

Sheep

March 2011 Volume 8 Number 2



What's Inside

- 2 - AGM - Chairman
- 3 - Ontario Tour
- 4 - Meet our CSBA rep
- 5 - 7 CSBA Report
- 8 - 9 Lamb Meat
- 10 - Agassiz Lamb Co-op
- 11 - Classifieds
- 12 - 13 Grazing Seasons
- 14 - Foot Rot
- 15 - Production Survey
- 16 - 18 Condition Scoring
- 19- Lambing Record Sheet
- 20 - Fines w/o Tags
- 21 - Traceability funding
- 22 - CCWG Report
- 23 - 2010 AGM minutes

New Eastman rep elected

Eastman district of the MSA has elected a new representative on March 8. He is Herman Bouw of Dugald (Anola). Herman is a new producer and has a flock of 40 ewe lambs and 80 Rideau Arcott ewes. He can be contacted at Ph: 204-866-3707 or by email at: bouw@highspeedcrow.ca

MSA holds Annual General Meeting

Forty-seven participants were at the MSA Annual General Meeting held this year in Brandon, March 5. Because of the controversy surrounding RFID tags, The MSA board felt it was appropriate to bring in a speaker who has experience with the tagging systems.

Tony Stoltz, co-ordinator for the Alberta Lamb Traceability Pilot Project and the Analysis Co-ordinator for the Alberta and National RFID Projects, gave a presentation on making your sheep enterprise profitable using RFID management systems.

His project work has first, enabled them to collect data on actual farm costs, then second, to apply it to systems using RFID management systems. Why is traceability important? It supports our ability to compete globally and ensures production capacity and global market access. January, 2012 is the

Cont'd on page 5



RFID tagging systems were the feature topic at the AGM held in Brandon, March 5. Speaker Tony Stoltz (centre) from Cremona, AB talked about how to use the tagging system to help increase financial returns from the flock. Also present were producer Graham Rannie from Binscarth (left) and MAFRI Sheep and Goat Specialist Mamoon Rashid (right).

2011 REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

- Mark Humphries

As I have only been in the post as chair for a few weeks my report is some what short.

To begin with, we as a committee have made a new contact with the Agriculture Minister's department, with regard to a proposed ewe lamb retention program. This program was also used to re-open dialogue between the ministers' office and the MSA.

Many topics were covered during the meeting with Dr Barry Todd D/M:

EWE LAMB RETENTION
TRACEABILITY
MANDATORY CHECK OFF
SLAUGHTER PLANTS
RFID TAGS
MULTI-SPECIES GRAZING
CASH FLOW PROBLEMS FOR NEW PRODUCERS
BANK LENDING

The dialogue continues and we are hopeful that this meeting has paved the way forward for more discussions, in the hope that we can establish some sort of financial help for the Manitoba sheep producer.

I have also guided the committee to revamp the MSA web site. This should be completed shortly.

We have also made two new motions to put to the AGM concerning the CSF position and also a motion that concerns the link to tag checkoff with premise ID.

My main concern at the moment is the diminishing ewe flock within our province. This weakens our position with Government and in turn reduces our voice within CSF, the national sheep board .

I would like to take this opportunity to give praise to my fellow directors, who work very hard on behalf of the Manitoba producers. All producers need to be made aware of the countless hours that are spent on their behalf with no compensation given to the Director what's so ever.

Ontario Producer Tour

My name is MITCH MILLAR and I am a new producer from Lundar . I recently got into sheep and currently run 400 ewes. I am interested in learning about the industry and the business and found that through the GROWING FORWARD programs, there is possibly some money available to do a learning tour.

I am proposing that we apply for funding to do a tour in Ontario. I would like to get an idea of how many producers would be interested in doing something like this along with any requests and or suggestions on where we might visit. At this point there is no commitment required. I am looking for an idea of how many would be interested. Suggestions so far include:

- Ontario Stock yards in Cookstown
- Abattoir / tour and see how they grade carcass and what they are looking for in a animal
- Buyers
- Large and small farms with different management styles
- Intensive operation
- Accelerated operation
- Grass-based operation
- Value-added operation- wool and meat
- Purebred and Commercial operations

I am thinking that some time in June would be a good time to do this tour, should we be successful in securing funding. This tour is tentative on getting the funding and could possibly involve some producer input of personal money depending on how much we can get from GROWING FORWARD program. The timing of the tour is flexible at this time and can be set up to best suit the majority of producers interested in participating.

We do have confirmation from Ontario Stock yards that they would be willing to show us around and tour the facility then sit in on a sale.

There are several producers in the area who have responded positively also to touring us around their farms and talking about how they run there operations.

- Cherry Allen – Foot Flats Farm
- Hedge Row Farm - Value Added
- Quality Sheep - premier award Agri Innovation Excellence

At this point, I would like to have any one who may be interested let the MSA know your intentions. I need to have an idea how many might be interested so I can come up with the tour budget.

The tentative itinerary would be to leave Winnipeg on a Monday early am - fly into Toronto ; visit the Ontario Stock Yards, then spend a few days touring farms, possibly an abattoir and some wholesalers. Total trip would be 3 to 5 days, depending on the final itinerary and funding available .

Any one who is interested please let myself, Neil Verseval or any one else on the MSA board know by MARCH 12. I will then submit the application. If the application is successful, we will contact the interested producers with more detailed information at that time.

NEIL'S INFO: njv671@mail.usask.ca
204 467 2083

MITCH INFO:
mjmillar@mts.net 204 280 0822

Meet our new CSBA Representative - Neil Verseval

Hello everyone! I would like to formally introduce myself as the new Manitoba CSBA representative. My name is Neil Verseval and I live in the Stonewall area. I run a small Suffolk flock and have been raising sheep for the past 12 years. I recently started showing my sheep at both the MSA and Mountain View Sales and I look forward to building my flock in the years to come.

Some of you have already heard from me via e-mail. It was recently brought to my attention that it would be a good idea if the CSBA reports I present to the MSA could also be presented to the CSBA membership. I believe this is a good idea and I will try to do just that. For those without satisfactory internet connection, I will provide updates via Sheep Sense. If you would like to be notified of major happenings a lot sooner, please forward your e-mail address to njv671@mail.usask.ca.

The last CSBA meeting was back in January and a few notable items were discussed. A request was submitted to the CSBA for a one time discount on a back log of registrations. In order to register the current animals, nearly 400 sheep would have had to of been registered. The board voted unanimously to decline the request. Concerns about the ability to accurately verify parentage, and the desire to be fair to breeders who keep their registrations up to date, guided the board on this decision.

