



Herd the News

September/October 2019

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

Update on Efforts Addressing the New Ag Overtime Law on Shepherdher Wages

~ Dan Macon, CWGA President

As we arrive at end of the September recess in the California Legislature, I wanted to provide members of the California Wool Growers Association with an update on our efforts to address the impacts of California's new agricultural overtime law.

As you know, CWGA – with the leadership of our ad hoc Labor Committee – has pushed for a legislative solution to this problem. With the help of our lobbyist, George Soares, we have succeeded in raising the profile of this issue with state legislators and Governor Newsom's administration. Through our efforts, the California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) has reinterpreted AB 1066 relative to shepherders – what was originally slated to be a 161% increase in shepherdher wages is now interpreted to be a 51% increase (for employers of 25 or fewer people) in 2022. However, despite this progress, we have not succeeded in finding a legislative vehicle for a viable fix. While there are a variety of reasons for this, the bottom line is that we are concluding the first phase of our effort to address this problem. We're now working on phase 2.

This new phase will focus on a variety of options that will address labor affordability and economic viability. Over the next week to 10 days, our ad hoc Labor Committee and CWGA officer team will be fleshing out these new strategies and scheduling meetings with our friends in the California State Senate and Assembly.

While we're not where we need to be in resolving this issue, I want to be sure to thank our friends in the Legislature, especially Senator Anna Caballero and Assembly Member Devin Mathis. Through their bipartisan efforts, the profile of this issue – and our profile as an organization and industry – has been raised to the highest levels of California government. We will be working with Ms. Caballero and Mr. Mathis in the coming weeks to advance our new strategies.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the tireless effort and outstanding leadership provided by our ad hoc Labor Committee. Ben and Steve Elgorriaga, Frankie Iturriria, Richard Hamilton, Florence Cubiburu, and especially Treasurer Andree Soares, and co-chairs, Ryan Indart and Dominique Minaberrigarai, have spent countless hours representing our collective interests. George Soares has been outstanding – helping us make connections with key members of the Legislature and Newsom administration. And Erica Sanko has continued to keep us on track and focused. Thank you all.

Obviously, we still have a great deal of work to do. You, our CWGA members, and many of our friends and allies, have stepped up with contributions to our California Guard Dog Fund – thank you. We are in this for the long haul. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions, concerns, or ideas!

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Presidents Message – Dan Macon



Dear CWGA Membership,

As I write this, we are experiencing what I hope is the last heat wave of the year. Here in Northern California, PG&E has shut down power off and on for the last several days to avoid the kind of wind-driven wildfires we've experienced over the last several years. Fire, it seems, remains foremost in the minds of many.

Our industry – and many of our members – offers the most cost-effective tool for managing fine fuel loads and brush in much of the state. I'm encouraged to see so many experienced producers incorporating targeted grazing into their business models – and to see new producers ramping up to meet this demand. Other than prescribed fire (which can be difficult to use in the wildland-urban interface), grazing is the ONLY fuel management tool that actually removes fuel from the landscape. While the problem of fuel load reduction is enormous, I believe our members have the knowledge and experience to help California tackle this problem!

I can't believe that our 159th annual convention was more than a month ago! To those of you who participated in this year's meeting – thank you! Despite the challenges we face as an industry, I came home energized and excited to be part of this great industry. I felt that we had especially constructive discussions on many of the critical issues we face – from labor to predator protection to the lamb and wool markets. And as always, it was great to see a mix of long-time producers and new members at our meetings. We all owe a huge thanks to Erica for organizing another great convention!

As I enter the final year of my term as President, I also want to thank the rest of our leadership. Vice President Ed Anchordoguy, Treasurer Andree Soares, and Past President Ryan Indart continue to do the heaving lifting for our association as members of our Executive Board. Our committee chairs Cecilia Parsons (Communications), Andree Soares (Financial), Ryan Indart and Dominique Minaberrigarai (Labor), Emily Rooney (Legislative), Lloyd McCabe (Member Services), Morgan Doran and Nancy East (PERC), Wes Patton and John Olagaray (Ram Sale), and Ed Anchordoguy (CA Guard Dog and Trust Fund) continue to devote their time and expertise to the betterment of our organization and industry. To this end, I want to encourage more members to get involved – join a committee, help plan an event, volunteer for a leadership position. The strength of the California Wool Growers Association has always been that we are a grassroots organization of, by, and for sheep producers of every type – and we are far stronger together than any of us are as individuals.

Speaking of celebrating our industry, the 100th California Ram Sale is scheduled for Saturday, April 18, 2020! While the Ram Sale is always a great time to catch up with old friends and make new ones, the 100th promises to be a special day! Mark your calendar now!

Last week, I had the opportunity to help Talbott Sheep Company ship ewes home from their summer range north of Truckee. The corrals and scale house we used to load the trucks have stood in that location for nearly 100 years. While I find it

easy to feel nostalgic for time gone by when I'm working in a setting like that, I also felt hopeful. Our industry has existed here in California since before statehood – and thanks to you, it will continue to exist well into our future. Many of you are getting ready to lamb; some (like me) are getting ready to put the bucks with the ewes. In both cases, autumn is both time of wrapping up and looking forward – and of intense work. Thank you for all that you do!

Welcome New Members

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

William Kellogg, Kelloggs Ag A Service, Paradise, CA

Gary Kincaid, BK Livestock, Woodland, CA

Delwin Ochsner, Alpena, SD

Jacob Reister, Reister Farms, Washougal, WA

Do you know a producer or industry stakeholder that is not a member of CWGA? If so, please share this issue of *Herd the News* and urge them to support their industry and join CWGA today!

Member News

ATV Fundraiser Winner Announced

Congratulations to Lisa Elgorriaga for winning the ATV Raffle benefiting the California Guard Dog Fund. THANK YOU to everyone who supported the fundraiser and the California Guard Dog Fund.

CWGA Partners with DUCKWORTH for CWGA Logo Clothing

CWGA has partnered with [DUCKWORTH](#) maker of American Merino Wool apparel to offer members a limited selection of CWGA logo clothing items. Available items will be either embroidered or screen printed with the CWGA logo.

