



HERD the News!

May/June 2022

The President's Message:

"Delivering Lasting Value to Support all Segments of the California Sheep Industry"

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I hope all is going well for all of you and your families. The seasons have changed here in Sonoma County. We have lots of brown forage and very little green left although we did get an inch of rain Saturday night through Sunday. Too late to make much difference but it did wash the dust off and refreshed the landscape.

It won't be long until it is convention time. The dates are August 19 & 20 this year in Gardnerville, Nevada. It appears to be a popular venue for most of you. Gardnerville has a sheep history, a Basque history and of course you can gamble if you like. You are also close to the South Shore of Lake Tahoe and the Genoa ski and golf course area. There are plenty of vacation opportunities in the area to tack on a day or two before or after the convention. The Carson Valley is a beautiful place.

The convention will include a Board of Directors Meeting, our Annual Membership meeting, an afternoon of Educational Sessions and lots of current Sheep Industry information and goings on. We will be hearing the latest updates from government agencies, sheep industry organizations and individuals with pertinent information that you as a producer will want to know. Examples are Wildlife Services, Forest Service, ASI, Western Range, market reports, current sheep health issues from associate veterinarians. So far, the plan includes educational sessions for Targeted Grazers and a panel discussion as per the Sheep Commission. There will be reports from all the CWGA committees including the financial health of your organization and the Labor Committee. There also may be action taken concerning the bylaws, resolutions, and nominations.

On the fun side of things, there will be Friday night dinner at JT's Basque Restaurant with wonderful Basque food and perhaps a few Picons. There will be the Shepherds Ball, the Picture Contest and both silent and live auctions. We will also honor some of the exceptional volunteers in our organization for the work they have done. We are also hoping to get lots of kid participation. Our future. So, what a package! Good food, good friends, networking with others in the business and making new friends. In addition, you will walk out of the convention totally up to date on what is going on in the Sheep Industry, you may have some new ideas that you can apply to your operation and of course, some great memories. I hope that all of you will make plans to attend our convention. The more people that attend the better it is for our businesses and the more enjoyment we will all have. Susan Taylor has put in an agenda in the newsletter which is just the start. We are also working with the hotel to finalize the costs. We will soon be sending out the hotel rates and the registration information.



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The Presidents Message continued...

As per Footvax, our order that was received in April is almost gone. If you are in need now, contact Susan Taylor. We are currently working with our supplier in New Zealand to put together another order. If you have a need now or are looking at the future, please call Susan Taylor and discuss your situation and get your name on the list. Thank you and I hope the Footvax situation is working for you. Susan is doing a great job acquiring and distributing the vaccine.

A litigation update as per the Wage/Overtime issue is that we are hoping for an appeal court date sometime at the end of this calendar year. In addition, George Soares is continually working on the administration/political end of this issue pro bono.

Hope to see you all in August in Gardnerville if not sooner. Enjoy the coming summer!

- Ed Anchordoguy

102nd Ram Sale Overview

To all of us from the California Wool Growers Association, we would like to thank all of the consignors, buyers, and volunteers for making the 102nd California Ram Sale in Tulare, California a success. Below is an overview of how the sale averaged:

2022 Breed Averages		
Breed	Head	Average
Suffolks	289	\$786
Crossbreds	88	\$779
Whiteface	26	\$773
Rambouillet	1	\$800
All Rams	404	\$784

High Selling Crossbred Pen - Joel Shepherd, Moroni, UT - \$1300.00

High Selling Suffolk Pen - John & Anita Phillips, Paul, ID - \$1,350.00

High Selling Whiteface Pen - Cole Estill, Winnemucca, NV - \$825.00

High Selling Suffolk Individual - John & Anita Phillips, Paul, ID - \$2,000.00

High Selling Whiteface Individual - Mike Mann, New Cuyama, CA - \$1,075.00

We are looking forward to the 103rd Annual California Ram Sale in 2023. See you all there!

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Save the Date!

California Wool Growers Association **162nd Annual Meeting & Convention**

August 19 – 20, 2022

Registration packets will be mailed and emailed soon.

Thursday, August 18th

Lake Tahoe Dinner Cruise

Friday, August 19th

**Morning Board of Directors Meeting
Afternoon Workshops**

Saturday, August 20th

**Membership Meeting
Past President's Luncheon
Shepherd's Ball**

We are so excited to have details finalized for the 162nd CWGA Annual Meeting and Convention!

It is our hope to see you all in Minden/Gardnerville Nevada this August for an opportunity to discuss key topics across the industry we are all so passionate about, and to enjoy a wonderful weekend away.