Scrapie is a major concern for producers out East, more so it would seem than here in the West. The CSBA continues to work on control and eradication of scrapie. I hope to learn more about their endeavours at the AGM in March.

A topic I found most interesting was the idea of developing a national Record of Performance (ROP) system. Both Quebec and Ontario have long had established programs. I know a fair number of producers here in Manitoba use their own ROP system on their farms, but a national database for comparative purposes would go a long way in helping us enhance our genetics. I would be interested in hearing your thoughts on this.

The CSBA AGM is March 2-6 in Truro, Nova Scotia. If there are any topics you would like for me to try and bring forth at the meeting, please contact me. I have already been asked to broach the idea of pressing Shear well to provide replacement tags for a double tagging system. It would appear that these tags seem to have better retention than the competitors' tags and are easier on breeds with small ears.

Finally, I would like to organize a work shop on raising purebreds. I have had a number of people over the past year inquire about raising purebreds and I think it would be a good idea to provide them with the knowledge they need to get started. The sheep industry is experiencing substantial growth and will require good purebred and seed stock genetics to help it meets this demand. If you or perhaps your children would be interested in such a seminar, please contact and let me know. Please give me an idea of your general location to help me determine the most convenient location to hold such an event.

Neil Verseval
CSBA Representative
MSA Interlake Regional Director



Neil showing his Suffolk ram at last summer's MSA "Gathering of the Flock" Show and Sale at Neepawa, MB.

CSBA Report

Neil Verseval - CSBA representative

My time in Nova Scotia was very productive and very educational. I thoroughly enjoyed myself! The CSBA directors are a good bunch of people and the new general manager, Stacey White, is an outstanding asset to this association. Stacey is energetic, enthusiastic, well organized and well prepared. I believe he will help the CSBA make significant progress in the very near future.

I came away from the CSBA board meetings with a very positive impression. Registrations and transfers were actually up this past year across Canada with nearly every province seeing some degree of increase. The CSBA is in the budgetary black and for many of the longer serving directors this was a highlight following years of tough decisions and spending cuts. The CSBA has built up a significant research purse and will be making a significant promotional push in the coming year. The new Business Plan provides a solid foundation for the Association's activities in the coming years and a new GM will be a significant asset in bringing the Business Plan to fruition in the coming years.

Promotion of the CSBA and purebred breeders was a major theme at these meetings. The breed book is to be updated and will most likely see the addition of the Finn breed and the California Red. It is currently in the works to incorporate these two breeds into the list of CSBA recognized breeds. The CSBA will be ordering a number of breed posters and breed books. If you have any interest in these materials, please let me know. We also discussed taking advantage of the website to further facilitate promotion and using provincial newsletters as a means of further disseminating pertinent information.

A good amount of discussion focused on promoting purebred sheep to commercial producers, highlighting the value of purebred sheep to commercial production. The sentiment was aired that this has been lacking in the past. The CSBA would like to see an increase in transfers of registered animals to commercial producers. The idea of using a national record of performance system as part of this promotion was discussed and will be touched on later in this report. The CSBA also hopes to have available later this year a downloadable pamphlet that will highlight the benefits of purebred sheep, as well as tips on caring for a purebred ram, that breeders can download and pass along to customers.

Cont'd on Page 6

MSA AGM cont'd

legislated start date for RFID tagging for sheep. In Manitoba, all farms are now required to have a premise ID number. This number will be required to purchase tags as of Jan 2012. There was some review of the Shearwell tags, which have now dropped in cost to \$1.65. Discussions continue between Shearwell and CSF.

Stolz suggest that the system will help producers. It can be used to measure and identify animals based on merit to lift flock productivity; provide accurate weighing and drafting; help keep accurate data recording; identify individual animals and provide performance reports.

The benefits include traceability and tracking of on-farm animal movement and animal history; labour costs are reduced because of the speed of physical processing and information collection, retrieval and analysis and finally knowing what you have; identifying your best/worst ewes; identifying top performing rams and marketing lambs at target weights.

The Agassiz Lamb Co-op gave an overview of the plans for the co-op. Meetings are planned around the province (see advert).

The annual general meeting was held with 29 people present. Reports were presented for the Chair Mark Humphries, Treasurer Lucien Lesage, CSBA Henry Nelson (acting for Neil Verseval), and CCWG Brian Greaves. Several motions were presented for discussion. An overview of the Show and Sale was given by Angela Viola, as was a producer tour (see article) and the Royal Winter Fair.

The CSBA received an enormous number of requests for funding this year, with the bulk of these coming from 4-H groups. The board was happy to see so much interest, but was concerned that their original message on sponsorship had been misunderstood. The CSBA offers sponsorship for provincial level 4-H events and national sheep shows. In order to control sponsorship spending, the CSBA cannot offer funding to individual 4-H events or provincial shows at this time.

The CSBA sets aside 10% of its annual income from CLRC registrations into a designated research fund. To date money has been donated to Dr. Paula Menzies at the University of Guelph and Dr. Dave Barrett from the Nova Scotia Agricultural College. However, these donations were relatively small and the research fund has grown to a considerable size at this time. The CSBA had been hoping for researchers to come forward with requests, but this has not happened and the CSBA now plans to actively seek out research projects in the coming year.

Scrapie and genotyping were discussed in detail. While my personal impression is that scrapie is not a major issue for producers in the west, it definitely seems to be on the minds of producers out east, where a lot of the scrapie cases have been detected. The scrapie eradication program is underway, involving sample collection at abattoirs and at farms involved in the voluntary on-farm program. In the recent past, the CSBA has been pushing for the inclusion of scrapie genotyping under an eradication program, and therefore possible government funding. However, genotyping is not recognized by the OIE (Office International d'Epizootics) as a necessary component for scrapie eradication. Furthermore, the current scrapie eradication program, including the voluntary on-farm eradication program, will not likely in its current form lead to an increase in export of Canadian breeding stock. The United States would like to see the Canadian scrapie program parallel the American program and until this happens the U.S. is not likely going to entertain opening the border. The CSBA supports the use of scrapie genotyping in development of the Canadian sheep flock and feels it is an important component in furthering the Canadian sheep industry. However, given the current climate, the CSBA feels its resources may be better directed to more achievable goals in the short term.