Available items include:

- Men's Snowcrest Vest
- Men's Powder Hoody
- Men's Vapor Loose Crew
- Men's Vapor Tee
- Women's Powder High Neck
- Women's Vapor Loose Crew
- Women's Vapor Tee
- Knit Rigger Hat

To order visit www.californiawoolgrowers.org/merchandise or contact the CWGA office.

Save the Date: ASI Convention January 22 – 25, 2020, Scottsdale, AZ

The American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) Annual Convention will be held on January 22 - 25, 2020 in Scottsdale, Arizona. Registration and meeting details will be posted this fall.

For meeting details visit www.sheepusa.org.

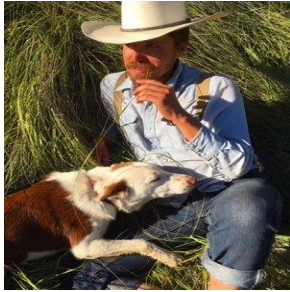
Thank You for your continued support for CWGA!

From the Flock

A firsthand report from California producers providing targeted grazing services.

Jack Anderson

Kern County



We've only been operating for a year and been pushing our targeted grazing services so we have more contracts this year but I can't compare that to a longer arc. We're are advocating for grazing as a vegetation management strategy for our region, but statewide awareness and the acceptance from environmental groups has helped officials and land managers make that choice with less fear of blow back.

I think we're riding the up arc of the demand for service. There will be a short window in which there is more demand then operators and then as more operators get on board the price for management per acre will come down significantly, so grazers that are also able to manage a production flock or herd will be more successful in the long term.

We need county, state and federal officials to know where to apply grazing effectively. We need a smaller ruminant transport vehicles in our region. Sets of doubles, that can get into tight neighborhoods especially.

Andrée Soares

Merced County



Demand for targeted grazing service has increased steadily again this year. I think the demand within both the public and private sector stems from increased awareness of a number of factors.

Overgrown vegetation and climate trends have reached a tipping point and that vegetation now represents significant threat of fire and subsequent loss of property and lives and often small ruminants are the best fit. Secondly, many public agencies are cycling downward with regard to their allowable use of herbicides and are looking for alternative treatment methods. Lastly, there is a general increased awareness and

sensitivity to regenerative land practices that not only reduce carbon emissions, but sequester carbon while improving soil health; and grazing is the catalyst in this carbon cycle.

I see the demand for targeted grazing with sheep and goats continuing to grow, particularly as more are exposed to the beneficial effects of grazing. Looking ahead, as is for traditional sheep ranchers, labor and feed are the challenges. Labor is a significant threat in particular related to wage in California. Secondly, finding the balance of sustainable herd size and access to adequate year round feed amidst unpredictable climate trends, precipitation, and impacts of water regulations presents dynamic decision making strategies with regard to herd size.

Don Watson

Napa, Sonoma & Yolo Counties



We have proven that sheep saved homes when fire storms flashed through Napa county a couple of years ago. For the past 75 years, public policy eliminated livestock from open space near our cities and towns. During this time, the growth of fire fuels has been relentless.

Due to the recent fires, I believe public sentiment has swung in favor of grazing livestock in urban and suburban areas. We are developing relationships with land managers who see a need for diminishing fire fuels. We are very confident about sheep, but it is not quite true that only ewes can prevent forest fire. We should make room for cattle and goats too.

CWGA Membership Adopts Polices at Annual Meeting

CWGA resolutions stand as adopted for a period of five years (can be adopted for less), unless amended or deleted by action of the Board of Directors or the CWGA membership. At the end of that five-year period, resolutions are dropped unless extended for another five-year period by a vote of the Board of Directors and/or the CWGA membership. CWGA works cooperatively with the American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) on Federal issues and refers to the ASI policy manual in order to unify the voice of the California sheep rancher.

A complete list of CWGA polices is available at www.californiawoolgrowers.org.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT REFORM – The Endangered Species Act (ESA) does not address social and economic impacts to property owners and public lands permittees. Therefore, CWGA is to continue its work to modify the ESA to include social and economic impacts relative to grazing on public lands and the protection of private property rights.

REMOVAL OF ENDANGERED SPECIES LISTING FOR WOLVES – CWGA supports the removal of the Federal Endangered Species Act and the California Endangered Species Act protection for wolves.

PREDATOR MANAGEMENT

FISH AND WILDLIFE COMPENSATION – CWGA promotes and supports legislation providing for compensation for livestock and crop losses caused by predators and non-predators, based on fair market value plus documented indirect impacts and losses on flocks due to predation. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) should take full responsibility for depredation by mammals and birds under their jurisdiction and that livestock losses be reimbursed based upon and supported by producer-recorded losses, verified depredation losses by USDA Wildlife Services (WS), or the equivalent professionals at the county level. The economic implications of the Endangered Species Act and introduction of endangered species which have a negative economic impact on producers, be reimbursed for the negative effect on the industry and lamb and wool production. By supporting a compensation program, CWGA in no way condones depredation losses of livestock and supports policies and practices that prevent depredation.

WOLF MANAGEMENT – The increase in the predatory animal population in California has placed public safety and domestic livestock in unnecessary danger. CWGA encourages legal lethal control methods when predators engage in livestock depredation. CWGA supports the creation of a review board where appeals and reviews of wolf kill confirmation may be made, efforts to provide that confirmation of kills be posted no later than thirty days from date of occurrence, and the collaring additional wolves to better facilitate proactive livestock management. CWGA supports efforts to provide compensation for documented indirect losses (losses in reproductive success, weaning weights, wool quality and other factors) due to wolf predation.

AUTHORITY TO DETERMINE PREDATOR POLICY – Proposed local, state and federal legislation and regulation regarding predator management occurs throughout the year requiring immediate attention by CWGA. Since the CWGA membership meets annually to set forth policy on such matters, the CWGA Executive Officers are authorized to define, develop and execute policy if needed regarding such matters on behalf of the membership.

OTHER

EVENT SPONSORSHIPS – CWGA supports activities and events which provide education and outreach to producers, stakeholders and the public about the sheep and wool industry. Many of these activities rely on funding from industry organizations such as CWGA. CWGA will only consider activity and event sponsorship requests that support its mission and provide value to the association, its members and the sheep and wool industry. Requests are to be submitted in writing to be considered by CWGA Board of Directors by a local sheep association or industry affiliate.

