

The Messenger

Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency, 130 Malcolm Road, Guelph, ON, N1K 1B1, www.ontariosheep.org Tel: 519-836-0043

This issue is developed based on the OSMA Board Meetings of May 13th 2009 & June 17th 2009 and matters that Staff are addressing in their normal course of duties and assignments following the Board meeting.

Meeting

Ontario Sheep Welcomes Neil Mesman

The election held on Saturday, June 13th for a new Provincial Director in District 3 resulted in the appointment of Neil Mesman of Tavistock to the Ontario Sheep Board of Directors. Neil has many years of experience with Ontario Sheep as he has previously held the position of Chair as well as Secretary-Treasurer of District 3. He assumes this position from previous Provincial Director, Jamie Heffer. We welcome Neil to this position and are pleased to see District 3 again represented at the provincial level.

Finance

The financial statements for months of March and April have been reviewed by the Finance Committee and accepted by the board.

General Reporting

- In the Vice Chair's Report, Chris Kennedy reported that predation continues to be an issue. Recently, Linda Huizenga and Al Whitlam met with opposition leader Robert W. Runciman to discuss their concerns in District 8.
- A request came from a producer in District 7 interested in forming a local sheep club and asked for a list of producers in District 7. This information was not provided as it is against OSMA policy. Discussion followed on the advisability of sheep clubs and the general consensus was that they were local and possibly helpful. The OSMA board neither encourages nor discourages such clubs and leaves it to the districts to work with sheep clubs or not. It was noted that an active sheep club could be an asset to a district for ideas and support at the district level. A motion was passed stating that those wanting to form a sheep club should be directed to their districts for information and recognition.
- The office has two University students working for the summer to increase efficiency in the OSMA Maedi Visna and Ontario Sheep Health programs and projects such as benchmarking, flock management software and directors manuals.
- General Manager, Murray Hunt spoke at the Victoria club meeting on May 20th and at District 8 meeting on May 23rd.
- In his Chair's Report, Markus Wand reported attending a meeting organized by OCA regarding an ever-increasing large animal vet shortage in Ontario. A variety of economic problems are not encouraging young people to pursue this profession. Ideas were brought forward on recruiting and retaining more vets.
- A Sheep Shearing Course is being held on July 29th & 30th at Eweville station in Holstein. The course will be run with nine participants. The course is \$160 per participant plus the cost of accommodations and food. The course is full. Those interested in subsequent courses can contact our office. Ontario Sheep and the Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers are contributing \$100 for each participant. Shearers teaching the course are Peter Kudelka, Doug Kennedy and Les Jones.

- A request was received from the Indian Agricultural Program of Ontario for sponsorship held for their first-ever event the Ontario First Nations Agri-Food Conference. Ontario Sheep sponsored the event for \$250.00. This entitles us to display space during the event to promote our product and programs.

Homegrown

John Iacobucci, Trade Liaison Officer, from Homegrown Ontario continues to meet one-on-one with retailers and suppliers to discuss the benefits of joining the Homegrown Ontario program. Since January 2008, more than 40 retailers and 20 processors have signed on to the program.

OIMP Stakeholder Meeting

On June 16th the Board and members of OIMP met for an informal discussion regarding various issues that affect the future of both Ontario Sheep and the Ontario Independent Meat Processors. Much was discussed including the topics of RFID, the need to increase the volume of production from Ontario farms, the threat of imports, On Farm Food Safety and biosecurity issues. Future meetings are planned to continue working toward resolving common issues.

Tagging or Rather Not Tagging

The CFIA is now issuing fines to producers, stockyards and truckers when an animal is not tagged and is accepted at a stockyard. The cost of the fine is \$500 each.

The Canadian Sheep Federation is now gathering information to work towards a resolution however it is imperative that animals be tagged. All districts should be encouraging their producers to ensure that their sheep are properly tagged

Lambs Down Park Festival, Carleton Place, Ontario

Allan Burn, District 9 Director represented Ontario Sheep at the Lambs Down Park Festival on June 13, 2009. This event was designed to bring urban and rural people together. The events centered on the Wool Growers and sheep with numerous sheep shearing and sheep dog demonstrations, spinners and crafters among others. Overall, the Ontario Sheep booth was very well received.