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Convention Hotel Information:



2022 CALIFORNIA WOOL GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Reservations Deadline: Friday, July 15, 2022

Group Number: 3476 Group Name: California Wool Growers

ROOM TYPE	Thursday 8/18/22	Friday 8/19/22	Saturday 8/20/22
354 Non-Smoking Fireplace Parlor Suite w/One King Bed	\$225.00	\$225.00	\$225.00
Hotel Non-Smoking Deluxe King	\$139.00	\$139.00	\$139.00
Hotel Non-Smoking Standard King	\$119.00	\$139.00	\$139.00
Hotel Non-Smoking Standard Two Queens	\$139.00	\$139.00	\$139.00
Motor Lodge 1st Floor Non-Smoking King	\$119.00	\$119.00	\$119.00

Room rates shown are per night for one or two persons, one or two beds. Occupancy tax (13%) is extra. For over two persons in a room, add \$10 per person per night plus tax.

Important information:

There must be at least one person 21 or older in each room or RV site.

Both a photo ID and a credit card must be presented at check-in.

Pets are not permitted in the Hotel or Motor Lodge.

Hotel and Motor Lodge Check-In time is 3:00 p.m. or after and heavy check-out patterns occasionally result in rooms not being available until after 3:00 pm. If you MUST have access before 3 pm, we encourage you to make your reservation arriving the night before. Check-out time is noon.

Rooms and RV sites are assigned as they become available. We cannot guarantee specific rooms or floors.

Two Night Minimum on Saturdays: There is a two night minimum for any stays including Saturday night. If any room is occupied for just Saturday night, an additional \$30 plus tax is added to the above Saturday rate.

Phone Reservations: Reservations are to be made on an individual basis by calling our Reservations Department at 775-783-6629 and mentioning our group number 3476 or group name California Wool Growers. CAUTION: Do not call any other number you find on the internet with the exception of 800-321-6983. Other numbers may come up on searches and many of these go to online travel agencies who are not always forthcoming with accurate information.

Hotel information available at www.carsonvalleyinn.com

Map and Directions available at www.carsonvalleyinn.com/map.php

2022 CWGA Convention

Please note: You can double click on the image of the hotel details and view the PDF, utilize the hyperlinks, and see the document with more clarity. It is our apologies with the slight pixilation of the image

May/June 2022

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California Ewe Mastitis and Lamb Survivability

UC
CE | UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Agriculture and Natural Resources | Cooperative Extension

May 2022

California Ewe Mastitis and Lamb Survivability

*Rose Digianantonio, DVM, MPH, Livestock Reproduction and Herd Health Resident, UC Davis,
Roselle Busch, DVM, Sheep and Goat Extension Veterinarian, UC Davis*

Has the lambing season left you sick of grafting orphaned lambs and/or dealing with bottle babies? It may be necessary to improve ewe udder health on your farm.

To highlight areas for future research, Dr. Roselle Busch, Sheep and Goat Extension Veterinarian at UC Davis, and her research lab in collaboration with UCCE Livestock Advisors have developed a survey for sheep producers about management of ewes and care of mastitis. If you own or manage breeding ewes and are willing to participate, please scan the QR code below or click [here](#) and complete the survey. This survey will take less than 10 minutes and can help us improve ewe and lamb health

What is Mastitis and why do we want to prevent it?

In pasture-raised sheep operations, the highest percentage of lamb losses occur within the first 72 hours of birth. This directly impacts productivity and profitability of the flock. Udder pain is one of the main reasons for ewes to reject lambs. In range or pasture rearing systems, rejection of the lamb by the ewe can create orphan lambs or lead to lamb starvation if noticed too late.

Mastitis is inflammation of the mammary gland/udder. The three types of mastitis that we typically think about and their descriptions are below

1. Clinical mastitis: Visible signs of milk and/or udder abnormalities.
2. Sub-clinical mastitis: Elevated inflammatory cells in milk, decreased milk production, but no obvious abnormalities in milk appearance or udder appearance.
3. OPP (Ovine Progressive Pneumonia Virus): "Hard Bag." Typically, the udder is firm, but non-painful and has little to no milk production. OPP is contagious between sheep.

Ewes are at increased risk for mastitis due to different environmental and individual factors. A few include poor nutrition, unsanitary housing conditions, litter size, and poor teat conformation. No matter the cause, any of these forms of mastitis lead to production losses on the farm. Mastitis prevention and control may limit lamb production losses, the number of bottle lambs, and improve lifetime productivity of your ewes. Help us improve our knowledge in this area by taking our survey.



A ewe that can't raise a twin lamb and has an asymmetrical udder and wool break should be checked for mastitis.