2019 CWGA Award Recipients

Master Shepherd Award ~ Martin Etchamendy



Martin Etchamendy accepting his Award.

In 1961, Martin immigrated to the U.S. from the Basque country. In 1965, he and his brother Jean Baptiste went into partnership and purchased their own band of sheep. After meeting his wife Maria Teresa on a visit to the Basque country, Martin sold his sheep and returned to the Basque country.

However, the American West called Martin returned to the U.S. Looking to start his sheep business again, Martin found an opportunity to buy part of an outfit in Kern County in 1972, and The Etchamendy Sheep Company was born. Later that year in October, he and Maria Teresa moved to Bakersfield, which would become their home, and where they would raise four children, and continue to run their business.

Running a successful sheep operation entails a lot of hard work, but a repeating sentiment that Martin has always expressed throughout the years, is his tremendous gratitude for the opportunity that he found running sheep in the U.S. Not only has it provided a great living, but it is a profession that allows him to do what he truly loves. For when he is on the ranch, and around his sheep and his dogs, that is, in his words, his “vacation”, and as the saying goes, love what you do, and you will never work a day in your life.

The Master Shepherd Award is presented to an acting or past officer, director, chairperson, or committee member of the CWGA. This individual has proven support and leadership in the Association, and dedicates themselves and their time to the sheep industry.

Golden Fleece Award ~ Dennis Orthmeyer



Joe Pozzi presenting the Golden Fleece Award to Dennis Orthmeyer

Dennis Orthmeyer is the State Director of the California USDA Wildlife Services Agency.

He has the pleasure of supervising 100 employees that protect agriculture. He provides program direction and supervision in resolving wildlife conflicts that occur in agriculture, property, people, and natural resources.

Dennis began his career as a biologist for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Geological Survey. He researched patterns, movement, distribution, and survival of migratory waterfowl on the Pacific Rim. He returned to his agricultural roots, taking the job with USDA Wildlife Services.

“This was a very humbling moment for me professionally to be recognized by California Wool Growers Association for the lasting contribution to the California Sheep Industry.

I accept this award on behalf of all the Wildlife Service professionals whom work on a daily basis protecting agriculture, property, Human safety, and natural resources in this state. Especially the Wildlife Specialists whom work in the counties everyday providing service to the resource owners. The dedication of these professionals in unmatched in government service. It is a daily honor for me to represent these individuals.” ~ Dennis Orthmeyer

The Golden Fleece Award is presented to a member of CWGA or a public official who through their position has made a lasting contribution to the California sheep industry.

2019 CWGA Award Recipients



Pictured left to right Catie, Martin, and Sarah.

Retailer-Marketer Award ~ Emigh Lamb

Martin Emigh is a fourth-generation sheep and cattle rancher. Martin's great grandfather settled in the Rio Vista area in the mid-1800s and started raising lambs in 1876. This tradition has been passed down through the generations.

Martin started running his own livestock business in 1993 and expanding from there. In 2011, Martin with his daughters Catie and Sarah, began direct marketing Emigh lamb to restaurants and butcher shops, promoting locally grown, naturally raised, grass fed American lamb.

This award is presented to a company that does a superior job in marketing the products of the California sheep industry.

CWGA Scholarship ~ Kaleiah Schiller



Lloyd McCabe presenting the 2019 Scholarship to Kaleiah Schiller.

Kaleiah is in her second year as a Doctoral candidate at the University of California, Davis. Her research combines experimental psychology with animal science in order to improve the care of extensively-managed ewes. Her ultimate career objective is to become either an Animal Research or Extension Specialist.

Kaleiah states: "The objective of my doctoral work is to assess behavioral strategies in rangeland ewes during pre and postpartum handling events to identify differences between individuals that may or may not interact with their likelihood of raising lambs to weaning."

According to Dr. Kristina Horback of UC-Davis, "While California is one of America's top states for sheep production, research on commercial sheep management, health, and welfare has not been conducted at UC-Davis for over two decades. This is a tremendous oversight and I believe that Kaleiah's research will put UC-Davis back on the map for American Sheep producers.

CWGA awards one \$1,000 scholarship to an enrolled college student pursuing an academic program with an interest and/or emphasis in the California sheep industry.

THANK YOU, Shepherds Ball Auction Supporters!

Proceeds from the Shepherds Ball Auction support CWGA in its efforts to deliver lasting value to support and represent the interests of all segments of the California sheep industry.

Ed Anchordoguy, Anchordoguy Lamb

John & Delores Brennan, Green Bay Farm

Rose Marie Caballero

John Cubiburu, Cubiburu Livestock

Morgan Doran

Mike Duff, Duff Land & Livestock, LLC

Andy Edmonson, Mendenhall Ranch

Ben & Stella Elgorriaga, Elgorriaga Livestock

R. Emigh Livestock

Johnny & Christina Etchamendy, Etchamendy Sheep

David Goldenberg

Kristina Horback

Ryan & Beatriz Indart, Indart Group, Inc.

Nancy Jones, Anchordoguy Lamb

Dan Macon, Flying Mule Farm

Joe Pozzi, Pozzi Ranch

Andree Soares, Star Creek Land Stewards, Inc.

Monica Youree, Western Range Assn.

2019 Photo Contest Winners



1st Place – “Guardian of the Lambs”
~ Dan Macon

2nd Place – “Pep Talk”
~ Christina Elgorriaga - Etchamendy



3rd Place – “In Flight”
~ Kim Arburua



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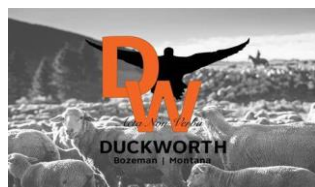
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Legislative Update

Lawsuit Challenges USDA Wildlife Services in Northern California Counties

Last month, three environmental groups filed a lawsuit in federal court seeking to halt part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture program called Wildlife Services. The lawsuit targets Wildlife Services' Sacramento District program. The district includes Colusa, El Dorado, Lake, Marin, Napa, Placer, Sacramento, Solano, Sonoma and Yolo counties

In 2018, the program killed nearly 1.5 million animals nationwide, including 26,441 in California, according to USDA records. The statewide toll included 3,826 coyotes, 859 beavers, 170 foxes, 105 black bears and 83 mountain lions along with 5,675 birds.

