed to last five years of sun exposure, he said. It takes him an average of 15 minutes to move four lines with a four-wheeler if he's going straight across the field.

Though he was scheduled to talk about artificial insemination, embryo transfer and other reproduction technology, Placer County rancher Joe Fischer acknowledged it's easy to get caught up in "cool, interesting trinkets" that are at ranchers' disposal. Instead, he stressed the importance of "feel and (of) understanding livestock" through observation and culling techniques to build long-term, problem-free herds.

Source: Ag Alert, California Farm Bureau Federation

Superior Farms Receives First Approval to Resume American Lamb Exports to Japan

Leading American lamb purveyor expands distribution overseas

Superior Farms, the leading purveyor of farm-to-table American lamb, today announced it has exported the first shipment of American lamb to Japan since the country's doors reopened after a 15 year absence. Superior Farms is working closely with its producer partners to deliver an exceptional product that will exceed the expectations of the Japanese consumer. The Japanese distributor, Farmland Trading will be working with Superior Farms to introduce premium Superior Farms American lamb to high-end restaurants and retail outlets.

"We have continued our relationship with Farmland Trading for 15 years anticipating this day," said Rick Stott, chief executive officer at Superior Farms. "This shipment represents a first step in a long-term strategic plan to grow the presence and appetite for American lamb in Japan. The potential to develop Japan into an excellent export country for American lamb is clearly there, but it will take time, investment and a long-term strategy to make that happen."

Superior Farms is working closely with their family farmer partners to raise grain-fed lambs that are raised and hand selected at just the right time to deliver a rich, mild flavor with the size and yield that only Superior Farms American Lamb can deliver. While the Japanese market has been served by other countries, Superior Farms American Lamb brings a unique dining experience to Japan both inside and outside the home, with recipe versatility and unparalleled taste and quality that cannot be matched.

The company's 412 employee owners are excited about the opportunity for Japanese consumers to experience the pleasure of the product that they so proudly bring to market. "We've always known that Superior Farms brings something special to people's lives," said Shaylynn Beam, sales and marketing coordinator. "It's great to think of others who haven't experienced us and will now get to enjoy American lamb."

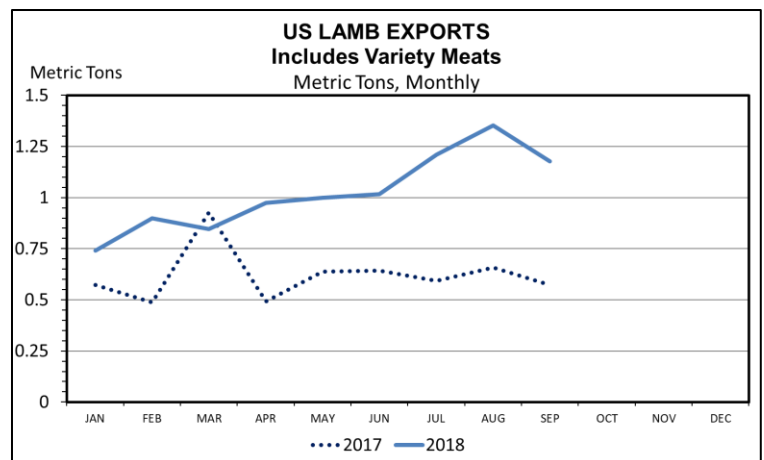
For information about Superior Farms, recipe inspiration and more please visit www.superiorfarms.com. For sales inquiries, please contact sfsales@superiorfarms.com.

Lamb Variety Exports Climb in September, But Muscle Cuts Still Sluggish

September exports of U.S. lamb more than doubled from a year ago to 1,177 mt (up 106 percent), fueled by a sharp increase in lamb variety meat exports to Mexico. But export value was down 12 percent to \$1.63 million as muscle cuts continued to struggle. Lamb muscle cut exports were just 126 mt in September, down 53 percent from a year ago and matching the lowest monthly volume of 2018.

Through the first three quarters of the year, lamb exports were 65 percent ahead of last year's pace in volume (9,210 mt) and 16 percent higher in value (\$17.1 million). The increase is mainly attributable to stronger variety meat demand in Mexico, but muscle cut exports showed promising growth in the Bahamas, the United Arab Emirates, Taiwan and the Philippines.

Source: U.S. Meat Export Federation, www.usmef.org



U.S. Lamb Exporters Prepare to Seize Sales in Japan

Meat industry professionals in the U.S. are gearing up to re-enter Japan's lucrative lamb market, following the Japanese government in July (2018) lifting a ban to import American lamb into Japan.

U.S. exporters are hoping to persuade Japanese consumers that American lamb is a quality, even niche, product, as they seek to compete with Australian and New Zealand rivals.

Japan had closed its doors to U.S. sheep meat in 2003, following outbreaks of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) or mad cow disease.



In the intervening years, Australia and New Zealand became the largest exporters of lamb to Japan.