Source: Dan Macon/Roger Ingram



Please contact Dr. Roselle Busch with any questions:
rcbusch@ucdavis.edu | (530)574-8208

News & Current Events

May/June 2022

HERDtheNews!

CDFW Wolf Livestock Compensation Grants

The CDFW has launched an Interim Wolf Livestock Loss Compensation Grant Program. This program aims to help minimize the impacts wolves have on livestock producers in California. Apply now!

CDFW is receiving recommendations from a range of experts and stakeholders in order to implement a more comprehensive pilot program in the coming months. That program will address three areas of need (prongs): payments for the impacts of wolf presence on livestock, compensation for livestock loss, and non-lethal deterrent use. This program will remain in effect until funds allotted in the 2021-22 state budget are exhausted.

Livestock Loss Compensation

Livestock producers who have lost animals to confirmed or probable wolf predation, as verified by CDFW, can apply for compensation at fair market value for losses incurred on or after September 23, 2021.

- [CDFW Livestock Loss Compensation Grant Application \(PDF Form\)](#)
- For questions or assistance - Email: Wolfprogram@wildlife.ca.gov

Deterrence Method(s) Compensation

Livestock producers who use non-lethal deterrent methods to deter wolf presence near livestock in areas of [known wolf activity](#) can apply for compensation of associated costs. The CDFW supports the use of various non-lethal techniques to deter wolf presence near livestock. Producers, landowners, their employees and agent(s) are encouraged to contact their County Agricultural Commissioner, the CDFW, and agency partners for technical assistance and to explore options.

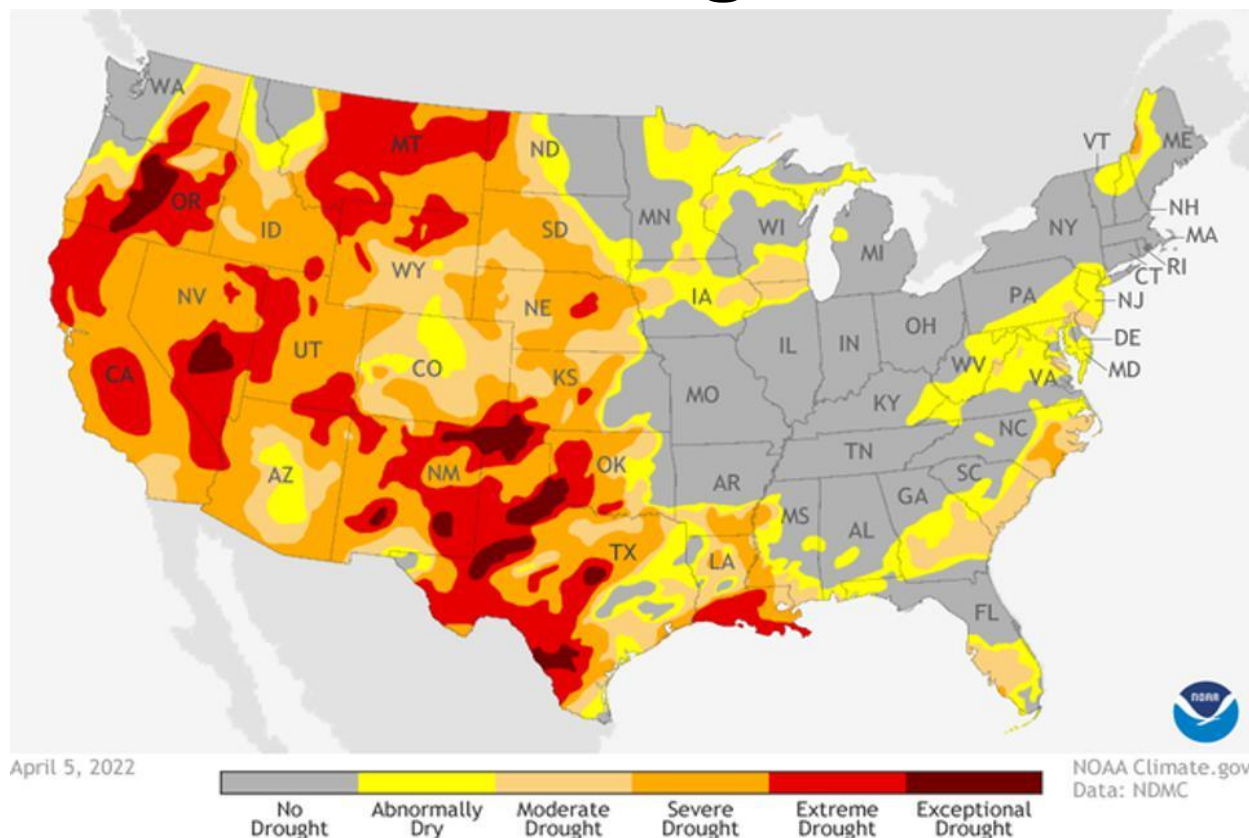
- [CDFW Non-Lethal Deterrent Compensation Grant Application \(PDF Form\)](#)
- For questions or assistance - Email: Wolfprogram@wildlife.ca.gov