Wildlife Services had a \$167 million nationwide budget last year, including \$8.7 million in California, with a significant portion coming from cooperating partners, such as county governments.

Filed by the Center for Biological Diversity and two other groups in a San Francisco court, the lawsuit specifically targets a USDA district that covers 10 counties, including Sonoma, Napa, Lake and Marin, and follows a successful challenge to the program in 16 Northern California counties, including Mendocino, in 2017.

The lawsuit alleges that the program in USDA's Sacramento District is unlawful because it is based on an environmental assessment more than 20 years old and "can no longer be reasonably relied upon without supplemental analysis."

The suit asks for a court ruling that Wildlife Services' failure to update its environmental analysis is illegal and halts the program until a new evaluation has been completed.

California Becomes the First State to Ban Fur Trapping

California became the first state in the country to ban fur trapping, solidifying its position as a trailblazer on wildlife issues. The Wildlife Protection Act of 2019, which Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law on September 4, bans commercial and recreational trapping animals for their fur on both public and private lands.

The move, which follows a 2015 ban on bobcat trapping, was celebrated by wildlife conservation and animal welfare groups that have been pushing legislators to update the state's wildlife laws. As Brendan Cummings, conservation director with the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD), put it in a statement, the change "marks a milestone in the process of bringing California's wildlife laws into the twenty-first century."

"This momentous law, which was spearheaded by Assemblymember Lorena Gonzalez, will spare countless foxes, coyotes, beavers, and other wild animals from the unnecessary fur trade," adds Camilla Fox, executive director of Project Coyote, an Earth Island project that promotes coexistence with wildlife. "For centuries, fur trapping has caused agonizing deaths for an untold number of animals."

Groups like CBD and Social Compassion in Legislation, which co-sponsored AB 273, point out, the trade is outdated, and is partially responsible for extirpation of wolves and wolverines from California, as well as severe declines in sea otters, fishers, martens, and beavers. Not to mention the animal suffering resulting from trapping and pelt-preserving methods of killing.

The bill's supporters also noted that in California, at least, trapping is no longer economically viable, which means the costs of regulating the industry have been subsidized by taxpayers. The 113 trapping licenses sold in 2017, for example, resulted in the deaths of 1,500 animals but generated just over \$15,000 in revenue, not enough to cover the costs of a well-managed program.

The new law does not impact hunting or wildlife-management-related trapping in California. But advocates hope it will inspire similar efforts to ban commercial and recreation trapping elsewhere.

Legislative Update

California, 16 Other States Sue Over Easing of Endangered Species Act

The Trump administration is illegally threatening the survival of some of the nation's most imperiled plants and animals with rules that weaken enforcement of the Endangered Species Act, California and 16 other states charged in a lawsuit last week.

The suit was filed in San Francisco federal court and is likely to be transferred to the Oakland court of U.S. District Judge Jon Tigar, who has been assigned a similar suit filed by environmental groups on Aug. 21.

The Endangered Species Act (ESA), signed by President Richard Nixon in 1973, protects the existence and habitat of more than 1,600 plants and animals threatened with extinction. More than 300 of the species are in California, including bighorn sheep, gray wolves, humpback whales, bald eagles and the California condor, which has recovered from the brink of extinction since the law passed.

The rules announced Aug. 12 by President Trump's Interior Department allow the government to consider economic impacts to landowners when deciding whether to protect a species and its habitat. The rules also make it easier to remove a species from the protected list and limit an agency's assessment of likely threats to a species in the "foreseeable future" — barring any consideration of global warming and its impact on a species' habitat.

Other changes would reduce restrictions on federal government actions that might harm an imperiled creature's habitat and would weaken current protections for species now designated as "threatened," or nearly endangered.

The regulations are part of the Trump administration's efforts to lessen environmental enforcement by raising limits on motor vehicle air pollution, in California and nationwide, ending federal protections for the nation's smaller waterways, and renouncing the Paris Climate Accord and other measures to combat climate change.

Interior Secretary David Bernhardt said the new rules on endangered species would ease regulatory burdens on landowners and industry while ensuring "recovery of our rarest species." But the lawsuit said the changes "violate the plain language and purpose" of the Endangered Species Act, and noted that the administration had classified them as a "deregulatory action," part of Trump's pledge to reduce federal regulations.

Among other things, the new policy "unlawfully and arbitrarily injects economic considerations into the ESA's science-driven, species-focused analyses," the states' lawyers said.

They said the rules on "threatened" species, delisting of currently protected species and reduction of habitat protections violate provisions of the 1973 law and were announced without the "reasoned explanation" that federal law requires. In addition, the suit said, the changes "significantly affect the environment" and thus required an environmental impact statement that examines those effects, invites public comment and discusses alternatives.

California has its own Endangered Species Act, which applies to some but not all of the species protected by federal law — nearly 80 federally protected animal species and more than 60 plants lack state safeguards.

The weakening of federal protections "increases the burden on states to fill the regulatory and enforcement void," the suit said.

The suit was joined by the states of Massachusetts, Maryland, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington, and by the District of Columbia and New York City.

Lamb Summit Challenges Industry

The inaugural American Lamb Summit challenged the industry to identify meaningful strategies that can improve the American Lamb industry's competitiveness and ability to recapture market share from imported lamb. The Summit was also designed to inspire collaboration, networking and information sharing across all segments and geographic regions of the American Lamb industry.

The Summit, sponsored by the American Lamb Board (ALB) and Premier 1 Supplies, brought together 200 sheep producers, feeders and packers from all over the country to Colorado State University in Ft. Collins, CO, August 27-28, 2019.

The education conference included in-depth discussions covering everything from how we address consumer needs and expectations to applying easily adopted production practices that can improve the quality and consistency of our products, to how our industry can use technology, innovation, business management tools and relationships to increase our efficiencies and profitability.

The News on Lamb Flavor from the Lamb Summit

Lamb flavor has been an industry topic for decades, including being identified, along with other product quality issues, as an area of focus in the Sheep Industry Roadmap. After all this time, are we making progress?