An update on the spot parentage program was given. To date there are a number of parentage requests that have not been completed. For a number of these cases, one of the parents was unavailable for testing, and so an alternate animal was, or is, going to be chosen. In a few cases, the request for parentage testing was ignored. For both scenarios, a number of requests are over one year old. The CSBA has voted to impose a penalty for failure of compliance. For any requests after March 4, 2011, a one year grace period will be given to allow for breeders to comply with the testing. If, after one year, the spot testing is not completed, all registrations submitted by that breeder will be with held until testing is complete. The CSBA will also be in contact with the CLRC to verify the correct procedure for selecting animals for spot parentage. Those breeders with tests that are still pending will be contacted and the reason for the failure to comply identified.

For 2011, the CSBA has gained an important resource in the form of Johanne Cameron, director for Quebec. Johanne was formerly employed with CEPOQ, the Quebec entity that coordinates Genovis. Johanne was able to bring the CSBA up to date on Genovis and its Ontario counterpart, the Sheep Flock Improvement Program (SFIP). Both agencies, CEPOQ and SFIP use the same data collection and analysis system developed and owned by the Centre for Genetic Improvement of Livestock (CGIL) at the University of Guelph. Data collected includes 100 day weights, number of lambs per ewe, number of lambs weaned per ewe, back fat measurements, etc. This data is then used to calculate an Expected Progeny Difference (EPD) for these measured traits. An EPD is a mathematical estimate of the likely hood that a certain ewe or ram will pass on favorable production traits to its offspring. Up until now, CEPOQ and SFIP would collect data in their respective provinces separately and then every 4 months combine their collective data. However, this process would cause a very large and sudden fluctuation in rankings of breeding stock that would upset and confuse breeders. CEPOQ and SFIP are now working together to collect and combine data on a much more regular basis, thereby preventing sudden and large fluctuations. This allows producers and breeders to gain a more accurate representation of individual breeding animals at any given time through-

out the year.

Currently, the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency (OSMA) and CEPOQ manage this initiative. I believe it is currently in the works to amalgamate the program under one name that can be promoted nationally. It sounds like the program will simply be known as Genovis. In Quebec, the Genovis program benefits from government subsidization, with the base cost to Quebec producers being \$150 dollars per year. Measuring and collecting back fat data is optional and an additional cost to producers. This price tag is in comparison to an approximate base cost of \$300 to producers outside of Quebec. The Genovis program is showing signs of success in Quebec owing to a government funded pilot project to train commercial producers and breeders on the use and benefits of the program. Prior to this training, the up take on the program was slow, but with training producers are now requesting this information when purchasing replacement stock. In order for Genovis to be successful nationally, three key requirements have been identified:

- Canada-wide training on how Genovis works, how to interpret results and how to implement those results on farm.
- Linking of online data to other organizations, such as CLRC (ie. When you get your registration paper, not only would that paper display the pedigree of that animal, but also the known EPDs)
- Training of technicians (swine technicians) on how to collect back fat measurements.

Armed with this knowledge, the CSBA feels that this is a program worth pursuing and will be sending a letter of support for Genovis to OSMA and CEPOQ. The CSBA will also investigate funding options for furthering the program.

This concludes my report for the 2011 CSBA AGM and board meetings in Truro, Nova Scotia. If you have any questions or would like to comment, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,
Neil Versavel
CSBA Manitoba Director

Lamb Shank Soup Recipe

- 1 1/2 c. dried chickpeas**
- 1 T. olive oil**
- 3 - 4 lb. lamb shanks, frenched**
- 1 medium onion, chopped finely**
- 2 medium carrots, chopped finely**
- Method:**
- 2 trimmed celery stalks, sliced thinly**
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed**
- 1 tsp. cumin**
- 2 c. chicken stock**
- 4 c. water**
- 8 large stalks Swiss chard**
- 1/4 c. lemon juice**

Meanwhile, heat oil in large saucepan; cook lamb, in batches, until browned. Cook onion, carrots, celery, garlic and cumin in same pan, stirring, about 5 minutes or until onion softens. Return lamb to pan with stock and water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, covered, 2 hours.

Remove soup mixture from heat; when lamb is cool enough to handle, remove meat, chop coarsely. Refrigerate cooled soup mixture and lamb meat, covered separately overnight.

Discard fat from surface of soup mixture. Place soup add Swiss chard and lemon; simmer, uncovered until chard just wilts. Serve soup with a warmed loaf of ciabatta, if desired.

Lamb meat may boost fat profile of infant formula: Study

By Nathan Gray, 10-Mar-2011

The fatty acid profiles of commercial baby food could be enhanced by using meat from suckling lambs, according to new research.

The study, published in the *Journal of Food Science*, suggests that lamb meat may enhance the fatty acid profile of commercial baby food, but noted that attention must be given to processing techniques to ensure that beneficial fatty acids are not lost.

"We have documented that meat from the suckling lamb is an interesting and potentially important source of [omega-3-FAs](#), especially some of the long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids ([PUFAs](#)) that are essential for optimal neonatal growth and development," said the authors, led by Dr Anna Nudd from the Department of Animal Science at the Università degli Studi di Sassari, Italy.

The authors added that the results *"may have special implications to the infant food industry,"* as products made with meat from suckling lambs *"may provide not only exceptional amounts of these fatty acids, but also other ...essential nutrients such as iron."*

PUFA profile

The authors said that the importance of fatty acids, especially long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids, for optimal fetal and neonatal growth and development, *"is well documented."*

"Of particular interest in this regard are arachidonic acid (ARA) and docosahexaenoic acid ([DHA](#)) that are essential to development and function of the brain and retina," said Nudd and colleagues.

They said that inadequate supplies of [omega-6](#) and omega-3 fatty acids can negatively impact the development of the central nervous system, and may result in long-term changes in learning ability and reduced visual function.

Due to the importance of long chain PUFA during infancy, experts in the area of infant nutrition recommend substantial dietary intake, with suggested ratios of omega-6 to omega-3 of 8:1 (*Institute of Medicine, 2002*).

In many developed countries, commercial baby foods based on meat and fish are commonly added to the infant's diet after the age of four months.

"At weaning meat is often included in a baby's meals in the form of commercially lyophilized (LIO) and homogenized (HO) products because they are considered practical to use, have high digestibility, and are presumed to be safer and more balanced from a nutritional point of view than foods prepared at home," said the authors.

