



Herd the News

March/April 2020

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

CWGA Hosts 100th Annual California Ram Sale

Sacramento, CA. – California Wool Growers Association (CWGA) is hosting the 100th annual California Ram Sale on Saturday, April 18, 2020 at the Porterville Fairgrounds.

More than 500 rams including Composite, Columbia, Crossbred, Dorper, Merino, Hampshire, Rambouillet, Suffolk, and White-Faced rams will be offered from California, Colorado, Nevada, Idaho, and Utah.



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Ultrasound carcass measurements (i.e. loin eye area) and a Range Ram Index will be provided on all sale rams. The Range Ram Index utilizes ultrasound carcass data collected at the sale and will help to identify the potential genetic merit of those rams in passing superior genetic traits such as larger loin eye area or heavier carcass weights into producer flocks.

This year's Ram Sale Trade Show will feature a variety of sheep health and equipment companies showcasing products developed to address sheep production, nutritional, and health needs.

Ram Sale information including the sale catalog is available on the CWGA website at www.californiawoolgrowers.org. To request a Ram Sale Catalog, contact the CWGA office at 916-444-8122 or info@woolgrowers.org or Susan Taylor at ewes_fluffy@hotmail.com or 530-966-1975.

Contributions and the proceeds from the California Ram Sale support CWGA in its continued efforts to deliver lasting value to support and grow all segments of the California Sheep Industry.

Sale Schedule – Saturday, April 18, 2020

9:00 am	Buyer Check-In & Ram Preview
9:30 am	Trade Show
11:30 am	Complimentary Buyer BBQ Lamb Luncheon
1:00 pm	Ram Sale Auction

Location: Porterville Fairgrounds, 2700 West Teapot Dome Ave. Porterville, CA 93257

Directions:

From Fresno – Take Hwy 99 south to Hwy 190. Go east on Hwy 190 into Porterville, then Hwy 65 south to Teapot Dome (Ave. 128). Turn west on Teapot Dome and travel approx. 2 miles until you reach the fairgrounds.

South from Bakersfield – Take Hwy 65 north into Porterville. Turn west on Teapot Dome and travel approx. 2 miles until you reach the fairgrounds.

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Presidents Message: Perseverance and Perspective – Dan Macon



Dear CWGA Membership,

I suspect anyone who's raised sheep for more than a couple of years knows the meaning of the word "perseverance." Those of us who stick with it – whether we have 10 ewes or 10,000 – know that raising livestock (and sheep especially) requires a heavy dose of perseverance. Stick-to-it-iveness. We must love what we do!

Here in Auburn, we've measured just 0.03" of rain since January 29. Warmer-than-normal temperatures and north winds have dried our soil, brought the oaks out of dormancy, and made me nervous. And yet the onset of lambing season (we lamb from late February through the end of March) always brings a sense of optimism. How can I not be optimistic when I see new life gamboling across my pastures?! While we continue to hope for a "Miracle March," I'm reassured by the fact that countless sheep producers before me endured dry conditions – that's the beauty (and flexibility) of being in the sheep business! We make do!

As I write this, your executive board and executive director search committee are preparing to interview applicants to replace Erica Sanko. We have been so fortunate to have Erica's guidance and diligence over the last five years. We're also excited about the opportunity that change – any change – presents. I'm confident that among the many applicants who've expressed an interest in serving our industry, we'll find one that will lead us to new opportunities!

Finally, I want to personally invite EVERY member of the California Wool Growers Association to our 100th Annual California Ram Sale in Porterville on April 18! Talk about Perseverance and Perspective! There are not many institutions – let alone organizations – that have persisted for a full century in the Golden State! Thanks to Wes Patton and John and Connie Olagaray, and the rest of our Ram Sale Committee, the 100th looks to be an amazing celebration of our industry! Over the years, our sale has built a reputation for offering the highest quality commercial bucks on the West Coast – I hope you'll join us in April!

Those of us who work and live in agriculture are no strangers to setbacks. Weather, markets, and politics have always presented challenges. But as the person entrusted to lead an organization that is now in its 160th year (think about that number for a moment!), I've come to realize that the significance of these challenges are a matter of perspective. Our organization has persisted through two world wars, not to mention the Civil War and the Cold War. Our organization has persisted through the Dust Bowl and the Millennial Drought of 2011-2015. Perseverance is in our DNA! See you in Porterville!