Dale Woerner, PhD, Texas Tech University meat scientist, and Cody Gifford, PhD, Colorado State University, led one of the most popular sessions at the Summit, giving participants an opportunity to actually taste various lamb flavor profiles. Dr. Woerner explained that flavor is a very complex topic, influenced by characteristics such as texture, aroma, cooking and handling of the product, and even emotional experience. "Lamb has more than one flavor profile, affected by feeding and other practices," he explained.

The U.S. Lamb checkoff, through ALB, has discovered a great deal about lamb flavor. For example:

- Differentiating American Lamb for its flavor is the clearest path to achieving price premiums. The National Lamb Quality Audit showed 71.7% of US lamb purchasers are willing to pay a premium for guaranteed eating satisfaction and they were willing to pay a 18.6% premium for such.
- Several controllable factors influence the flavor or taste of lamb, checkoff research proves. Altering the composition of lean and fat will impact flavor; factors that are influenced by differences in production background, days on feed, animal gender and age.
- Technology can differentiate lamb flavors and segregate lamb carcasses into expected eating quality groups. Off-flavors can also be detected using technology. This was the purpose of the checkoff-funded Lamb Flavor Study Phase I.
- Using REIMS (Rapid Evaporative Ionization Mass Spectrometry) to identify off-flavors in lamb carcasses is a predictable method. And, it holds promise for its use in harvest facilities at typical production speeds, concluded the Lamb Flavor Study Phase II.
- Age and duration of feeding influences flavor. Phases I and II of the Lamb Flavor Study found that meat from yearlings fed a more consistent diet for longer periods tended to have a milder flavor than that from lambs.
- Lamb Flavor Study Phase III is evaluating the ability of consumers to differentiate specific lamb flavor nuance. The study will also determine if REIMS can identify and sort sheep meat flavor based on consumer ratings and preference. This is also a checkoff-funded study.

At the Summit, lamb industry members received a first-hand lesson on evaluating flavor, and how lamb can vary. "Aroma is the greatest contributor to how people perceive flavor," explained Dr. Woerner. In fact, people are capable of detecting and discriminating against thousands of different aromas. To demonstrate this, participants were asked to sample flavored candies. With their noses plugged, flavors were not as strong or even present.

Emotional connections also influence flavor perception. “For example, were you with a great group of friends when you first enjoyed U.S. Lamb chops?” asked Woerner.

From there, Summit attendees went through a sensory training using specific flavor attributes to find their baseline on certain meat flavor attributes, such as fishy, oxidization, metallic and livery. Then, four different lamb samples were handed out, which were all prepared the same. These samples illustrated Woerner’s points about various preferences and profiles.

As the session concluded Dr. Woerner put the importance of lamb flavor into perspective. “If we can sort lamb carcasses or cuts into flavor profile groups, we can direct that product to the best market. And that means more satisfaction with US Lamb.”

The Road to Future Consumers Requires Transparency through Traceability

The American Lamb Board (ALB) continuously works to create more demand for U.S. Lamb by gaining a better understanding of the needs of current and future consumers. Providing a consistent and high-quality product that meets the desires of specific consumer audiences is the cornerstone for American Lamb demand. This demand led to the important topic discussed at the American Lamb Summit of understanding carcass quality traits and transparency through traceability.

The tools and technologies available to improve the traceability of value traits and increase feedback related to carcass quality throughout the supply chain were explored during the 2019 American Lamb Summit.

“It’s important to take opportunities to add value to U.S. Lamb by adding production information that follows a product all the way through the system. You allow consumers to be more informed and aligned with farmers and ranchers,” Keith Belk, Ph.D., Colorado State University Department Head of Animal Sciences said, who moderated the Lamb Summit traceability session.

Blockchain technology, which allows for multiple parties to contribute to an animal’s individual data all the way through the system, opens the doors for traceability as never before, Rob Jennings said, CEO of BeefChain. “It is the foundation for being able to tell your story as an individual and as an entire industry.”

For example, an animal with an electronic ID tag can be added into a blockchain by the producer, who includes data about vaccinations, antibiotic use, and days on grass. The feeder can add information. Then, the packer can add data about carcass quality. A blockchain can even include data related to sustainability. It opens doors for production improvement, meat quality, and profitability measurements as never before.

Henry Zerby, Ph.D., was upfront with Summit participants from his perspective as both a sheep producer and vice president of Protein Procurement and Innovation for Quality Supply Chain Co-op, Inc., which represents Wendy’s franchise restaurants. “Traceability and trust are incredibly important for us to win market share for our animal proteins. If you’re not willing to look at traceability and blockchain technology and have a level of understanding, you need to rethink your role in the meat industry long term.”

Flock54 from Superior Farms is an example of a new farm-to-packer program for traceability. Its DNA panel provides parentage determination plus single gene traits for fertility, disease resistance, fleece variation and muscling. EID tags are used to track each animal.

Lesia Eidman, Director of Producer Resources and Sustainability for Superior Farms, explained how it transforms information exchange. “Through the use of the Flock54 DNA panel, EID tags, the camera grading system at the harvest facility, and the producer’s website portal, there is full transparency on individual lamb performance from birth to harvest as well as lot performance.” This complete feedback loop for the packer, feeder, producer and seedstock owners provides the potential to improve production efficiencies, genetics, and management for increased profit margin.

Information from the 2019 American Lamb Summit can be found on the Lamb Resource Center website: www.lambresourcecenter.com/production-resources/2019-american-lamb-summit.

Lamb Market Updates

U.S. July Lamb Trade Update

Lamb export tonnage struggled in July, with shipments slipping compared to 2018's by 78% for lamb. July's meat trade data converted to a carcass weight by USDA ERS was released on September 5th. Imported lamb is a much bigger component of the lamb market than are exports. Interestingly, lamb imports have been down significantly in June (-15%) and during July (-23%). Australia and New Zealand both contributed to the large declines in imported products. Those following the lamb market have seen the rapid rise in shoulder prices this year and rather large gains in slaughter lamb prices relative to a year ago.

Source: [*Livestock Marketing Information Center*](#)

Lamb Variety Meats Push July Exports Higher

Strong variety meat demand in Mexico and the Caribbean pushed July exports of U.S. lamb 36% higher year-over-year in volume (1,650 mt), while value increased 11% to \$2.4 million — the highest since February. For January through July, lamb exports were 41% above last year's pace at 9,433 mt, while value increased 16% to \$15.6 million. Muscle cut exports were lower than a year ago in volume (1,290 mt, down 16%) but edged 2% higher in value to \$8.6 million. Markets showing promising muscle cut growth include the Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Panama and Guatemala.