Western U.S. Drought Approaches Historic Levels

Hurricanes and tornadoes get a lot of attention and rightfully so. They can be significant stressors on our socio-economic fabric in the United States. They are also more episodic and “buzzworthy” events than drought, which tends to be rather creeping and sustained. Drought rarely receives immediate live reporter coverage and social media hashtags like a severe weather or hurricane threat. Yet, it is a significant stressor on society as well. The current drought in the U.S. West is approaching historic levels, and you probably didn’t know it.

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Western U.S. Drought continued...



In a report issued by the NOAA's National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI) in mid-April, the agency noted that, "The current multi-year drought across the West is the most extensive and intense drought in the 22-year history of the U.S. Drought Monitor." For the first three months of the year (2022), precipitation deficits were nearing or at record levels. Victor Murphy is a Climate Services Manager for the National Weather Service. On April 16th, he tweeted the image below and said, "19 west TX counties from Pecos in the south to Crosby in the north have seen their driest September-March time period on record, dating back to 1895." By the way, The Dust Bowl was after 1895. NOAA goes on to point out that, "As the climatological wet season ends across portions of the West, with below average snow cover and reservoirs at or near record-low levels, concerns for expanding and intensifying drought and water resource deficits are mounting." In a nutshell, the critical time to replenish western water supply is passing, and there are signs that the drought will continue to intensify. So what?

The implications of a dry western U.S. are numerous. Some of the countries most populated urban regions are in the region and rely on an already scarce water supply. Much of the countries agricultural productivity comes from the Central Valley of California and the Great Plains. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture [website](#), the Ogallala Aquifer, under an eight state region of the Great Plains, is responsible for, "Nearly one-fifth of the wheat, corn, cotton and cattle produced in the United States."

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Western U.S. Drought continued...

Geological action created the water reservoir over the past 1 million years, but we are using the water at unsustainable rates.

Another implication of a drought plagued West is wildfires. A recent [Desert News](#) headline read, “California, Utah and other Western states face scary wildfire season.” According to the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC), 19,226 wildfires have burned in the United States since January 1st while scorching 820,587 acres. This is above the 10-year average according to NIFC. The recently released April to July Significant Wildland Fire Potential [Outlook](#) appears ominous too.

As we move into summer, keep a close eye on the western drought. We all buy products in our markets that are grown or raised in the Western U.S. Yes, drought matters to you too. Credit to: Marshall Shepherd

Sheep and solar panels: Using solar sites for pastureland

A solar power boom generated by new renewable energy mandates is unfurling in the Chesapeake Bay region. Virginia, for example, was ninth in the nation for new solar capacity in 2021.

With many solar arrays ending up on farmland, a movement is fast taking hold to make sure that they will benefit the environment, agriculture and wildlife, and not just create a sea of silicon.

Allowing sheep to graze among solar panels has become one attractive antidote

Grazing by sheep and other livestock joins other dual uses: planting groundcover to benefit pollinators, growing marketable plants such as cherry tomatoes and lavender under the panels, installing beehives and maximizing soil health practices to improve the land for later ag use. Projects that combine farming and solar energy are called agrivoltaic.

State agencies in Virginia, Maryland and New York have all created pollinator-friendly scorecards for solar developers, underscoring the expectation that environmentally beneficial groundcover will become the norm on both rural and urban solar farms.

“Solar [arrays] on farmland should be required to be dual use,” said Arjun Makhijani, founder of the Maryland-based Institute for Energy and Environmental Research.

The use of solar sites for livestock grazing is still in its infancy, but flocks of sheep are already grazing contentedly under and around glass panels in Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland and New York.

By welcoming the grazers, solar operators save money on land maintenance. After the cost of leasing the land, vegetation management is often their top expense.

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Sheep and solar panels cont...

Sheep owners get access to new grazing pastures while receiving payments to boot, adding precious income at a time when many farmers are struggling. Studies find that sheep farmers often are paid \$300–\$500 an acre.

There are environmental benefits as well. For example, a new study funded by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory found that native vegetation munched on by sheep shows an uptick in carbon capture and improves the soil by increasing the cycling of nutrients, carbon and water.

The synergies of grazing and leaving the ground undisturbed can actually improve a farm's soil during its use as a solar site, according to a study by the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, based on solar projects on three Maryland farms. Farmers want and financially need the opportunity, the study said.