In 2016, Meat and Livestock Australia reported a 12.9% year-on-year increase in Australian exports of sheep meat to Japan, while New Zealand lamb exports to Japan from October 2016 to September 2017 were up 36.9%.

As Japan imported a record U.S.\$169 million in sheep and goat meat in 2017 and consumption was expected to rise in 2018, the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) said it was confident that the U.S. could reclaim sales, even if initially it was a small market share.

"Japan is one of the world's top importers of lamb. If the U.S. can capture just 0.5% of Japan's imported market share, Japan will be one of the top export markets for U.S. lamb muscle cuts," Ralph Loos, director of communications for USMEF, told GlobalMeatNews.

He added that, while the U.S. export industry was not large enough to displace Australia and New Zealand's position, it could attract new customers "by offering a very high-quality product that hasn't been available in Japan for many years".

Loos said he believed U.S. grain-fed lamb would appeal to consumers who had not previously enjoyed lamb, thanks to its "milder and less gamey" flavour profile and texture. It also offered greater cooking options through being available in larger, thicker cuts, he said.

Peter Orwick, executive director of the American Sheep Industry Association (ASIA), meanwhile, said U.S. lamb could gain a similar high status to that of U.S. beef.

"U.S. lamb commands a premium in restaurants and retail sectors in the American market and we anticipate that [to happen] in the Japan market as well," he said.

Four ASIA member firms have signed up to attend an industry event in Japan on 28 November, where USMEF will organise an educational seminar on sheep meat for chefs, importers and other food industry professionals.

According to Japan-based B2C meat sales firm The Meat Guy, lamb is "hitting an era of popularity", aided by growing demand from Muslim tourists, as most imported lamb is halal.

USMEF's Loos added that U.S. lamb producers were ready to capitalise on the halal market as its suppliers were well equipped to meet this demand.

Source: Global Meat News.com, www.globalmeatnews.com

Thank you for your continued support for CWGA!

Woolrich to Close, Leaves Long Legacy of Wool Craft

The company, in a joint announcement with its new European owners, said the woolen mill and its fabric manufacturing operations will shut down by Jan. 1, resulting in the furlough of 40 people.

“The decision to close the mill was made following a comprehensive review of our overall woven fabric business and the considerable capital improvements needed to modernize and maintain viable operations. Unfortunately, due to higher manufacturing costs, eroding margins and continued unprofitability within the mill, it is no longer economically feasible to continue our Pennsylvania based Woolen Mill operation,” said Nick Brayton, president of Woolrich Inc., in a prepared statement released Thursday.

The mill opened in 1845 and — at least for now — is the oldest, continuously operated mill in the United States. But “it simply is not profitable,” Brayton said, because of its antiquated equipment.

“This is not an easy decision, obviously,” he added. “It’s basically a result of years of unprofitability within the mill.”

The decision was made by Woolrich International, in concert with L-GAM Advisors, which just bought Woolrich’s international and American operations in late September for an undisclosed price. L-GAM is based in Luxembourg. Including Brayton, a smaller group of Woolrich family members and former employees maintain minority ownership.

The Woolrich outlet store in the iconic village is not affected by the mill’s closing, Brayton said, though he declined to speculate on its future.

However, the company’s distribution center, which reportedly still is open though in limited operation, is listed for sale at \$3.1 million. The warehouse on just under eight acres in Porter Township, outside of Jersey Shore.

Brayton added “We are eternally grateful to all our employees for their years of dedication and loyalty to the company and our number one priority right now is to help affected employees through this transition. While this was a very difficult decision, our strategic approach to align our collections globally remains our primary focus and we are continuing the next stage of the globalization of the Woolrich brand.”

The company will maintain its wholesale, retail and e-commerce apparel businesses.

Brayton, meanwhile, said he still is working with Woolrich International’s chief executive officer, Paolo Corinaldesi, a consultant to former Woolrich owner, W.P. Lavori of Corso, Italy.

The only other two woolen mills in operation in the U.S. are the Pendelton Woolen Mill at Portland, Oregon, and the Faribault Woolen Mill in Faribault, Minn.

The Woolrich mill produces blankets, throws and fabric “for our own use within our garments, as well as fabric for other, third-party private labels,” Brayton said.

“We will now start to outsource our blankets domestically. We’re working with a few different parties and we’re optimistic to have continued quality and a very nice blanket line and other products moving forward.”

Another sad reaction to the closing came from Bill Batchelder, president of Bemidji Woolen Mills in Bemidji, Minn.

Bemidji is among Woolrich’s oldest customers and has been affiliated with Woolrich since 1920. It purchases wool fabric from Woolrich for cutting, sewing and producing garments.

The Minnesota firm – its operation is 98 years running – has 10 employees.

Batchelder called the Woolrich mill closing “devastating.”

“We wish there was another way. Woolrich is very important to us ... and has been for generations,” Batchelder said.