Source: [*U.S. Meat Export Federation*](#)

Export Demand Underpins Record Sheepmeat Prices (AUS)

Strong international demand for Australian sheepmeat continues to underpin historically high lamb and mutton prices, buoying producers with stock available to sell, as most Australian producers continue to manage severe drought conditions.

The September update of Meat & Livestock Australia's (MLA) 2019 Sheep Industry Projections has seen forecast lamb exports revised slightly higher on previous projections to 268,000 tonnes shipped weight (swt).

National lamb slaughter has also been revised slightly higher and is now expected to reach 21.6 million head, a decline of 5% on 2018.

MLA Senior Market Analyst, Adam Cheetham, said domestic sheep and lamb indicators have surged to new highs in 2019, as demand from overseas markets has outweighed domestic availability and more than offset the price pressure usually associated with a prolonged dry period.

"There has been exceptionally strong demand from China and the United States in particular, supported by a depreciating Australian dollar," Mr Cheetham said.

"Prices across all categories reached record levels during winter. The national saleyard trade lamb indicator powered through 900c/kg at the beginning of July and ultimately reached a peak of 950c/kg, 9% above the high achieved in September 2018.

"Once conditions improve, strong prices for both sheep and lambs are likely to see many producers begin to rebuild their flocks after a long period of destocking. Increased restocker activity will apply further competitive pressure to processors looking to fulfil export demand.

Mr Cheetham said 2019 lamb production is forecast to decline 3% year-on-year to 495,000 tonnes carcass weight (cwt).

"The decline in production is due to the considerable drop in lamb slaughter, but will be partially offset by increasing carcass weights," Mr Cheetham said.

Source: [*Meat & Livestock Australia*](#)

Sheep Day 2019



Commercial Factors and Flock Maintenance

9:00 *Welcome! Brad Foyil, UCD Sheep Unit Manager*

9:15 *Superior Farms*

Matthew Hayes, Lamb Buyer

- Understanding Value Based Marketing
- Understanding Carcass Quality
- How Dorpers fit into the Commercial Market

Lesa Eidman, Director, Producer Resources and Sustainability

- Superior Farms Programs
- Camera Grading
- Probiotics and Flock54

10:30 *Western States Dorper Association (WSDA)*

Dr. Wes Patton, Prof Emeritus, CSU Chico, Glenn Land Farm, Orland, CA

Catherine Diaz-Khansefid, President, WSDA, DK Dorpers, Galt, CA

- Introduction: The Dorper breed, Glenn Land sheep displayed
- Favorable characteristics unique to Dorpers
- How Dorpers fit in the American Sheep Industry

12:00 *Dorper hamburger lunch (free)*

1:00 *UC Davis*

Dr. Allen Pettey, Lecturer, Dr. Roselle Busch, Specialist, Dr. Brett McNabb

- Sheep nutrition
- CL and other disease management

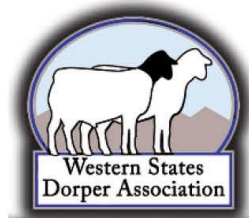
2:30 *Western States Dorper Association (WSDA)*

Dr. Wes Patton, Prof Emeritus, CSU Chico, Glenn Land Farm, Orland, CA

- Carcass comparison in Meat Lab

4:00 *Closing Remarks and Networking*

Brad Foyil, UCD Sheep Unit Manager



**October
26
9-4 pm**



Saturday, October 26, 2019

**UC Davis
Cole Facility**

(next to Meat Lab)

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**Contact
Brad Foyil at
blfoyil@ucdavis.edu**

Member Spotlight: Meridian Jacobs Farm Club

By Elizabeth Prose

Along the western edge of the Sacramento Valley, in Solano County just north of Vacaville, lives a flock of more than 60 rare-breed Jacob sheep tended by shepherds Robin and Dan Lynde of Meridian Jacobs.

For 10 years, one of the essential ingredients in the success of Meridian Jacobs has been its Farm Club. Robin says that members range in age from their early 20s to late 70s and have diverse back grounds, but share both “a common interest in learning about and supporting a local farm and the love of animals and fiber craft.” Many are handspinners and knitters, but some just come to learn more about the beautiful white and black spotted sheep. The income generated by the club’s dues help support all facets of farm life, and members provide some physical help, too, both on the farm and at shows.



Robin Lynde and friend.

The On-the-Farm Farm Club (OFFC) is the original Farm Club, and people close enough to take part in farm maintenance and club activities make up the bulk of its membership. This past May, Robin launched a virtual spin-off of her popular club. Cyber Fiber Farm Club (CFFC) gives those who live too far away to visit in person an opportunity to learn more about the sheep and day-to-day life on a small-scale farm.

OFFC offers different tiers that allow for various levels of participation. The perks of membership include Meridian Jacobs logo swag, such as T-shirts, tote bag, or apron, a discount on classes taught by Robin, and regular email updates on lambing, farm happenings, and events. There’s also an exclusive members-only page on the farm’s website. CFFC members receive a tote bag, a signed copy of the book *Raw Material* by Stephany Wilke, Jacob fleece samples, and yarn with instructions for their choice of a woven scarf or knit hat, plus all of the email updates and access to the members-only page. CFFC members are invited to visit the farm for a tour when they’re in the region.



Marina Gerson and Susan Gandy watch the sheep move out to the pasture after vaccinating lambs.

Farm Club members get a behind-the-scenes peek at what it takes to go from sheep to skein. Robin says, “People want to have a farm connection and be around the animals.”

For more information about Meridian Jacobs, Farm Club, and Cyber Fiber Farm Club, visit www.meridianjacobs.com.

This article was originally published in the Fall 2019 issue of Spin Off. For more information, visit www.spinoffmagazine.com and www.shop.longthreadmedia.com.

Did You Know.... Wool’s Natural UV Protection

Wool helps protect against the potentially damaging rays of the sun. Testing of various textiles in clothing show that wool has a natural UV protection factor of 30+ in more than 70% of cases—much higher than most synthetics and cotton.