Welcome New Members

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

Rami Amaro, Amaro Farm, Friday Harbor, WA

William Burden, Burden Brothers, Manteca, CA

Mary Hurley, Fiber Artist Market LLC, Los Angeles, CA

Julia Orlando, Escalon, CA

Renee Presto, Gardnerville, NV

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



Save the Date: 160th Annual CWGA Meeting & Convention ~ August 14 - 15

The 160th Annual CWGA Meeting & Convention will be held on August 14 – 15, in Morro Bay, CA.

CWGA is committed to delivering lasting value to support and grow all segments of the California sheep industry. Our annual meeting delivers on this commitment by providing an opportunity for attendees to participate in educational forums, learn about current industry happenings, and be engaged

in association policy making. While at the same time meeting with fellow sheep producers and enjoying the recreational activities in the area.

Location: [Inn at Morro Bay, Morro Bay, CA](#)

Hotel Information: For reservations call 1-800-321-9566 and mention the California Wool Growers Association. Room Rates: Sun/Thurs \$166-\$206, Fri/Sat \$186-\$226

Registration: Opens May 2020

Renew Your Membership Online

For those members who prefer to pay for their membership online, electronic payments by credit card and PayPal are accepted on the CWGA website at californiawoolgrowers.org/about/join.

Now available as a USB! – Sheep Production Handbook, Volume 8

Now available as a USB! Volume 8 of the Sheep Production Handbook features updated material in every chapter as well as a new chapter on lamb quality. This sheep industry reference book includes chapters on dairy sheep, reproduction, management, breeding/selection, forages, nutrition, marketing, predator damage control, health and wool. Cost is \$19.95. To order visit www.sheepusa.org/shop

Happy Easter to You and Your Family!



100th Annual California Ram Sale Catalog

Round 1 - Registered Rams

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
1	Kurt & Carol	Heupel	Weldona, CO	1	Suffolk
2	Andy	Edmondson	Loma Rica, CA	1	Merino
3	Cecilia	Parsons	Ducor, CA	1	Columbia
4	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	1	Rambouillet
5	Terry	Mendenhall	Loma Rica, CA	1	Merino
6	Andy	Edmondson	Loma Rica, CA	1	Rambouillet
7	Andy	Edmondson	Loma Rica, CA	1	Merino
8	Terry	Mendenhall	Loma Rica, CA	1	Merino
9	Andy	Edmondson	Loma Rica, CA	1	Rambouillet

Highest Indexing Whiteface Ram

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
10					

Round 2 - White Face Range Rams

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
11	Cole	Estill	Winnemucca, NV	1	White Face
12	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	2	White Face
13	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	2	White Face
14	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	1	White Face
15	Cecilia	Parsons	Ducor, CA	1	White Face
16	Henry	Ratay	Corning, CA	4	White Face
17	Blair & Gina	Summey	Lincoln, CA	1	White Face
18	Cole	Estill	Winnemucca, NV	3	White Face
19	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	2	White Face
20	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	2	White Face
21	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	1	White Face
22	Cole	Estill	Winnemucca, NV	2	White Face
23	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	2	White Face
24	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	1	White Face

100th Annual California Ram Sale Catalog

Round 2 - White Face Range Rams continued

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
25	Cole	Estill	Winnemucca, NV	2	White Face
26	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	2	White Face
27	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	1	White Face
28	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	1	White Face

Highest Indexing Blackface Ram

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
29					

Highest Indexing Blackface Pen

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
30					

Round 3 - Suffolk Range Rams

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
31	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
32	Jim	Stavros	Fairview, UT	3	Suffolk
33	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	3	Suffolk
34	Lloyd	McCabe	Dixon, CA	3	Suffolk
35	John	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
36	Reed	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	4	Suffolk
37	Jim	Neumiller	Healdsburg, CA	3	Suffolk
38	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	5	Suffolk
39	Matt	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
40	Blair & Gina	Summey	Lincoln, CA	2	Suffolk
41	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
42	Kurt & Carol	Heupel	Weldona, CO	3	Suffolk
43	Austin	Goff	Rupert, ID	5	Suffolk
44	Larry & Linda	Pauly	Delta, UT	5	Suffolk
45	Chris	Stavros	Salt Lake City, UT	4	Suffolk
46	Jack	Massera	Salinas, CA	5	Suffolk