They added that although the importance of essential fatty acids in infant nutrition has been documented, *"there is very little information published concerning fatty acid content of meat-based baby foods."*

Study details The new study compared the fatty acid profiles of fresh lamb meat from suckling lambs with those of homogenized and lyophilized, commercially available, lamb-based infant foods.

The authors reported the content of total omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids was highest in fresh meat (more than three fold) compared to commercial baby food. They found that this was largely due to higher contents of alpha-linolenic acid (1.5 times higher), eicosapentaenoic acid (six fold higher), and docosahexaenoic acid (10 times more).

Furthermore, they found that arachidonic acid was more than 6-fold higher in the fresh meat compared to homogenized and lyophilized formula products.

“In general, fatty acid composition was more similar between lyophilized and fresh meat samples than between homogenized and fresh meat samples, probably as a consequence of the high level of vegetable oil added to homogenized products,” said the authors.

“The seemingly common use of vegetable oil as an ingredient of homogenized products may cause potentially important modifications of the fatty acid composition and, consequently, lead to a difference in fatty acid profiles of ...infant food products,” said Nudd and her co-workers.

The authors also reported the ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids in homogenized foods was 19:1. In contrast, the fresh meat and lyophilized had a more appropriate balance between omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, with ratios closer to the recommended 8:1.

They concluded that the use of meat from suckling lambs for baby foods *“may provide a reliable way to improve essential and long chain polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) content of lyophilized products.”*

Source: *Journal of Food Science*

[Volume 76, Issue 2](#), pages H43–H47, doi:10.1111/j.1750-3841.2010.02027.x

“Documentation of Fatty Acid Profiles in Lamb Meat and Lamb-Based Infant Foods”

Authors: A. Nudda, M.K. McGuire, G. Battacone, M.G. Manca, R. Boe, G. Pulina

Leg of Lamb in Tangerine Sauce

1 (6 - 9 lb) leg of lamb, bone in or 1 (5 - 7 lb boneless, rolled and tied)

2 cloves garlic, cut into slivers

Vegetable oil

1 tsp rosemary

Salt and pepper

1 1/2 c. tangerine juice

1/2 c. Grand Marnier

1/2 c. apricot jam

2 T. cornstarch

1/2 tsp dried mint

1/4 tsp ground ginger (opt)

Heat oven to 325F

Method:

In a shallow roasting pan, place lamb, fat side up. With a sharp knife, cut slits in lamb. Insert garlic slivers in slits. Roast lamb at 325F for 20 - 25 minutes per pound when using a bone in leg (25 - 30 minutes, if using a boneless leg), or until meat thermometer placed in thickest part of meat reaches 140F for rare or 150 F to 155F for medium. Allow lamb to stand in a warm place for 15 - 20 minutes before carving.

Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan, combine remaining ingredients. Simmer, stirring constantly, until thickened. Serve with leg of lamb.

Makes 8 servings.

Agassiz Lamb Co-op

Throughout the month of March there will be meetings held in Manitoba to promote and recruit members for the Agassiz Lamb Coop, a new marketing initiative for producers. There are a number of issues driving the need for this Coop and producers looking to set long term goals for a successful sheep operation should take the time to come out to one of the 5 regional meetings.

There will be a brief overview of the proposed Coop and marketing project at the AGM but the evening, regional meetings, will give producers a chance to look more closely at the idea and learn how they can become involved.

Most of the lambs produced in Manitoba end up on a dinner plate in Ontario and the first three phases of this project target getting better returns for our lambs from the Ontario market.

Once we have established a supply of quality lambs the forth phase will then look at working with local abattoirs to direct lambs into the Manitoba market at prices that will equal the Ontario returns.

The most important phase of the project, in the long term will be working with a local abattoir to create an opportunity to establish a lamb kill facility in Manitoba that will process lambs here in Manitoba for shipment into the Ontario market.

This last phase is crucial to the continued success of Manitoba lamb production because of where we are located. The Westhawk Lake Zoning Initiative has been established to control the movement of live animals between Western and Eastern Canada in the event of a Foreign Animal Disease outbreak. Zoning the country (as it is called) will allow for the re-opening of export markets more quickly for producers on one side of Westhawk Lake. The problem for us is that when live animal movement is stopped we will have our access to the Ontario market shut off. The immediate effect will be for the Eastern lamb prices to jump and the Western prices to crash. The halt in movement of animals will help beef and hog producers in the long run by reopening export markets sooner but it will be at our expense. If we work now towards developing Federally Inspected facilities here in Manitoba we can avoid this crisis.

Federal facilities in Manitoba are also important because of the inevitable changes to live animal transportation. The additional costs associated with off-loading lambs for feed, water and rest will drastically reduce any cost of production advantages we may have over Eastern producers.

Though these last two issues are something that the Governments, both provincial and federal should be addressing with us, it is important that we as producers step out ahead of this challenge.

So, if you see yourself in this Industry for the long haul and want to be part of this new initiative take the time to come out to one of the 5 regional meetings.

Randy Eros

Agassiz Lamb Co-op

If you are interested in learning more about this initiative please plan to attend one of the following meeting locations:

March 8- Smitty's Restaurant, 45
Park Rd (Beside Clear
Spring Mall) Steinbach, MB

March 10-Souris GO Office
130-1st Ave. Souris, MB

March 15-Dauphin GO Centre
27-2nd Ave S.W. Dauphin, MB

March 17-Carman GO Office
65-3rd Ave. NE Carman, MB

March 22-Teulon GO Office
77 Main St. Teulon, MB

All meetings will be 7-9 p.m.

For more information call Randy Eros at (204)
422-8723

Classifieds

For Sale: Livestock Guardian Pups: Great Pyrenees/ Marema cross. Males & females. Raised in the corral with the sheep. Both parents are working dogs at farm. Ready to go March 11, 2011. \$200.00

Two 4-month old male Border Collie pups, both tri-coloured. Born Oct 22, 2010. Both parents are excellent working dogs. Parents can be seen at our farm. \$400.00. Call Rick 204 739-2642 evenings or weekends.



Wanted: 20-30 Dorset ewes. Call 204-325-9950

For sale: 5 Border Collie/Gt Pyrennes puppies . Male and females, we are asking \$200 each, they were born at the end of December, needs to be picked up ASAP. Please contact Matthew Thiessen at 204-434-9488 or e-mail us at mcthiessen@mtsm.blackberry.com.

Watch the next issue of Sheep Sense for our ad selling 150 yearling Clun Forest cross ewes. They will be open, 15 months old and ready to go in September. Asking \$275 each. Call Wayne at 529-2633 or email mcdonald_farm@yahoo.ca.