Why are sheep the most popular choice, at least for now? Because most solar arrays are too close to the ground to accommodate cattle. A solar project being built in Howard County, MD, though, has panels 6 feet off the ground so cows can graze on hay planted underneath. Goats tend to eat wiring and jump onto the panels. Pigs wallow.

Sheep, on the other hand, fit nicely under the panels, typically built 2–3 feet off the ground, and they keep their heads down for the business at hand. The panels provide shelter and shade. Studies are also finding that vegetation planted for grazing under solar panels helps keep the panels cool, boosting energy production.

“Normally, we hired crews with lawn mowers and Weed Wackers. For a solar business focused on sustainability, the idea of using fossil-fuel equipment is counterintuitive,” said Keith Hevenor of Nexamp Inc., one of the largest solar developers in the nation. The New Jersey-based company has sheep grazing at 14 sites in New York and may double that total by the end of the year.

“It’s been a great fit for us,” he said.

And then there are the optics. At some sites, solar grazing has blunted the concerns of those rattled by the conversion of farmland to energy production. Twenty states have sheep grazing on solar sites.

It seems too good to be true. But it’s not, said New York sheep farmer Lexie Hain, who helped form the grassroots American Solar Grazing Association in 2018 to connect and mobilize sheep farmers and solar operators around the country.

“Sheep are the natural fit for solar. It’s creating a shift,” Hain said. “This is a land-use change as well as a business opportunity for people, and they are responding. Solar grazing is happening on its own because it works better than mechanical mowing. It’s kind of remarkable.”

She and her nonprofit are being flooded with requests for advice and have helped launch grazing at solar arrays in Virginia, Pennsylvania and New York and other states. Hain and a business partner graze 1,400 of their own sheep at eight solar sites in New York and Pennsylvania.

HERDtheNews!

Sheep and solar panels cont...

Fat as butterballs

In the spring of 2020, John Fisher and his son, who are Amish sheep farmers near Gettysburg, PA, turned loose 100 lambs inside the newly opened 130-acre Nittany 1 solar array erected by Lightsource BP on former farmland.

“Those lambs gained weight like crazy, more than sheep ever gained on our pastures,” Fisher said.

Things went so well that this past season the brothers have increased the number of sheep they grow for meat on the property to 480. To keep from overgrazing the ground bare, the sheep are rotated into new areas of the property every few days with moveable fences.

The best grazing was under the solar panels themselves, he said. Studies have shown that “microclimates” of heat and moisture develop under panels, providing ideal growing areas for an assortment of vegetables, berries and marketable niche plants such as saffron.

“I couldn’t have found a better pasture for my sheep, in all honesty,” Fisher said when asked if he was satisfied with the grazing arrangement. Coreopsis, goldenrod, ox-eyed daisies, milkweed and other flowering plants added to the mix to benefit bees and other pollinators had “blooms all over the place,” the grazer reported.

About 100 miles east, near Sunbury and the Susquehanna River, grazer Caroline Owens lets 40 sheep she raises for meat, wool and public education fatten up on a 14-acre solar array. The panels there power 30% of the surrounding campus of Susquehanna University. The college initiated the grazing venture with her three years ago. Now, the sheep share the site with a beehive and communal gardens for students.

“They have everything they need. They’re butterball fat,” she said.

Are there enough sheep to do the job?

With the accelerating interest in solar grazing, the question may soon be if there are enough sheep to go around.

On average, it takes about one to five sheep per acre to keep plant growth trimmed.

In Virginia, where an estimated 7,500 to 35,000 acres will be needed for solar projects to meet the state’s goal of 50% renewable energy by 2020, there are 72,000 sheep. Approximately 417 solar projects are awaiting approval from PJM Interconnection, the nation’s largest electric grid operator. At the upper end of the estimated need for solar acres, there would not be enough sheep to cover that ground.

Pennsylvania has about 96,000 sheep, according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service. Under Gov. Tom Wolf’s 2019 executive order to lower greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050, some estimates say 80,000 acres of solar arrays will be needed in the next eight years. Approximately 437 solar projects are awaiting review by PJM Interconnection, a majority on open land. Pennsylvania would have a deficit of sheep unless only one or two sheep are needed to keep grasses shorn.

In Maryland, the state had mandated that 14.5% of its energy come from solar sources by 2030 — triple the amount installed now.

HERDtheNews!

Sheep and solar panels cont...

That was before the Climate Solutions Now Act became law this spring, speeding up the targeted rate of greenhouse gas reductions. Under the former law, a governor's task force estimated that 7,766 to 33,033 acres of farmland would be needed to meet the goal. Currently, there are an estimated 23,400 sheep on 925 farms of various sizes. That would not be enough sheep to handle the upper estimate of needed solar acres.