100th Annual California Ram Sale Catalog

Round 3 - Suffolk Range Rams *continued*

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
47	Shirl	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
48	Joseph	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
49	Brent	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
50	Brian	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	4	Suffolk
51	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
52	Cole	Estill	Winnemucca, NV	3	Suffolk
53	Layne	Shepherd	Genola, UT	4	Suffolk
54	Henry	Ratay	Corning, CA	3	Suffolk
55	Brady	Olsen	Santaquin, UT	4	Suffolk
56	Dawson	Shepherd	Genola, UT	4	Suffolk
57	Mike & Kandi	Duff	Blackfoot, ID	3	Suffolk
58	Anna	Estill	Gerlach, NV	3	Suffolk
59	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
60	Jim	Stavros	Fairview, UT	3	Suffolk
61	Lloyd	McCabe	Dixon, CA	4	Suffolk
62	Reed	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	4	Suffolk
63	Jim	Neumiller	Healdsburg, CA	3	Suffolk
64	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	5	Suffolk
65	Matt	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
66	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
67	Kurt & Carol	Heupel	Weldona, CO	4	Suffolk
68	Austin	Goff	Rupert, ID	5	Suffolk
69	Larry & Linda	Pauly	Delta, UT	4	Suffolk
70	Chris	Stavros	Salt Lake City, UT	4	Suffolk
71	Jack	Massera	Salinas, CA	3	Suffolk
72	Shirl	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
73	Joseph	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
74	Brent	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
75	Brian	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	4	Suffolk

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Round 4 - Crossbred Range Rams

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
76	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Crossbred
77	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	4	Crossbred
78	Larry & Linda	Pauly	Delta, UT	3	Crossbred
79	Matt	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Crossbred
80	Joseph	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	3	Crossbred
81	Brent	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Crossbred
82	Brady	Olsen	Santaquin, UT	4	Crossbred
83	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	2	Crossbred
84	John	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Crossbred
85	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Crossbred
86	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	4	Crossbred
87	Reed	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	5	Crossbred
88	Brian	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	3	Crossbred
89	Bill	Buckman	McArthur, CA	3	Crossbred
90	Andy	Edmondson	Loma Rica, CA	2	Crossbred
91	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Crossbred
92	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	4	Crossbred

Round 5 - All Other Breeds Range Rams

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
93	Henry	Ratay	Corning, CA	1	Dorper
94	Jack	Massera	Salinas, CA	3	Hampshire
95	Mike	Mann	New Cuyama, CA	3	Hampshire

Round 6 - Composite Range Rams

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
96	Nancy	East	Alturas, CA	5	Suffolk x Texel x Columbia
97	Nancy	East	Alturas, CA	5	Suffolk x Texel x Columbia

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Round 7 - Suffolk Range Rams

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
98	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
99	Cole	Estill	Winnemucca, NV	3	Suffolk
100	Layne	Shepherd	Genola, UT	4	Suffolk
101	Brady	Olsen	Santaquin, UT	4	Suffolk
102	Dawson	Shepherd	Genola, UT	3	Suffolk
103	Mike & Kandi	Duff	Blackfoot, ID	5	Suffolk
104	Anna	Estill	Gerlach, NV	3	Suffolk
105	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
106	Jim	Stavros	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
107	Jim	Neumiller	Healdsburg, CA	3	Suffolk
108	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	5	Suffolk
109	Matt	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	4	Suffolk
110	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
111	Kurt & Carol	Heupel	Weldon, CO	4	Suffolk
112	Austin	Goff	Rupert, ID	5	Suffolk
113	Larry & Linda	Pauly	Delta, UT	5	Suffolk
114	Chris	Stavros	Salt Lake City, UT	4	Suffolk
115	Shirl	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
116	Joseph	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
117	Brent	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Suffolk
118	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
119	Mike & Kandi	Duff	Blackfoot, ID	2	Suffolk
120	Anna	Estill	Gerlach, NV	2	Suffolk
121	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
122	Jim	Stavros	Fairview, UT	2	Suffolk
123	Jim	Neumiller	Healdsburg, CA	3	Suffolk
124	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	4	Suffolk
125	Matt	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	4	Suffolk
126	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk

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Round 7 - Suffolk Range Rams *continued*

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
127	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
128	Kurt & Carol	Heupel	Weldona, CO	4	Suffolk
129	Larry & Linda	Pauly	Delta, UT	4	Suffolk
130	Brent	Shepherd	Spanish Fork, UT	3	Suffolk
131	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
132	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
133	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	3	Suffolk
134	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
135	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
136	Kurt & Carol	Heupel	Weldona, CO	3	Suffolk
137	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	4	Suffolk
138	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	3	Suffolk
139	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
140	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
141	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
142	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk
143	John & Anita	Phillips	Paul, ID	5	Suffolk

Round 8 - Crossbred Range Rams

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
144	Larry & Linda	Pauly	Delta, UT	2	Crossbred
145	Matt	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	4	Crossbred
146	Joseph	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	2	Crossbred
147	Brady	Olsen	Santaquin, UT	4	Crossbred
148	John	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	5	Crossbred
149	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	3	Crossbred
150	Brian	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	2	Crossbred
151	Bill	Buckman	McArthur, CA	2	Crossbred

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Round 8 - Crossbred Range Rams *continued*

<u>Lot #</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u># Head/Lot</u>	<u>Breed</u>
152	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Crossbred
153	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	4	Crossbred
154	Matt	Olsen	Spanish Fork, UT	3	Crossbred
155	Joel	Shepherd	Moroni, UT	3	Crossbred
156	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Crossbred
157	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	4	Crossbred
158	David	Hansen	Fairview, UT	4	Crossbred
159	Mike	Cox	Fairview, UT	4	Crossbred

Thank you to all our Buyers, Consignors and Sponsors for your continued support!



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Ram Index: A Tool for Selecting Range Rams

Each lot of rams sold at the Ram Sale will be assigned an Average Range Ram Index Value (Ram Index) so you, the buyer, can be better informed in making your ram selections. The Ram Index estimates the potential carcass merit of the lambs sired by range rams with superior carcass characteristics. When purchasing rams, the Ram Index will help to identify the ram's potential genetic merit in passing genetic traits such as loin eye size or weight onto the ram's offspring.

How the Ram Index Is Calculated

- The Ram Index is calculated using the following carcass characteristics: loin eye area (LEA), loin depth, fat thickness (BF), and ram weight.
- These characteristics are given numerical values to measure the ram's genetic merit value relative to other rams at the California Ram Sale.
- The Ram Index is calculated using a base value of 100 for which comparisons can be made between rams with differing Ram Indexes.
- Rams with average carcass characteristics are assigned a Ram Index value of 100.
- Rams with a Ram Index over 100 (e.g. 110) will exhibit more desirable carcass characteristics (i.e. larger LEA, less BF) relative to all of the rams at the Ram Sale.
- Rams with a Ram Index under 100 (e.g. 85) will exhibit less desirable carcass characteristics relative to the other rams at the Ram Sale.
- There is potential economic incentive in selecting rams with higher Ram Index values.

Ram Index as a Ram Selection Tool

- Helps to identify rams that will sire lambs with more desirable carcass traits such as loin eye size.
- Utilizes live animal ultrasound which can provide reliable estimates of carcass quality characteristics.
- According to U.S. Sheep Experiment Station (USSES), genetic selection for larger loin-muscle area should be expected to improve carcass merit and carcass value of market lambs.
- According to USSE research, rams with larger loin-muscle areas (i.e., loin eye area), measured between the 12th and 13th ribs, sire progeny with larger and more valuable carcasses.
- If you are marketing your lambs on a carcass value-based system such as double dressed weight there is potentially a financial incentive for selecting rams with high index numbers.
- Ultrasound technology has proven to be an objective measurement of carcass traits in live animals and an important means for the improvement of beef and swine carcass characteristics.
- Carcass traits are highly heritable and in utilizing rams with highly desirable carcass traits, a producer can implement changes in progeny carcass traits, such as a larger loin eye size, in a relatively short period of time rather than relying on traditional selection methods that focus on phenotypic characteristics.
- Will benefit the industry as whole in producing a more desirable product for the consumer.