RAM SALE

Warren Moore and guest consigners are holding their annual Ram Sale, May 19, 2011, at the Fort Macleod Auction Mart. On offer will be approximately 104 yearling rams, including Suffolks, Hampshires, Rambouillets, Dorsets and North Country Cheviots. For more information contact Graham Rannie at 204-532-2008 or Warren Moore at 403-549-2464.

Ewes for sale: 15 purebred Border Cheviots yearling ewes. An extremely even group of young ewes, will make great mothers.

For more information contact Graham Rannie or Janice Johnstone at 204-532-2008 or granie@inetlink.ca

Announcements

The Manitoba Stock Dog Association AGM has been postponed, please see the website for updated info and any clinic or trial information, which is updated as I hear about it. Lorna Wall

www.manitobastockdog.com

When you sell breeding stock to a new producer, please ask them to contact the MSA, so we can make sure they have access to the services and information available and we can add them to the mailing list for the newsletter and email listing.

Contact: Gerry at 204-834-2261 or email - gerry@spiritsands.ca

The **Mountain View Sheep Association** is planning to hold an informational meeting on **Sheep Nutrition** in April (date TBA) in Dauphin. We are also planning a hands-on spinning/wool workshop if there is enough interest. Anyone wishing to attend either of these two events please contact either **Diana Neuman** [835-2745] or **Virginia Fox** [638-8103]. MVSA is once again planning its annual fall sheep sale in Dauphin. Date will be announced in an upcoming Sheep Sense.

Black Dorper semen is still available. We will have some Ram Lambs of Registered White Dorper as well as some crossbred White Dorper/Katahdin available. Lorna Wall. More info on our Website www.wall2wallsheep.com



I'm having a bad hair day!!

The Three Grazing Seasons

by Jane Thornton

Forage and Pasture Specialist, MAFRI, Souris, MB

Over the years, I have observed graziers from BC to MB and the pattern of grazing is the same. Spring grazing starts in late May to early June and is usually done by early September to mid-October. This puts your grazing days at about 122 days which just happens to coincide with the average number of growing days.

In the last 10 years however, this trend has started to change, probably because of economics. It is cheaper to graze than any other form of feeding. So how can we accomplish this without losing production of pastures or livestock? Well, as they say the devil is in the details. But don't think this is hard, it just takes a little forward planning and understanding of the forages we have at our disposal.

The grazing season can be divided into three sections; we'll look at early spring and late fall to early winter as they are the most neglected and where the greatest gains can be made.

For early spring, there are a number of strategies that can be employed. The first is to seed a designated area with crested wheatgrass, the variety "Kirk" is probably the most suitable for MB conditions. Crested wheatgrass is the earliest spring grass available and can also take close clipping so it is ideal for sheep.

I recommend seeding as a monoculture and you probably won't need that many acres as it is just a fill in for early spring before your summer pastures are ready. This grass does need some special use and care. Start grazing in spring when the grass is approximately 4 inches in height. Allot the sheep only enough pasture for about 1 week, forward and back fence each section, and allow them to clip it to about 1 to 2 inches. It is good to have enough acres to hold the sheep for about 1 month. At the end of the first rotation (4 weeks), your summer pasture will probably be ready. If it is not, then start back on the first section and if there is inadequate regrowth supplement with hay. Continue through the rotation.



By the second go round your summer pasture will be ready. Fertilize the crested wheatgrass before you lose early spring or summer moisture and leave it until fall and a good killing frost, approximately – 8 C. After a killing frost the sheep can come back to this pasture and graze it in the late fall or early winter period. Crested wheatgrass should not be grazed or hayed in the summer. Also of note is that crested wheatgrass likes well drained soils so if you are in an area with heavy clays or lowlands then this is not the grass for you.

Meadow brome grass is also very early and widely adapted to Manitoba conditions. However this grass can not take the same beating as crested wheatgrass. If your soil or climate is not suited to crested wheatgrass then meadow brome is a good choice. Management of meadow brome is significantly

different however. Meadow brome stores some carbohydrates in the stem bases so this means that once the sheep have grazed it down to 4 inches the sheep should be moved to the next section. Start grazing when the brome is about 5 to 6 inches tall which on most years will be 1 to 2 weeks later than crested wheatgrass.

Annuals are another option for spring grazing. Depending on the soil and moisture profile of your farm you could try spring seeded fall rye (for drier areas), Italian annual ryegrass (for moister areas) or winter wheatgrass (average moisture). All of these species will stay vegetative through the first growing season so can be used about 6 to 8 weeks after seeding and on rotation right through to late fall. Watch in the fall for frosts and the risk of nitrate poisoning. In the spring of the second year fall rye and winter wheat will be available for early grazing and will need to be hit very hard to keep them from bolting.

Grazing Seasons

One of the last strategies for early spring grazing is stockpiled pasture. This is the practice of saving pasture from the previous year. It can be used as soon as the snow has gone but is generally of poor quality and supplementation is required to provide proper nutrition to your sheep. As the spring progresses, new growth will begin to appear and pasture quality will begin to increase. Stockpiled pasture provides good clean ground for your flock in the spring.

I have already mentioned a few strategies to extend the grazing season in the fall and early winter such as crested wheatgrass, fall rye, Italian ryegrass and winter wheatgrass but stockpile forage can also be used. To set up this system, you should pick forage that has good re-growth capabilities. This generally means a pasture-type for-

age such as meadow brome or orchard grass. To have good quality forage in the fall and early winter, this pasture will need to be grazed or hayed about the middle of July. The pasture is then allowed to re-grow until use after the growing season. Studies showed that stockpiled forage had adequate nutritional value for dry, early gestation animals. Do not use this forage for lactating ewes, young stock or late gestation animals without testing the forage and supplementing as required.



Meadow Brome

By employing one or more of these strategies your sheep may be on pasture an additional 30 to 75 plus days per year – depending on weather conditions and your commitment.