"I think there's a lot of interest [in solar grazing] in Maryland. I'm not certain we have enough sheep," said Susan Schoenian, a sheep and goat specialist at the University of Maryland's Western Maryland Research and Education Center.

New York, which has one of the most ambitious clean-energy goals in the nation, has 80,000 sheep.

Challenges include transportation to distant solar sites and lack of awareness of solar grazing opportunities. That's why Todd Schmidt is working on a three-year study, funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Schmidt's own Cornell University, for ways to increase solar grazing in Pennsylvania, New York and other mid-Atlantic and New England states.

Sheep farmers forming cooperatives that can buy and share transportation —even marketing sheep meat as "produced under solar arrays"— are among the ideas to increase the sheep-solar connection.

"I think from a policy standpoint, there is considerable interest from state legislatures that this needs to be considered," Schmidt said.

Hain and others said that they believe the demand for solar grazing create growth in the sheep industry. Plus, the relatively low costs of starting a sheep farm is attractive to entry-level participation by young and beginning farmers, as well as people of color.

"Sheep farming in the United States hasn't really taken off because it hasn't been a profitable venture," said Caleb Scott, a New York sheep farmer and vice president of the American Solar Grazing Association. "But now, with the opportunity to provide a service through feeding your sheep, it's increasingly making sheep farming maybe one of the most profitable animal husbandry markets that's scalable."

A workable tradeoff?

Despite its multiple benefits, sheep grazing among solar fields has not been universally embraced and is seen by some as enabling the conversion of prime farmland to energy production. Some think solar belongs only or primarily on rooftops, parking lots, abandoned mine land and industrial or commercial sites.

Especially where prime soil is taken out of production, some groups don't want to see farmland converted into industrial energy sites, even if theoretically the land can resume agricultural use, on healthier soil, after solar contracts end, typically in 25 years.

Roughly 61% of solar arrays built on Virginia farmland so far have been on the highest-rated soil, according to a study by Aaron Berryhill of Virginia Commonwealth University.

HERDtheNews!

Sheep and solar panels cont...

“The scale and pace at which this is happening means reasonable mitigation measures need to be strengthened,” said Ethan Winter, the American Farmland Trust’s northeast solar specialist.

While solidly endorsing solar energy, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation says solar arrays should avoid prime farmland and the removal of trees. A planned 7-acre community solar project on the foundation’s Clagett Farm in Maryland will incorporate an existing herd of sheep for vegetation management and to increase the herd size.

Grazing may not address all concerns, but it is playing a role in handling the increasing pressure for multiple benefits from solar sites.

“It doesn’t necessarily solve the problem of prime farmland going into solar developments and loss of farmland,” Schmidt said. “But maybe it’s a middle-ground strategy.”

Credit to: Ad Crable

Demand and prices for lamb hit record highs in 2021

West Virginia gained 2,000 sheep last year, according to the USDA-NASS.

Michelle Wilfong has been getting calls lately from people who want sheep. She and her husband, Charles Wilfong II, run about 1,150 ewes on their farm in Pocahontas County, West Virginia. They’ve grown the flock together from a couple hundred ewes when they got married in 2014.

They don’t typically sell to just anyone. They keep their best ewe lambs back as replacements and have set buyers for their market lambs. But still, people are calling. “Even the local people here, they’re wanting to buy our ewe lambs,” Michelle Wilfong said.

The sheep industry is going through a revival of sorts. Prices for lambs and ewes hit record highs in 2021, following a year of solid growth in 2020. People consumed more lamb last year than they have in two decades.

While numbers nationally are down, there are pockets of growth in West Virginia and Ohio. West Virginia reported a 7% increase in its sheep flock in 2021, the largest percentage increase in the nation.

Industry leaders expect the good times to keep rolling, at least through the rest of the year.

“We thought it was a covid up,” said Susan Schultz, president of the American Sheep Industry Association, and an Ohio sheep farmer. “Now we’re in the second year of it being up. Everyone is feeling very positive.”

The numbers

The total number of sheep in the U.S. dropped by 2% last year, from 5.17 million head to 5.06 million, [according](#) to the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service.

HERDtheNews!

Demand and prices cont...

The top 10 sheep states by inventory — all west of the Mississippi River — saw a decrease in numbers in 2021. Drought and predation are big challenges for producers out West.

There's growth in the East, though. West Virginia went from 30,000 to 32,000 head. Ohio, which has the largest inventory of sheep east of the Mississippi River, added 1,000 head in 2021, bringing it up to 127,000. New York and New England also saw an increase in sheep.