For further information on using genetics to improve productivity visit the U.S Lamb Resource Center at www.lambresourcecenter.com/production-resources/best-practice-resources/.

Legislative Updates

CDFW Expands "Three Strikes" Mountain Lion Policy to Central Coast and Southern California

In February, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) issued a memo expanding its “three strikes” mountain lion depredation policy to the Central Coast and Southern California regions. The memo makes clear that the policy is in response to the recent petition to list mountain lions in the region as threatened, stating that the policy’s geographic extent includes “the full extent of the proposed Southern California and Central Coast [Evolutionarily Significant Unit] boundary as set forth in the petition to list the ESU of mountain lion as threatened under CESA, which was recently filed with the Fish and Game Commission.”

Under the policy, CDFW will only permit non-lethal “take” of a mountain lion (e.g. pursuit and hazing) after the first and second instances in which a mountain lion is confirmed to have perpetrated a depredation of livestock or domestic animals. Only upon the third confirmed depredation by a mountain lion will CDFW issue a lethal take depredation permit.

Beginning in December of 2017, CDFW issued the policy for mountain lions in portions of the Santa Monica and the Santa Ana Mountains. CWGA and other agriculture organizations have challenged the policy’s legality.

The memo also declares that “all mountain lion depredation permits within the” region “will require the convening of a Response Guidance Team (RGT) and no final permit decision will be made without RGT/headquarters involvement and approval.”

The policy does not appear to impact one’s ability to take a mountain lion caught in the act of depredation. Fish and Game Code § 4807(a) is clear that “any mountain lions that is encountered while in the act of pursuing, inflicting injury to, or killing livestock, or domestic animals, may be taken immediately by the owner of the property or the owner’s employee or agent” so long as the take is reported to CDFW within 72 hours.

CWGA, California Cattlemen’s Association and California Farm Bureau Federation believe that the three-strike policy is contrary to California law, and is pressing CDFW to reverse the policy. To see CDFW’s memo <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=177324&inline>.

GET INVOLVED: Tell Fish & Game Commission Not to List Mountain Lions as Threatened

In late February, the California Fish and Game Commission revealed that it has received more than 4,500 comments in favor of a petition to list mountain lions as threatened throughout the Central Coast and Southern California.

Most of those 4,500 comments likely came from supporters of the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD), which on February 7 emailed its vast network of contacts asking them to “Tell the California Fish and Game Commission...It must grant these mountain lions protection under the state’s Endangered Species Act.”

While CWGA has vocally opposed the petition, to ensure that CBD’s vocal members do not drown out ranchers’ voices it is essential that ranchers write to the Commission and tell them that mountain lions should not be protected under California’s Endangered Species Act. The most successful comments will be those that address mountain lion impacts to your ranch and likely impacts that mountain lion protections would have upon your operation. Any information you may have about mountain lion population abundance in Southern California or the Central Coast may also be valuable.

Comments can be delivered to Kirk Wilbur at kirk@calcattlemen.org or by mail to the California Cattlemen’s Office. Letters should be addressed to Eric Sklar, President; California Fish and Game Commission; 1416 9th Street, Room 1320; Sacramento, CA 95814. All letters received will be submitted to the Fish & Game Commission prior to a future hearing on the mountain lion petition.

Lamb Market Updates

Lamb Export Volume Largest Since 2011

December exports of U.S. lamb were 1,225 mt, up 9% from a year ago, while value jumped 24% to \$2.36 million. For 2019, lamb export volume increased 22% from a year ago to 15,732 mt, valued at \$26.1 million (up 12%). Led by strong demand in Mexico, export volume was the second highest on record behind 2011 and export value was the highest since 2014. In addition to Mexico, strong growth markets included Trinidad and Tobago, Panama, Guatemala and the Philippines. *Source:* [U.S. Meat Export Federation](#)

USDA AMS Announces Trade Mitigation Lamb Purchase

On July 25, 2019, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced details of additional actions the U.S. Department of Agriculture would take to support American agricultural producers while continued efforts on free, fair and reciprocal trade deals take place. As part of those actions, USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service announced up to \$17 million of food purchases in American lamb under the authority of Section 5 of the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act for distribution to various food nutrition assistance programs.