"Gathering of the Flock"

MSA Sheep Show
and Sale

4-H, Wool Show

Fibre Festival
Displays

August 12 - 14

Neepawa Ag Grounds,
Neepawa, MB

Farmers Can Spot Lame Sheep, But Fail To Prevent Foot-rot Spread

Science Daily (Oct. 13, 2008) — Sheep farmers are highly able to spot even mildly lame sheep, but many do not take steps to prevent the spread of lameness in their flocks by catching and treating these animals. A new study provides evidence on the accuracy of farmers' reporting of lameness, suggesting that farmers have one of the skills required to minimize foot-rot and other infectious foot conditions in their flocks. Foot-rot, one of the most common causes of lameness, is infectious, caused by the bacterium *Dichelobacter nodosus*. Previous studies have shown that the rapid treatment of a sheep with foot-rot increases its rate of recovery and decreases transmission of the infection to other sheep. But are sheep farmers able to pick out sheep in the early stages of the disease? Dr. Jasmeet Kaler and Professor Laura Green, researchers at the University of Warwick, asked more than 230 farmers and sheep specialists to watch video clips of individual sheep and then say whether they thought the sheep was lame or not. They were then asked about when they would catch the sheep for inspection and treatment, or whether they would wait until more sheep in the flock displayed a similar level of lameness. More than 90% of the study participants correctly iden-



It's that time of year again - babies abound! This is a Romney ewe with the first of two Texel cross lambs, from 2010. The 2011 lambs are a month away.

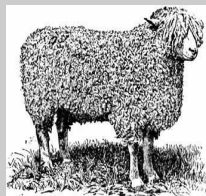
tified mildly lame sheep, that is, those with an uneven posture, a shorter stride in one leg or a slight nodding of the head as they moved. However, the treatment of lame sheep varied considerably between farmers. Nearly 20% said they would treat lame animals on the first day, whilst about 70% said they would do so within a week. Farmers and sheep specialists were more likely to catch and treat a sheep as the severity of its lameness increased. The majority said they would catch a single lame sheep at the point where it would not bear its weight when standing and showed discomfort when moving. However, 25 farmers said they did not catch individual sheep at all and only treated lame sheep at routine gatherings. These farmers had highest prevalence of lameness in their flock (15%). The authors say, "Our study indicates that farmers have the skills to follow the current advice about how to minimize lameness in sheep and prevent the spread of foot-rot among their flock. They should inspect – and if necessary treat – the first mildly lame sheep in a group within one to three days of it first being lame."

Journal Reference:

Jasmeet Kaler and Laura E Green. **Recognition of lameness and decisions to catch for inspection among sheep farmers and specialists in GB.** *BMC Veterinary Research*, October 14, 2008

"Wild and Woolly" Fibre Festival

Wanted: Wool and wool breed sheep for our 2nd annual fibre show to be held at the MSA Show and Sale, August 13-14, 2011



**Wool Show and Sale
Workshops and Demos
Vendors
Spinning Circle**

For more info contact : Gerry @ 204-834-2261 or
email gerry@spiritsands.ca

Manitoba Sheep Association Production Survey and Contact List

The MSA would like to be able to facilitate contacts between producers, abattoirs and retailers. If you are interested in being put on a contact list, which would be distributed to buyers of MB lamb, please fill out the following survey and return to Gerry Oliver, MSA secretary, Box 1117, Carberry, MB R0K 0H0; ph - 204-834-2261 or email - gerry@spiritsands.ca.

Name:	
Address:	Phone:
	Email:
1 What time of year do you lamb?	
2 How many lambs do you have to sell (approximately)?	
3 What time of year do you sell your lambs?	
4 Who do you usually sell your lambs to? (Please check all appropriate boxes)	a) auction mart <input type="checkbox"/> b) livestock dealer <input type="checkbox"/> c) direct market <input type="checkbox"/> d) farm gate <input type="checkbox"/>
5 Other comments	

Condition Scoring of Ewes

Condition scoring the ewe flock can be a useful management tool. A producer can classify ewes into groups according to fullness of muscling and amount of fat cover. While it is subjective, it is accurate enough to indicate the nutritional status of individual ewes as well as an entire flock.

Knowing condition scores, flockowners can make adjustments in the feeding program to save money or prevent problems attributable to ewe condition. There is an optimum condition (score) for each ewe in the flock for each stage of the production cycle. Use Table 1 to compare each ewe's and the flock's condition against a standard and as a guide for feeding ewes in optimum or poor condition.

Ewes can be scored several times during the year. Perhaps the most important time is five to six weeks prior to lambing.

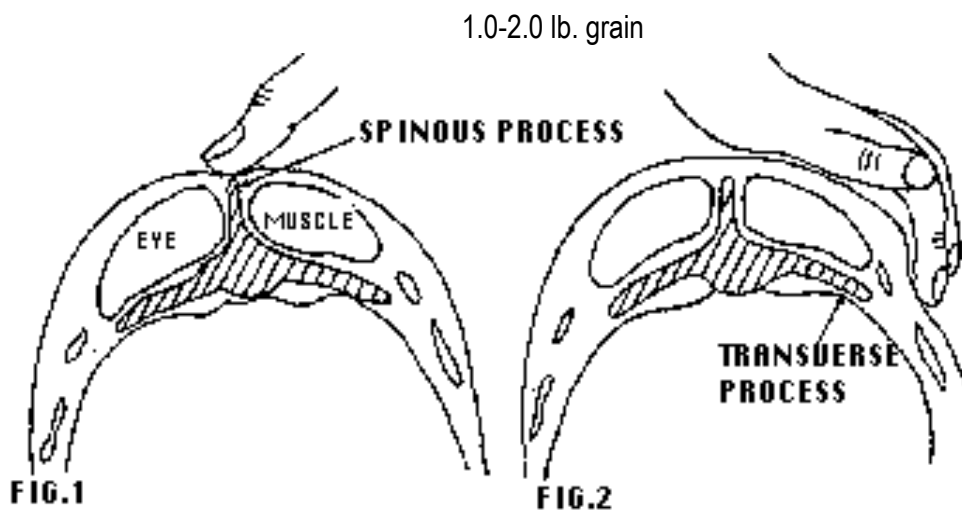
Scoring is done by using the hand to feel for the fullness of muscling and fat cover over and around the vertebrae in the loin region. The loin vertebrae have, in addition to the central spinal column, a vertical portion of bone called the spinous process (figure 1), and a short horizontal bone called the transverse process extending outward (figure 2). These bones can be easily felt through the wool and skin on thin ewes, but not at all on fat ewes.

A uniform condition scoring system has not been adopted in the U.S. sheep industry. The system described in this fact sheet has been used by some and appears to be workable. It can be modified to include half scores when scorers are unsure of a whole number score.

Table 1. Feeding by Condition Score of a 150-Lb. Ewe.