California Wolf Updates

CDFW Collars Second Lassen Pack Wolf

On Friday, September 20, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) announced that it has collared a second Lassen Pack wolf. The Department's notice stated that "CDFW, with the assistance of USDA Wildlife Services, recently captured and collared a second wolf from the Lassen Pack. The female pup from the pack's 2019 litter weighed 53 pounds at the time of capture and was in excellent condition. Radio collars are important to monitor California's wolf population and to help deter wolf-livestock conflicts. Photos of the capture can be found on the CDFW Gray Wolf webpage."

The collar will be of use in tracking the Lassen Pack's movements, particularly if the breeding female's radio collar should fail. The radio collar will also assist in tracking the wolf's movements if and when the animal disperses from the Lassen Pack. Three photos of the capture and collaring can be found viewed at www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Mammals/Gray-Wolf/Photos.

Livestock Depredations by Lassen Wolf Pack and OR-54

Since July 13, wolves have been confirmed to have killed or injured eight cattle in four depredation incidents. Since wolves have become reestablished in California, 16 cattle have been confirmed as killed or injured by wolves across 11 incidents—of those, four cattle have been killed or injured by OR-54 in two incidents, with the remaining confirmed depredations and depredation incidents attributable to the Lassen Pack.

Ranchers suspect the Lassen Pack in numerous other livestock deaths in which the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) did not issue a confirmation. CDFW acknowledges in its Wolf Conservation Plan that the number of actual livestock depredations by wolves is likely to exceed the number of confirmed kills.

Depredation reports can be viewed at www.wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/mammals/gray-wolf.

To receive wolf updates directly from CDFW, click "Subscribe to Gray Wolf Updates by Email" in the upper right-hand corner at www.wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/mammals/gray-wolf.

Lassen Wolf Pack Update – New Litter Born

A new litter was born to the Lassen Pack, California's only currently known wolf pack. As of early July 2019, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) estimates the pack consists of a minimum of two to three adults/yearlings and three pups. The new litter, born this year, is the third litter born to the pack.

If You Suspect A Wolf Kill

Wolves are currently protected under both the state and federal endangered species acts; under the California law, lethal control of wolves is not permitted under any circumstance. According to California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), "non-injurious harassment [of wolves] is allowed when wolves are within 0.25 miles of livestock, or within 100 yards of a dwelling, agricultural structure, campsite, or commercial facility."

If you suspect that wolves may have killed livestock, contact both the Wildlife Services State Office (916-979-2675) and the CDFW Wolf Coordinator (Kent Laudon: 530-225-2186). Investigators will search the kill site for predator sign and will examine the livestock carcass to document injuries (including bite marks and tissue damage) and cause of death. Upon completion of the investigation, CDFW will issue a Livestock Loss Determination. Currently, there are no programs in California to compensate livestock producers for losses to wolves or other predators.

For further information on ranching with predators visit www.californiawoolgrowers.org/resources/predators.

Livestock Carcass Management

Authors: Tracy Schohr, UC Cooperative Extension Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor Plumas, Sierra, and Butte counties; David Lile, UC Cooperative Extension Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor Lassen County; and Laura Snell, UC Cooperative Extension Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor Modoc County.

Overview

During the course of livestock production, ranchers will be faced with animal disposal events. It is important for ranchers to have proper carcass disposal plans in place to prevent public nuisances, protect natural resources and remove food sources that can attract livestock predators (e.g. wolves).

UCCE Research

Composting of livestock carcasses in California is illegal, however it is a typical method for the disposal of animal mortalities in 42 states. University of California Cooperative Extension and California State University, Chico are conducting research on composting in California and coordinating with regulatory authorities on development of an additional option for livestock carcass management.



Cattle carcass being prepped for composting. (credit: Rivers)

Regional Water Quality Control Board

There are no prohibitions from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board or the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board on the burial of livestock carcasses in rangeland settings. The water boards support the procedures for on-site burial outlined below. However, Confined Animal Facilities that are regulated under General Waste Discharge Requirements (e.g. dairies, feedlots, auction yards) have specific guidelines for carcass management within their operation and maintenance plan (Snyder and Letton, 2019). Additionally, regulations state animal carcasses from confined animal operations shall be collected, stored, and removed from the property to an approved processing facility or disposal site prior to the creation of adverse public health/well-being conditions, or processed or disposed of on the property in a manner approved by the Enforcement Agency (14 CCR § 17823.5).

Resources Agency

In the California Code of Regulations Title 14 § 17823.5 it states animal carcasses from animals on pasture or rangeland shall be managed so as to prevent the creation of excessive vectors or other adverse public health/well-being conditions. This language aligns with many California county ordinances.

Department of Fish and Wildlife

When disposing of a carcass it is unlawful to deposit, permit to pass into, or place where it can pass into the waters of the state or within 150 feet of the highwater mark of the waters of the state under §FGC-5652. Furthermore, this code does prohibit a rancher from abandoning a carcass that may die within such an area.

California Department of Food and Agriculture

According to Food and Agriculture Code (FAC) §19348, for routine livestock mortality, animal owners can choose to bury the animal on the owner's property after the animal dies if the burial is within three (3) miles of where the animal died. If to be disposed of offsite, routine mortality carcasses shall be transported by a California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) licensed dead animal hauler to a licensed rendering plant, a licensed collection center, an animal disease diagnostic laboratory acceptable to the department, the nearest crematory, or to a destination in another state that has been approved for that purpose by the appropriate authorities in that state.

If an animal dies from a contagious disease, FAC §9143 states that the animal shall not be used for the food of any human being, domestic animal, or fowl. Also, the Natural Resources Code § 17823.5 states the carcasses of animals with any contagious disease shall be disposed of by means prescribed by the CDFA, Division of Animal Industry. Additionally, during an emergency, the CDFA may work with Cal EPA, including CalRecycle and the water boards, and local jurisdictions to allow temporary disposal at permitted landfills (e.g. 2018 Camp Fire in Butte County and 2006 heat wave in San Joaquin Valley).