Some of the drop in numbers can be attributed to people cashing in on the strong prices. That in turn kept prices strong, as supply dropped and demand for lamb and replacement ewes remained up.

Slaughter lamb prices hit record levels, averaging \$217.25 per hundredweight in 2021, according to ASI's 2021 Sheep Industry Review report, [released](#) in March. That's a 44% increase over 2020 and 46% higher than the 2015-2019 average price.

The traditional lamb market calls for fat lambs finished between 125 and 140 pounds. That's what's used for restaurants and retail to get individual cuts of meat, like the rack or chops.

Prices were even high for nontraditional market lambs or light-weight slaughter lambs, those weighing 100 pounds or less. These lambs cater to the ethnic population that traditionally harvest lambs whole for religious or cultural feasts.

The average price for lambs weighing between 60-90 pounds at New Holland Auction in south central Pennsylvania, one of the largest auction markets for light-weight in the country, was \$346.20 per hundredweight in 2021. That's a 30% increase from the prior year.

Yearling, young, middle age and aged ewe prices all set new record levels in 2021. Ewe lambs brought in an average of \$284.38 per hundredweight, compared with \$185.26 the year before and \$164.97 in 2019, before the pandemic began. Aged ewes averaged \$192.77 per hundredweight in 2021, \$127.13 in 2020 and \$95.83 in 2019.

"We are expecting prices for live lambs to remain strong this year," Schultz said.

Lamb demand

The increased demand for lamb can be, in part, attributed to the pandemic. Before the pandemic, 50% of lamb was sold through the restaurant sector, Schultz said. That shifted toward retail and direct-to-consumer sales after covid closed restaurants and forced people to stay home.

"We thought our industry was going to be white tablecloth and cruise ships — and we want that to come back — but to have such a bump with our direct marketing and farmers markets and people trying lamb for the first time and coming back and trying it again, it's exciting," Schultz said.

More people had the chance to try lamb at home, and they're hooked. That's a big part of why the amount of lamb consumed per capita increased to 1.36 pounds in 2021, the highest level since the early 90's. Schultz credits younger people, millennials namely, being adventurous in the kitchen.

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Demand and prices cont...

The U.S. Quarterly Lamb Retail Sales Report for Q4 2021, [released](#) in March, found the volume of lamb sales was up 19% in 2021 compared with 2019, the year before the pandemic.

The bubble could burst. Schultz said there is a price point at which consumers will step away from retail lamb cuts, as they will with all proteins. Market reports showed that happening in late 2021, with the price shooting up to just over \$10/pound in November then falling below \$9.60/pound by December.

Getting better

There is room for improvement, Schultz said. One is lambing percentages. The 2021 lambing percentage was 1.07%, meaning 107 lambs were born to 100 ewes.

“We have pockets that are raising 1.33 lambs per ewe,” she said. “That’s where we really want to put some emphasis. We can make these ewes produce more lambs than they are doing right now.”

It won’t take a scientific breakthrough to increase lambing percentages. It’s mostly by using best practices, Schultz said, like improving management systems, animal health and genetics. Being more efficient is imperative if the industry is to be viewed as being a climate-friendly commodity, she said.

The American Lamb Board is [working](#) with Michigan State University to evaluate the environmental footprint of the U.S. sheep industry. The study will focus on greenhouse gas emissions for various sheep production systems such as range, farm flock, pasture, intensive and feedlot.

There’s growing interest in using sheep to combat the impacts of climate change. Schultz said sheep are being used in targeted grazing to reduce the vegetative fuel load in the West, possibly reducing wildfire risk.

Sheep are the preferred livestock for vegetation management under solar panels, called solar grazing. This could become a bigger factor in Ohio’s sheep industry as thousands of acres are slated to be turned into solar farms.

“We’re seeing growth for different purposes,” Schultz said. “It’s really reenergized the industry.”

Another Wool Alternative



One of the new hedges/wildlife corridors that's been created, using sheep wool as weed suppression giving the plants the best start in life. Instead of using plastic guards. Standard oaks and rowan trees were planted in recycled tree tubes.

The wool retains moisture and slowly releases natural nutrients back into the ground.

Credit to: Joanne Nissen & Mary Arnold

Feeding the HERD!

Lamb Stew Recipe

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 2 hours 20 minutes

Total Time: 2 hours 40 minutes

Servings: 8 people

This lamb stew is loaded with hearty, healthy ingredients. This lamb stew recipe is simple (a one-pot meal!) The lengthy simmering time in the oven makes the tender lamb morsels and vegetables just melt in your mouth.