		Adjustment for Thin	
		Daily Ration	Ewes with a Score of 1
Period	Desired Score (air dry, lb.)		to Low 2
Maintenance	2	3.2 good hay, equiv.. pasture	Add 0.3 lb. hay, 0.3 lb. grain, better pasture
Breeding	3	3.0 good hay, equiv. pasture+	Add 0.3 lb. hay, 0.6 lb. grain, better pasture
		0.5 grain	

Early gestation	2+	3.5 good hay, equiv. pasture	Add 0.3 lb. hay, 0.3 lb. grain, good pasture
Late gestation	3	4.5 good hay, 0.5-1.0 lb. grain	Add 1.0-1.5 lb. grain
Lambing	3+	4.0 good hay, 1.0-1.5 lb. grain	Add 1.0-1.5 lb. grain
Weaning	2	5.0 excellent hay, 1.0-2.0 lb. grain	Add 1.0-1.5 lb. grain



Adjust feed for "fat" (score 4) and "obese"(score 5) ewes **only** during early gestation by reducing intake to 75-80% of normal. 10-15% weight loss can be tolerated. For a 150-lb. ewe to move up on condition score, she will need to gain 5 to 10 pounds.

The five condition scores (figure 3) are:

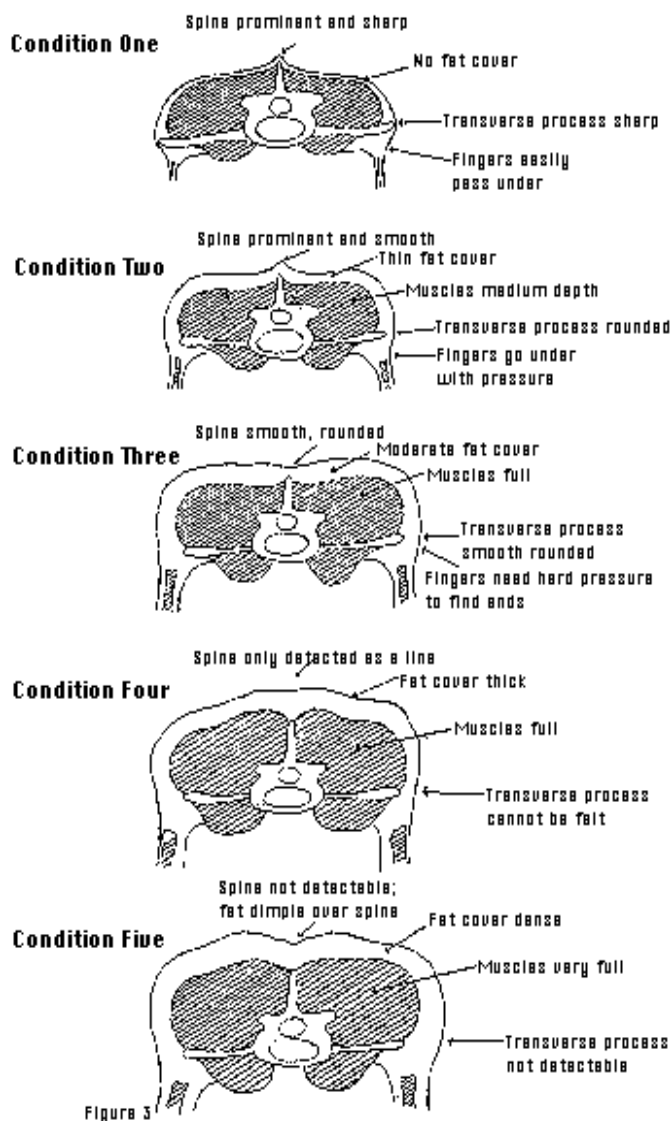
Condition Score 1: Very thin Spinous process very prominent and sharp; transverse process also easily felt and sharp; fingers can be pushed easily under ends; loin muscle shallow, concave; no fat over muscle, under skin.

Condition Score 2: Thin Spinous process prominent but less sharp; transverse process smoother on ends; fingers can be pushed with little pressure under ends; loin muscle more depth and fullness; no discernible fat covering.

Condition Score 3: Average Spinous process easily felt with finger pressure but smooth not sharp; transverse process smooth and fat covered; firm pressure needed to push fingers under edge; loin muscle full with cover of .15-.20 inches of fat.

Condition Score 4: Fat Spinous process can be felt with considerable finger pressure; transverse process cannot be felt, ends covered with fat; loin muscle full with cover of .25-.35 inches fat.

Condition Score 5: Very fat Spinous process cannot be felt; back broad with hollow; transverse process cannot be felt; loin very wide and thick over loin edge; evidence of fat around dock extending forward on rump. Fat covering over .4 inch over loin muscle, 1.0 inch or more over rib.



Scoring illustrations above from "Body Condition Scoring of Sheep" by Dr. Terry Boundy in *The Progressive Sheep Breeder*, pp. 22-24. Spring 1982 Shoreham Vermont

Lambing Records - 2011

Lamb ID	Ewe ID	Sire ID	Birth Date	Sex	Birth WT	Wean WT	Wean Date	Remarks
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Increased fines for animals without tags

Ken Sloik, National Lead for Enforcement on Animal Identification,
Canadian Food Inspection Agency

In October 2010, amendments were made to the Agriculture and Agri-Food Administrative Monetary Penalties Regulations (AAAMP Regulations) which increased the penalties available for violations under the Health of Animals Act. The changes affected the penalties applicable to persons who are found to contravene Canadian sheep identification requirements.

Recently, the Canadian Sheep Federation sat down with Ken Sloik, National Lead for Enforcement on Animal Identification with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). Sloik took the time to discuss the regulation changes – why they happened, what the CFIA is trying to achieve and what it all means for producers and the rest of the industry.

Changes to Regulations

Part XV of federal Health of Animals Regulations set out the identification requirements applicable to sheep. One important requirement is that every sheep leaving a farm must be identified with an approved tag. Non-compliance of this rule can lead to enforcement action, and may result in a fine being imposed. The AAAMP Regulations have three different classifications of non-compliance – minor, serious and very serious. Prior to October 2010, the penalties for violations committed during the course of business were \$500 for minor, \$2,000 for serious and \$4,000 for very serious. The CFIA has increased these penalties to \$1,300 for minor, \$6,000 for serious and \$10,000 for very serious.

An example of a minor infraction would be not tagging an animal, a serious infraction would be not keeping the necessary records, and a very serious infraction would be altering or producing false tags.

Why the Change?

