

Sheep and Goat Notes



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Special points of interest:

- ASI Annual Convention
- Coopworth breed originator dies
- KySGDO and Farm Bureau Celebrate Food Checkout week
- New USDA Secretary named
- KySGDO opens Online Store

Sheep Industry Education Key at Annual Convention *(continued on page 2)*

More than 400 sheep producers, feeders and affiliated businesses from across the nation descended on Las Vegas, Nev., for the U.S. sheep industry's annual convention, which ran from Jan. 23-26, 2008. Attendance once again surpassed that of the previous year as multiple sectors of the industry gathered during this annual event.

Joining the membership of the American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) and the National Lamb Feeders Association (NLFA) were the American Lamb Board, American Sheep and Goat Center, Food and Fiber Risk Managers LLC (FFRM), National Livestock Producers Association, Western Range Association, ASI Women and contestants for the national Make It With Wool competition.

Wool company officials, Rick Honaker, Entrenos Inc., and Jason Bannowsky, Lempriere USA Inc., shared how wool buying and processing has changed over the last 10 years. According to Bannowsky, the biggest change to the industry in general is that 10 years ago, 75 percent of the U.S. wool clip was being consumed domestically with only 25 percent going to exports. Today, these statistics are reversed-75 percent of the clip is exported with 25 percent utilized domestically. In the 1990s, three combing plants consumed nearly 50 million pounds of greasy wool per year and now only one plant remains, using 10 million pounds of greasy wool annually.

Currency fluctuation represents a high risk for wool buyers. The change in rates from the time wool is purchased to when it is sold can be very different. In addition to currency risk for the wool buyer, some changes in sheep production have also led to increased contamination risks for exported wool. Contamination leads to claims against the wool buyer and, due to wool blending at the processor level, a small amount of contamination can result in a huge amount of non-usable wool product, hence costing the buyer far more than the price paid to the grower. Where polypropylene was the worst contamination in wool,

Sheep expert Professor Ian Coop dies

Professor Ian Coop, the scientist who lent his name to a sheep breed and did much to boost the production of New Zealand's flock, has died in Christchurch at the age of 93.

He started cross-breeding in the early 1950s at Lincoln College's research farm Ashley Dene near Christchurch, later recalling he did it "to get some hybrid vigor into the female side of the New Zealand sheep industry".

He ended up by producing a pure border leicester-romney cross that boosted lambing percentages by 25 percent.

When Coop began work the national lambing percentage was about 85 percent, much the same as it had been in 1900. *more on page 2...*

Sheep Industry Education Key at Annual Convention

continued

kemp/hair has now moved into that position. As wool buyers, the advice given to growers was never mix hair with a wool clip. Dye-resistant fibers such as these dramatically limit any textile use of the product and make business overseas more difficult. If growers run both wool breeds and hair breeds, keep the animals totally separate to avoid any possibility of cross-over and to assist in building a superior reputation for U.S. wools.

Lamb feeders and processors reported to the organizations during the convention that while lamb supplies are current, the historic high prices for feed

and fuel are the number one concern. Costs of gain on lambs due to the run up on all feed supplies combined with fewer acres of pasture and alfalfa as farmers convert to grain crops dealt uncertainty to lamb buyers and feeders this winter.

The board of directors re-elected the existing slate of officers to lead the organization for the next year--Burdell Johnson (N.D.), president; Glen Fisher (Texas), vice president; and Margaret Soulen Hinson (Idaho), secretary/treasurer. Also re-elected to the executive board were DA Herral (Texas) representing Region V, Angelo

representing Region V, Angelo (Butch) Theos (Colo.) representing Region VI and Tom Watson (Ore.) representing the lamb feeders.

One of the more exciting business sessions was the goat committee, out of which came the blueprint for the new American Goat Federation, an overarching organization that will strive to become the unified voice of the goat industry. Plans are in the works to explore the development of a working partnership with the American Sheep Industry (ASI) and the American Goat Federation for the betterment of the sheep and goat industries.

ASI is a national trade organization supported by 44 state sheep associations, benefiting the interests of the more than 69,000 sheep producers.

Sheep expert Professor Ian Coop dies *(continued)*

When he retired in 1978, it was 95 to 100 percent and now hovers around 120 percent.

In 1968 farmers using the Ashley Dene rams formed a society and picked the name Coopworth in a ballot.

Five years ago Coop told a reporter one of the main legacies of his work was the wide use now of performance-recording systems, rather than guesswork, in sheep breeding.

As well as bringing science to animal production in the post-war years, Coop began pioneering work at Lincoln in 1968 to see if it was possible to farm deer behind fences.

He was told it wouldn't work; it did.

After retiring Prof Coop worked for 15 years as a livestock

consultant on international aid projects. He also lectured widely.

His work and resulted were recognised with an OBE in 1976 and a CBE in 1992.

Professor Emeritus Ian Coop died on January 13, survived by his wife, one daughter and two sons.