Department of Resource, Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle)

The composting of unprocessed mammalian tissue (e.g. cattle, goats, sheep), including but not limited to, flesh, organs, hide, blood, bone and marrow is prohibited. (14 CCR § 17855.2). If rendering capacity is exceeded or suspended, the acceptance of dead animals may be accepted at a permitted solid waste landfill if allowed by local regulations (27 CCR § 20890). Additionally, open burning of solid waste (including livestock carcasses), except for the infrequent burning of agricultural wastes, silvicultural wastes, land clearing debris, diseased trees, or debris from emergency clean-up operations, is prohibited at all solid waste landfills (27 CCR § 20780). For information regarding a permitted solid waste landfill that can accept dead animals, contact your Solid Waste Local Enforcement Agency at www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SWFacilities/LEA/Directory.

County Ordinances

Most counties have ordinances in place regarding prohibition of dumping carcasses on roadway, airports, public beaches, parks or in waterways within a county. Please check with your county regarding such ordinances.

Procedures for On-site Burial of Livestock on Rangeland Operation

These procedures apply only if there are no local prohibitions or regulations. Additionally, on-site burial of animals must have died on the owner's property and will be buried on the same property, no off-site transportation. This is the most least desired option, but it is recognized in remote locations on-site burial may be the only method available. Unconsolidated waste buried in this manner not only poses a risk to water quality, but also can affect future use of your property. Procedures for onsite burial include:

- Burial should take place more than 150 feet downslope of nearest domestic well.
- Burial should not be near streams, swales, ponds or in saturated soils.
- Carcass should be buried in a shallow trench and if available apply lime to the carcass. Excavate at least 7 feet to allow 5 feet of soil cover. Do not put carcass on soil surface and mound soil.
- Keep a record on-site of animals buried, depth of pit, depth of cover and location on property.
- Do not irrigate over the disposal pits.
- Do not bury an animal where you may intend to build a structure in the future.

Licensed Transporters in Region

A list of companies licensed (as of Spring 2019) by CDFA to haul carcasses in California is available at www.cdfa.ca.gov/AHFSS/MPES/pdfs/DeadHaulers2019.pdf. Please contact for availability and pricing.

CWGA Policy - Composting Animal Carcasses

In 2018, the CWGA membership passed policy supporting pilot projects in Northern California to further explore the feasibility and safety of composting livestock carcasses as a common and legal disposal practice, that CWGA work with interested stakeholders, particularly the Pacific Coast Rendering Association, to ensure the exploration and development of new common disposal practices, including composting, that do not economically harm California's already shrinking rendering industry, and CWGA support the use of public and private funds to facilitate research projects. Following the completion of the pilot project, CWGA will seek legislative or regulatory remedies to allow for the onsite composting of animal carcasses where rendering services are not available or such services are not economically feasible.

Proper Vaccine Storage is Critical to Disease Protection

Glenn Selk, Oklahoma State University Emeritus Extension Animal Scientist

Each year producers spend thousands of dollars for vaccine products to immunize their animals. A vaccine can cost over \$3.00 a head (for cattle), and if not stored properly that vaccine can be rendered ineffective. Producers cannot afford to overlook the importance of how they store vaccine and handle it prior to injection.

Most biological products should be stored under refrigeration at 35 to 45°F unless the nature of the product makes storing at a different temperature advisable (APHIS 2007). Read the insert or box label carefully to discover the recommended storage temperature. If vaccines are not stored within this temperature range, efficacy to the animal can and will be reduced. Killed vaccines are especially susceptible to freezing temperatures. Freezing a killed vaccine will alter the adjuvant or delivery system of a killed vaccine. This, in turn, negatively affects the immune response to the antigen in the vaccine. Modified live viruses (MLV) are more stable but can be inactivated if they are repeatedly cycled above or below the required temperature range (Gunn et al, 2013). Also, once activated by mixing, MLV's effective life will be reduced to 1-2 hours and need to be maintained at the 35° to 45° F. This can be accomplished by only mixing the doses that you will use at that time and use a cooler to maintain temperature while working livestock.

Researchers from the University of Arkansas and Idaho analyzed the consistency of temperatures for different types, ages and locations of refrigerators over a 48-hour period. They found that only 26.7% and 34.0% of refrigerators were within the acceptable temperature limit 95% of the time, respectfully. Refrigerator location can also affect temperature. Refrigerators located in barns (35.6 °F) were colder than in mud rooms (41.72 °F) and kitchens (40.82 °F). (Troxel and Barham 2009). Temperature within a 24-hour period can also be highly variable for individual refrigerators. Troxel and Barham (2009) demonstrated some refrigerators may take up to 8 hours to cool down to the 45°F, while others will remain too cold varying from 24.8°F to 35.6°F.

Producers need to be aware of these variations in temperature so they are able to adjust refrigerator temperature as needed. Thermostats can also be very variable from unit to unit, so keeping a thermometer inside works well to monitor and to make adjustments as need. Simple indoor-outdoor thermometers work well to achieve this goal. The outdoor unit can be placed in the refrigerator while the LCD display can be hung with a magnet on the door. This allows temperature to be monitored without opening the door and many models will record the high and the low temperature in a 24-hour period so producers can adjust accordingly. Very inexpensive digital thermometers can be purchased and placed in the refrigerator that will allow the producer to check the refrigerator on those extremely cold nights or very hot days to make certain that the unit is within the desired range.

CDFA Antimicrobial Use & Stewardship Program (AUS) Updates

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Antimicrobial Use & Stewardship Program (AUS) has recently revised the [Guidelines for Judicious Use of Antimicrobials in Livestock](#) and [Guidelines for Veterinarians: Judicious Use of Antimicrobial for Livestock](#) (published in July 2018). The updated documents may also be found at www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/AUS/Stewardship.html.

AUS is committed to promoting and educating veterinarians and livestock producers on the principles of antimicrobial stewardship and the fundamentals of judicious use of antimicrobials. AUS encourages stakeholders to contact the program if there is an interest in presentations, workshops, or additional outreach materials related to antimicrobial stewardship.

With the goal of ensuring the practical implementation of antimicrobial stewardship, AUS is committed to multidisciplinary involvement in the development of guidelines and recommendations. To this end, AUS ensures that representatives from the California Veterinary Medical Board, the California Department of Public Health, universities, and Cooperative Extension have participated in the development and review of AUS guidelines. AUS sought input from these and other stakeholder groups to ensure broad-based representation.

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A rectangular inset photograph showing a group of sheep in a field. One sheep in the foreground is looking towards the camera, while others are behind it.

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Modesto, CA

December 11, 2019

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