Sloik says the changes were put into place to achieve better compliance generally under the Health of Animals Act and Plant Protection Act. The result for the animal identification programs is expected to be more effective deterrence of non-compliance throughout all sectors of the industry – primary producers, transporters, auction marts and processors.

Although, the majority of industry stakeholders have fully embraced mandatory traceability, according to Sloik there is still a small group that have not. He says this is the group the CFIA are targeting. “Animal identification is important because if there is a question about disease or food safety, we need exact information on where the animal has been and where it originated,” Sloik says

News Release

Government of Canada Strengthening Traceability in Sheep and Goat Industry

Ottawa, Ontario, January 31, 2011 – The Government of Canada is once again demonstrating its commitment to enhance traceability in Canadian agriculture. Parliamentary Secretary Pierre Lemieux announced today an investment of more than \$487,000 to the Canadian Sheep Federation (CSF) and the Canadian National Goat Federation (CNGF).

“Our farmers are known for producing safe products,” said Mr. Lemieux. “Traceability will give our sheep and goat farmers and exporters another tool to demonstrate the high quality of their products and help them compete in the international marketplace and continue to strengthen the Canadian economy.”

This investment will go towards finalizing the development of a national animal identification and traceability plan, creating various communications products and educating the industry on the benefits of traceability. The project will help ensure all farmers have access to and are educated on traceability equipment, which will help create an efficient way of tracking both sheep and goats. This initiative is another step forward towards the full implementation of a National Agricultural and Food Traceability System.

“In recent years there has been a continual increase in the demand for sheep and lamb products, which represents significant opportunity for growth and long-term stability of the industry if capitalized upon within the next few years,” said Andrew Gordanier, Chairman, CSF Board of Directors. “A critical success factor for capitalizing upon this opportunity is the industry’s ability to address the increasing demand for traceability – providing feedback and information to the consumer about where their food and other products are coming from. We

are pleased to be working with the Government of Canada to provide the tools and resources necessary for the Canadian sheep producer to address traceability.”

Under the Canadian Industry Traceability Infrastructure component of Canadian Integrated Food Safety Initiative, the Government of Canada supports national organizations in the development and implementation of traceability processes and systems. To find out more about this initiative, please visit www.agr.gc.ca/cifsi.

Funding is subject to the signing of a contribution agreement for the project.

For more information, media may contact:

Media Relations

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Ottawa, Ontario

613-773-7972

1-866-345-7972

Meagan Murdoch

Press Secretary

The Office of the Honourable Gerry Ritz

CCWG Report

2010 – 2011

MSA AGM March 5, 2011
Submitted by Brian Greaves, MB
CCWG Director

CCWG has sold a small piece of land at their head office and warehouse location in Carleton Place to Tim Horton's. The money from this sale is to go towards a new storage warehouse. The new storage warehouse will free up space in the main warehouse and improve the flow through of wool. This will help to speed up the payments to producers.

Wool prices are on the rise. Currently domestic prices are at \$0.35/lb and range prices are at \$1.50 - \$1.70/lb. Prices for this season's clip are expected to be \$0.50 - \$0.60/lb for domestic wool and \$2.00/lb for range wool. Producers who have put an effort into breeding to improve wool weight and quality will see a good dollar return on their wool clip. It will also pay to put some time and effort into skirting and sorting your wool before packing it.

Congratulations to Lorna Devos and Trevor Decorte, the Manitoba 2010 winners of the CCWG's Wool Certificate of Merit.

CCWG once again sponsored the wool competition at the 2010 MSA Sheep and Wool Show and Sale. Jim Shields, CCWG manager of the Lethbridge store, attended the event in 2010 and is booked to attend again in 2011.

Just a reminder to producers that this is a good opportunity to have stock supplies delivered and save shipping costs.

The shearing school planned for March to be held at Brandon was cancelled due to a lack of registrants. I will try to organ-

ize a shearing school in June if there are enough people interested.

Just a reminder that the government has made RFID tags mandatory as of Dec. 31, 2012. The pink Ketchum tags and Alfex tags can still be used on this year's lamb crop. The government has set June 30, 2011 as the final date for the sale of the pink Ketchum tags and Alfex tags. Therefore, CCWG will not be ordering any more of these tags only selling what they currently have in stock. The pink Ketchum tags and Alfex tags will be available from CCWG while stocks last or until June 30, 2011 whichever comes first. The RFID tags are currently available from CCWG at a newly reduced price of \$1.65.

The position of Manitoba Director on the CCWG Board is up for re-election in 2011. Any shareholder can ask for a nomination form from head office in Carleton Place, Ontario. Completed nomination forms must be received at Head Office by August 31, 2011.



No, I'm havin' a bad hair day!!!

**MSA Annual General Meeting
Portage la Prairie, MB
March 6, 2010**

Present: 29 members were present for the meeting

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Lucien at 1:47 pm.

Introductions: Directors and membership were introduced.

Moment of Silence: A moment of silence was held to remember members who have passed in the last year.

Approval of Agenda: Amendment to agenda: Add - predator issues

Motion: Rosanne Nevakshonoff Rick Willetts Carried.

Minutes of 2009 AGM: as circulated

Motion: To approve minutes of 2009 AGM.

Lyle Fox Henry Nelson Carried.

Constitutional Change: Lucien gave background to decision to change "Quorum required for "meeting" to read "the quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of over 50% of elected board members".

Motion: To approve constitutional changes to 4.01 of constitution -

Vote: For – 17 Against – 2 Abstain – 2 Carried.

Chairman's Report: Lucien

(See attached) A discussion followed on predator issues and On Farm Food Safety.

Motion: That the MSA Board of Directors move forward with the gov't to ensure that policies and programs do not cut into sheep industry of MB profitability.

Lyle Fox Clifford Flynn Carried.

CSF Report: Lucien (see attached)

CSBA Report: (see attached)

Auditor Report: (see attached)

Motion: Approval of the auditor's report.

Lucien Lesage Rick Willetts Carried.

Appointment of Auditor:

Motion: To appoint auditor for 2010.

Rosanne N. Rick Willetts Carried.

New Business:

Predator Issues- Ernie Hildebrand (Pilot Mound) made a presentation

Action: MSA board to explore with gov't the problem of predation (MASC) and possibly work with MCPA and RM's.

Stuart Greaves – 12 sheep are needed at the Morris Stampede.3. Show and sale – (see report)

CCWG Report: Brian Greaves

Adjourn: Motion to Adjourn Mark Humphries Stuart Greaves Carried.