A pre-solicitation notice issued February 18 announced an opportunity for a solicitation of lamb products to be procured as to include, but not limited to, lamb shanks. A delivery period is as May through September.

Solicitations will be issued soon and will be available electronically through the Web-Based Supply Chain Management system. Public WBSCM information is available without an account on the WBSCM Public Procurement Page. All future information regarding this acquisition, including solicitation amendments and award notices, will be published through WBSCM, and on the Agricultural Marketing Service's website at www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food. Interested parties shall be responsible for ensuring that they have the most up-to-date information about this acquisition. The contract type is anticipated to be firm-fixed price. Deliveries are expected to be to various locations in the United States on an FOB destination basis.

To be eligible to submit offers, potential contractors must meet the AMS vendor qualification requirements. Details of these requirements are available online at: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food/becoming-approved>.

Industry Projections 2020 – Australian Sheep

The national flock continued to contract last year as conditions deteriorated in many key sheep production regions. On the back of the warmest and driest year on record, water and feed availability created heightened pressures for producers, particularly in NSW and northern Victoria, with many forced to offload core breeding stock. At 63.7 million head, the national flock is now estimated to be at its lowest level in more than a century.

The impact and severity of consecutive drought years will be felt across both sheep and lamb supply in 2020 and for a number of years to come. The strong prices being achieved across lamb and mutton are expected to provide plenty of incentive for producers to rebuild their flocks and, under the assumption of a return to average seasonal conditions, this will likely be achieved by retaining their core breeding stock and ewe lambs. Consequently, sheep slaughter is forecast to decline 22% to 7.2 million head in 2020 and lamb slaughter is anticipated to decline to 21 million head (8% below the pre-drought peak in 2016). This reflects the impact of the diminished breeding flock, generally lower marking rates and the expectation of greater retention of ewe lambs on-farm.

In the last two years, supply constraints during the winter have seen prices surge to new records. With the aforementioned demand unlikely to waiver and the expectation for fewer lambs available for slaughter, in particular out of NSW, lamb prices are expected to remain at historically high levels in 2020. Similarly, mutton prices, on the back of strong demand, limited international competition and an expected drop in supply next year, should see continued price support at or above recent levels.

Source: [Meat & Livestock Australia](#)

Cost of Maintaining Guard Dogs Varies from Case to Case

While many farmers who raise sheep maintain guardian dogs in the herd to protect their vulnerable ruminants from predators, there have been, until now, few attempts to precisely calculate whether these canines earn their kibble.

The financial bottom line of guardian dogs varies greatly, depending on the cost of incorporating care of this canine security force into normal ranch operations, as well as their effectiveness in warding off predators.

A new study of the Great Pyrenees guarding the sheep at the Hopland Research and Education Center in Mendocino County outlines costs to consider and concludes the dogs are not quite worth the cost of maintaining them at a University of California standard of living. But the researchers caution there are important variables in the calculations.



"Market lamb and ewe prices are typically well known to producers and can be used, in conjunction with efficacy rates from this study, to estimate the benefits of guard dogs," advised UC Cooperative Extension specialists Ellen Bruno and Tina Saitone. "On the cost side, producers would need to make some logical forecasts about the time required to maintain the dogs, given their operation specifics."

Bruno and Saitone studied the budget for five dogs guarding sheep at the Hopland Center and, assuming they reduced coyote predation of lambs by 43% and ewes by 25%, concluded they fell short of covering UC's costs to provide daily food and periodic visits by the vet.

"We found that costs exceeded benefits by a total of \$13,412 over the seven-year period," they wrote, but added, "Livestock guard dog effectiveness is dependent on a number of site- and operation-specific factors including size of pasture, changes in elevation, tree cover, perimeter fencing, ewe-to-guard dog ratio and the discount rate."

Many sheep, goat and even free range chicken ranchers continue to use guard dogs, however, and apparently find them to be well worth the time and trouble.

"Probably 75 to 80% of commercial sheep ranchers are using dogs for protection, and a lot of people also use them with goats," said UC Cooperative Extension livestock farm advisor Dan Macon. "I think most of them are getting their money's worth or they would look for other ways to protect their livestock."

Macon maintains a herd of 150 sheep on his Flying Mule Farm outside Auburn, and his calculations show he is getting good value from his three Great Pyrenees guard dogs, Bodie, Elko and Dillon, aged three years, two years, and nine months, respectively.