Ingredients:

- 4 oz bacon, (4 strips, chopped into 1/4" strips)
- 2 lbs boneless leg of lamb or lamb shoulder, trimmed of excess fat, cut into 1 1/2" pieces
- 1/2 Tbsp sea salt for the lamb plus 1 tsp for stew
- 1 tsp black pepper for lamb plus 1/2 tsp for stew
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour or gluten free flour*
- 1 large yellow onion, diced
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 1/2 cups good red wine, *
- 1 lb button mushrooms, thickly sliced
- 4 cups low sodium beef broth or stock
- 1 Tbsp tomato paste
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme
- 1 1/2 lbs small yellow potatoes, halved or quartered into 1" pieces
- 4 medium carrots, 10 oz, peeled and cut into 1/2" thick pieces
- 1/4 cup parsley, finely chopped for garnish

Instructions

1. In a 5Qt dutch oven, saute chopped bacon over medium heat until browned and fat released. With a slotted spoon, transfer bacon to a large plate.
2. While bacon cooks, season lamb pieces with 1/2 Tbsp salt and 1 tsp pepper. Sprinkle with 1/4 cup flour and toss to coat. Cook lamb in 2 batches in hot bacon grease over medium heat until browned (3-4 min per side) then transfer to the plate with bacon.
3. Add diced onion and sauté 2 min. Add garlic and cook another minute, stirring constantly. Add 1 1/2 cups wine, scraping the bottom to deglaze. Add sliced mushrooms, bring to simmer then cook uncovered 10 min. Preheat Oven to 325°F.
4. Return bacon and lamb to pot and add 4 cups broth, 1 Tbsp tomato paste, 1 tsp salt, 1/2 tsp pepper, 1/2 tsp dried thyme and 2 bay leaves. Stir in potatoes and carrots, making sure potatoes are mostly submerged in liquid. Bring to a boil then COVER and carefully transfer to preheated oven at 325°F for 1 hr and 45 min. When done, potatoes and lamb will be very tender.**

In the Kitchen

HERDtheNews!

Upcoming Events

August 19th – 20th, 2022

162nd California Wool Growers Association
Annual Meeting and Convention
Carson Valley Inn, Minden, NV

August 19th, 2022

Board of Directors Meeting
Carson Valley Inn, Minden, NV



U.S. Targhee Sheep Association

PO Box 955
Chinook, MT 59523



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Mardy Rutledge, 702-292-5715, or visit the USTA website at www.ustargheesheep.org

U.S. Targhee Sheep Association 2022 National Show and Sale

Production, performance, lamb and wool. These are the fundamental characteristics of Targhee sheep. The Targhee breed excels in exhibiting all of these. The 2022 National Show and Sale is being held at the Sweet Grass County Fairgrounds in Big Timber, Montana. The Junior Show is on July 18th, followed by Open Show on 19th and ending the 20th with the National Sale at noon.

For a full list of entries and information, you can visit our website and view the latest Targhee Talk.

For more information contact the U.S. Targhee Sheep Association office at 702-292-5715 or www.ustargheesheep.org or ustargheesheep@gmail.com.



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NATIONAL RAM SALE
October 7 - 8
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Commercial Rams • Stud Rams • Registered Stud Ewes • Commercial Ewes
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HERDtheNews!

Sheep and Shepherds in the 21st Century – PhotoVoice Survey



UCCE is collaborating with the US Sheep Experiment Station in Dubois, Idaho, on a survey project to help identify opportunities and challenges associated with raising sheep on rangelands in the 21st Century.

Participation in this survey, and submission of 1-3 photographs that best reflect your own perspective on the role of sheep and shepherds in the modern, world will help rangeland managers, ecologists, and the public better understand sheep production and sheep producers. In addition, this project will connect members of an international sheep community through photovoice, a participatory method that engages knowledge holders as experts in the creative process of photography. Your stories and photos will be displayed as a scientific or popular poster and/or publication.

Please note that the use of electronic means of communication (e.g. the internet, email, text messages, faxes, and social networking) may not be secure, private, or confidential in your community. Please use care in submitting photographs; do not submit anything that might get you in trouble with authorities.

Your participation in this research should take about 10 minutes. You can access the survey at http://ucanr.edu/sheep_and_shepherds_photovoice_survey/

If you have any questions about the project, please contact Dan Macon at (dmacon@ucanr.edu).

LGD Bonding Survey

UCCE farm advisors Dan Macon and Carolyn Whitesell are conducting a survey of producers who are currently bonding LGDs with livestock. Successful bonding is critical to long term success with LGDs, and this survey will help provide a better understanding of successful bonding strategies. If you're interested in participating in this survey (which will track your bonding processes for 12-18 months), please contact Dan at dmacon@ucanr.edu or (530) 889-7385.