Take Steps to Prevent Abortions in Sheep

Prevention is the key to protecting ewes against abortion-causing diseases.

Sheep producers need to watch for abortions, stillbirths and weak lambs during the upcoming lambing season, according to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Sheep and Goat Specialist Reid Redden.

“Numerous infectious agents are commonly found in U.S. sheep flocks, and they can cause diseases such as chlamydia, vibriosis and toxoplasmosis,” he says.

Chlamydia is caused by a pathogen that is transmitted through the placenta and birthing fluids. Unexposed ewes, including ewe lambs, have a high rate of abortion (20 to 30 percent), whereas previously exposed ewes have a much lower rate of abortion (0 to 5 percent).

A high rate of weak and unhealthy lambs can be a sign of chlamydia in a sheep flock, Redden says. He suggests adding feed-grade antibiotics to late-gestation diets to treat ewe flocks diagnosed with chlamydia.

Vaccines can improve resistance to the disease, he adds. However, they are not 100 percent effective and do not provide lasting immunity.

“Chlamydia also has the potential to cause human disease, especially in pregnant women,” NDSU Extension veterinarian Charlie Stoltenow says. “Women who are pregnant or planning to become pregnant should limit their exposure to pregnant ewes.”

Vibriosis, also known as campylobacteriosis, is caused by bacteria that are transmittable through birthing fluid. Previously exposed ewes appear to develop protective immunity. Feed-grade and injectable antibiotics can be used to treat the disease during an outbreak. Vaccines are available; however, they must be given every year prior to breeding and during midgestation.

Toxoplasmosis is a disease that almost always is a result of feed contamination by cat feces and/or birthing fluids. Unless ewes previously were exposed to the toxoplasmosis, the infectious agent will invade the placenta and cause placentitis, an inflammation of the placenta.

Exposure during early gestation may lead to fetal reabsorption or expulsion, and late-gestation exposure may lead to stillbirths or weak lambs. No effective treatment is available.

“Prevention is the key to protecting ewes from these disease-causing agents,” Redden says. “Most all ewe abortions result from ingestion of either contaminated feed or birthing fluids of infected ewes, so access to clean, high-quality feed and water during gestation and proper disposal of placentas are crucial to reducing the likelihood of ewe diseases.”

Here is what producers should do if a ewe aborts a pregnancy:

- Separate the ewe from the flock.
- Properly dispose of the placenta, fetus and contaminated bedding to reduce any further flock exposure. Handling these items is a human health risk, so wear gloves.
- Contact your veterinarian to properly diagnose the infectious agent that caused the abortion.
- Maintain current vaccination programs if positive diagnoses have been made on your flock.
- Consider whether using feed-grade antibiotics during late gestation is appropriate for your flock health.

Source: North Dakota State University Ag Communication

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To order, contact the CWGA office at 916-444-8122 or erica@woolgrowers.org.

Product tags can be viewed at the following link - <http://californiawoolgrowers.org/products/healthproducts/>.

September 2018 Scrapie Report Released

For FY 2017 and 2018 the percent of cull black-faced sheep found positive at slaughter was 0 percent and the percent of cull sheep found positive at slaughter and adjusted for face color was 0 percent. The retrospective 6-month rolling average of the percent positive, black-faced sheep sampled at RSSS collection sites has been 0 since June 2016.

In August, a Pennsylvania goat sampled at slaughter in July was confirmed positive for classical scrapie. The herd was designated as a source flock in September. Two other flocks, one in Colorado and one in Texas, have open statuses, but there are no exposed animals on the premises of these flocks. Cleaning and disinfection of these premises has to be completed before the infect or source status can be closed.

In April, APHIS identified scrapie in a 171 RR sheep from a flock in NC. There was insufficient positive tissue available to rule out non-classical scrapie; no other sheep in the flock have tested positive for scrapie.

To report a sheep or goat with clinical signs of scrapie, please contact your local VS office or State Veterinarian. For California call 916-854-3950. APHIS will pay indemnity for adult sheep or goats with neurological or other signs or that are determined to be consistent with scrapie.

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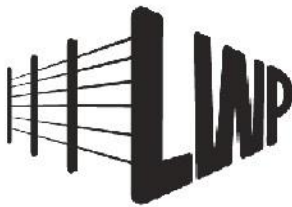
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Looking forward to speaking with you, Bill & Susan Shaul



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December 7, 2018
Board of Directors Meeting
Modesto, CA

December 11, 2018
California Sheep Commission Meeting
Sacramento, CA

January 19, 2019
UC Davis Aggie Classic Sale
Davis, CA

January 23 – 26, 2019
ASI Annual Convention
New Orleans, LA

February 9, 2019
Chico State Annual Sheep & Meat Goat
Education Day
Chico, CA

April 13, 2019
California Ram Sale
Porterville, CA

August 1 – 2, 2019
3rd Annual CWGA Online All Breeds
Sheep Sale

August 22 – 24, 2019
159th Annual Meeting & Convention
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