To begin with, his dogs provide a higher level of service than a 43% reduction in predation by the coyotes in the foothills neighborhood.

"Many ranchers report that dogs eliminate predation entirely, which has been our own experience," Macon said. "If this had been the case at Hopland, the benefits would have exceeded the costs of using dogs by over \$12,000."

Care for the dogs is also quite a bit more economical at Macon's farm, and at most other working ranches, than at the university's Research and Extension Center in Mendocino County.

"In our operation, feeding the dogs is part of our daily check of fences and sheep; we see the sheep every day whether we have dogs with them or not," he said. "We charge about five minutes per day to feeding three dogs; even if I pay myself \$20 per hour for this work, our 'dog' labor amounts to \$371 per dog annually. Hopland, on the other hand, reported labor costs of nearly \$1,600 per dog per year."

All three researchers agree that the calculation of whether it is worth investing in livestock guard dogs, and of how many to have, depends on numerous variables that have to do with the ease or difficulty of caring for the dogs, the nature of the threat from predators and the market price for lamb.

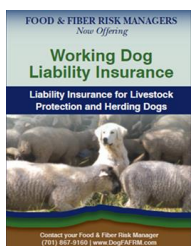
"We use electro-net fencing, which definitely deters canine predators like dogs, coyotes and foxes as well as bobcats, and this allows us to get by with fewer dogs," Macon said. "We rarely if ever have all of our sheep in one mob. During the summer, the mature ewes are in one flock; the feeder lambs and replacement ewe lambs are in a second flock; the rams in a third location. During breeding season, we have two separate breeding groups plus a group of lambs, and this argues for more dogs."

Bruno and Saitone's detailed discussion of the economics of livestock guard dogs is available online in the July/August 2019 issue of the UC ARE Update, available at www.giannini.ucop.edu/publications/are-update/issues/2019/.

Bruno and Saitone also advise that the economics depend on a number of factors including the added cost of caring for the dogs and the nature of the threat predators pose to the sheep.

Their article includes their recommendations for items to consider in calculating the potential costs and benefits of livestock guard dogs in particular situations.

Source: [California Farm Bureau Federation](http://CaliforniaFarmBureauFederation.org)



Working Dog Liability Insurance

Working Dog Liability Insurance (WDLI) is for livestock producers, who use guardian and herding dogs to protect their livestock from predators and other risks, and to assist in the management of their flock or herd. Frequently the producers have no liability protection from incidents related to the guardian and herding dogs.

For details visit www.workingdogliabilityinsurance.com

CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife - New Wolf Information Update

OR-54, a female dispersing wolf approximately 3-4 years old, was found dead in Shasta County on February 5, 2020.

OR-54 was born into Oregon's Rogue Pack most likely in 2016. She was the fourth Rogue Pack wolf known to have spent time in California. OR-54 weighed 83 pounds when collared by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) biologists in October 2017. On January 24, 2018, she crossed the state line into eastern Siskiyou County. Since then, she spent much of her time in California, although she made two trips back to Oregon. She covered more than 7,646 miles after leaving the Rogue Pack. OR-54 traveled widely in northeastern California, through portions of Butte, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou and Tehama counties. In late September 2019, she crossed to the south side of Interstate 80 and briefly entered Nevada before returning to California and crossing back to the north side of the highway the following day. Her travels represent the southernmost known wolf locations in the state since wolves returned to California in 2011.

Gray wolves are covered under both the Federal Endangered Species Act as well as the California Endangered Species Act. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) takes very seriously any threats to this recovering wolf population. We are currently investigating the circumstances surrounding OR-54's death. We remind the public that killing a wolf is a potential crime and subject to serious penalties including imprisonment.

Source: [CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife](http://CADept.ofFishandWildlife.org)

Lamb Lovers

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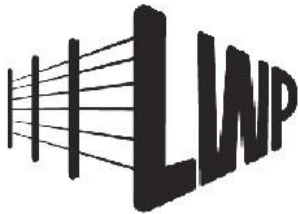
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April 18, 2020

**100th Annual California Ram Sale
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April 24, 2020

**Bakersfield Ram Sale
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May 2, 2020

**Cloverdale Ram Sale
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