The Coopworth breed makes up the second largest flock in New Zealand.

It is also bred in Australia, parts of Europe, and the United States. The Coopworth is used for both meat and wool.

Coopworths have been selected on visual criteria, wool quality, frame and carcass attributes, and measured performance, including fertility and lamb survival, growth rate to weaning, growth rate to yearling stage, leanness, growth and fleece production of 30-35 micron wool.



New US Secretary of Agriculture Ed Schafer sworn in

Ed Schafer was sworn in as the 29th Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on January 28, 2008.

Secretary Schafer brings a record as an innovative two-term governor of North Dakota to USDA along with extensive private sector experience as both an entrepreneur and a business executive.

Schafer served as **North Dakota's governor** from 1992 to 2000 and made diversifying and expanding **North Dakota's economy**, reducing the cost of government and advancing agriculture his top priorities in office.

He worked to normalize trading relations with China and develop that nation as an export market for North Dakota farm products. He also led

efforts to upgrade **North Dakota's** communications infrastructure and make high-speed voice and data networks available to farmers, ranchers and rural businesses.

To expand the state's job base, he encouraged the growth of value-added agricultural industries such as pasta and corn sweetener manufacturing.

As governor, Schafer managed a state workforce of 12,000 people, oversaw a budget of \$4.6 billion, and led the **state's response** to emergencies such as the severe floods that hit the Grand Forks area in 1997.

As chair of the Western Governors Association, Schafer led regional efforts to demonstrate how technology could improve the

efficiency and lower the cost of delivering government services such as health benefits and food stamps. He also worked to make telemedicine more available and affordable in rural areas.

Schafer was elected chair of the Republican Governors Association in 2000 and that same year he co-founded and co-chaired the Governors Biotechnology Partnership to increase public understanding and support for the benefits of agricultural biotechnology. He has had a lifelong interest in conservation and helped arrange the U.S. Forest Service's **May 2007** purchase of the 5,200 acre Elkhorn ranch in North Dakota. The site was where Theodore Roosevelt had his home and operated a cattle ranch in the 1880s. It is near the preserved town of Medora—the **state's** leading tourist attraction.



Born and raised in Bismarck, North Dakota, Schafer graduated from the University of North Dakota in 1969 with a **bachelor's degree** in Business Administration and earned an MBA from the University of Denver in 1970.

**Kentucky
Sheep and Goat
Development Office**



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Farm Bureau and KySGDO Celebrate Food Check-Out Week

The cost of food in America remains affordable. According to the latest statistics compiled by the Agriculture Department's (USDA's) Economic Research Service, American families and individuals currently spend, on average, just under 10 percent of their disposable personal income for food. Applying that statistic to the calendar year means the average household will have earned enough disposable income -- that portion of income available for spending or saving -- to pay for its annual food supply in about 37 days, according to the Kentucky Farm Bureau.

In recognition of this, Kentucky Farm Bureau celebrated Feb. 3-9, 2008, as Food Check-Out Week. To mark the occasion, KY Sheep and Goat Development Office Executive Director Ray Bowman joined KFB in providing baskets of Kentucky grown and packaged products to all 138 members of the Kentucky General Assembly. **The basket included goat's milk soap from the Kentucky Goat Producers Association.**

According to the Tax Foundation, Americans must work 52 days each year to pay for health and medical



KySGDO's Ray Bowman presents a basket to Representative David Osborne

care, 62 days to pay for housing/household operation and 77 days to pay their federal taxes.

The percent of disposable personal income spent for food has declined over the last 35 years. In 1970, it took Americans 14 more days to earn enough income to pay for their food supply for the year. According to USDA, food is more affordable today due to a widening gap between growth in per-capita incomes and the amount of money spent for food.

This overall decrease is made more notable by trends indicating Americans are buying more expensive convenience foods, as well as more food away from home.



KySGDO opens Online Store



How would you like a nifty cap or t-shirt with the Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office logo on it? Well, now you can buy all kinds of neat stuff and help out the Development Office at the same time—all with just a few clicks of the mouse. Visit the web site at

www.kysheepandgoat.org or go directly to the store at www.cafepress.com/kysheepandgoat



choose from a number of items bearing our logo. You can make a fashion statement, demonstrate your **support for Kentucky's Sheep and Goat Industries** and contribute to the office all at the same time. A portion of each purchase comes back to the Sheep and Goat Development Office.

Breckinridge/Meade County Goat Producers get a double shot of speakers

Dr. Gil Myers of Bluegrass Sheep and Goat in Garrard County and Ray Bowman of the Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office teamed up recently to bring Breckinridge and Meade County **Goat Producers up to speed on what's happening** in the industry and particularly how things are progressing at the new processing plant in Paint Lick.

"It's good to have the opportunity to visit one-on-one with producers and local meetings are great for that," said Bowman. **"I think we're also exhibiting a strong sense of unity any time my office can team up with the private sector and both send the same message— it's a great time to be in the goat business!"**



Dr. Gil Myers