Research Committee

Ontario Sheep is now developing a procedure for the operation of a cross industry research committee. The first step along this path is setting up a Research Advisory Committee consisting of approximately 12 to 15 people who will represent our many stakeholders. The job of this committee will be to establish the needs and priorities of Ontario producers and then receive proposals from researchers on how to best address these needs and priorities.

Projects

Benchmarking and KPIs

Essentially, benchmarking is done to compare your farms' performance against peers and competitors to reveal opportunities for improvement in your operation. Specifically, benchmarking identifies key performance indicators (KPIs), which are the critical success factors of your business. The trends of KPIs vary in both geographic location, and production type. In Australia, many of their profitability indicators are defined per unit area. The most prominent key performance indicators are stocking rate (livestock grazing per unit area), and measures of profit per unit area. The other key indicators were related to wool production, such as wool fibre diameter, wool production per unit area, and profit per labour unit. In the United States, the KPIs relate more closely to the cost of production. The most significant cost factors are the cost of growing feeder lambs and the costs of weight gain after weaning.

Premier Agri-Food Innovation Excellence Awards

The Premier's Agri-Food Innovation Excellence awards are part of a \$2.5-million, five-year program (now in its third year) established to recognize innovators who contribute to the success of Ontario's agri-food sector.

55 regional farms received the Premier's Agri-Food Innovation Excellence award for their innovative ideas. As you may have read in the June issue of the Ontario Sheep News, Best Baa Farm was the recipient of one of the Premier's Agri-Food Innovation Excellence awards. In addition to Best Baa Farm, there were several other winners.

Congratulations to:

Codan Suffolks – Lambton County
Lynn & Bill Duffield

Ewe Dell Family Farms – Essex County
Carolyn & Rick Fuerth

Fifth Town Artisan Cheese Company – Essex County
Stephanie Diamante, Petra Cooper, Stan Siebenga, Marion Greveling, & Lawrence Greveling

Ontario Lamb Improvement Breeding Strategy Replicating Breeder's Association - Peterborough County
John & Eadie Steele

Windblest Farm – Lanark County
Bryan & Janice Lever

WoolDrift Farm – Grey County
Axel Meister & Chris Buschbeck

Scholarship Information

Once again we are offering our annual Scholarship. Look for the details in the June issue of the Sheep News as well as on our website.

Photo Contest

Get your camera! Entries for the 2009 photo contest must be postmarked no later than October 16, 2009. There are three grand prizes to be won. Look for more details in the June issue of the Sheep News.

Let Your Predation Concerns be known

There is lots of information on the homepage of www.ontariosheep.org regarding predation including a template to send a letter to Minister Cansfield.

Other Events and District Updates

International Plowing Match (IPM)

The International Plowing Match will be held in Temiskaming, September 22-26, 2009. A Sheep tent will be featured at the event. OMAFRA's Sheep Team will be lending a hand with that. To help develop the District 11 display or to volunteer at the IPM, please contact Jim Johnston at (705) 647-7160.

Royal Agricultural Winter Fair

The 2009 Royal Agricultural Winter Fair will take place from November the 6th -15th. OSMA is looking for volunteers to tend the booth as well as volunteer spinners. If you would like to volunteer please contact Ruth Gilmour at (519) 836-0043 ext. 27

Western Fair

The 2009 Western Fair will be held from September 11th – 20th. Please contact Mo Delves at (519) 666-1088 or email: mdelves@execulink.com if you wish to volunteer for this event.

Ontario Sheep Annual General Meeting

Ontario Sheep's 2009 AGM will be held on the last weekend of November at the Cambridge Holiday Inn. More information will soon be posted on the website.

CSF Annual General Meeting

The CSF AGM will take place the week of November 9th in Toronto. Programs and more details should be known soon.

PSBO Sale

The Annual Purebred Sheep Breeders of Ontario Annual Show & Sale will take place at the Carsons Sales Arena – Listowel on Saturday, July 4, 2009. For Catalogue and information please contact: Irwin Jackson (519) 856-4490 or Jim Groves (519) 752-8552

OSSA Sale

The Ontario Suffolk Sheep Association 3rd Terminal Sire Sale will take place at the Carson's Arena – Listowel on Saturday, August 15, 2009 at 1:00pm. For information or a Catalogue contact: Glen Porteous (519) 794-4549 or Grant Preston (519) 923-6341

All Canada Sheep Classic

The Alberta Sheep Breeders' Association and the Canadian Sheep Breeder's Association in conjunction with the Calgary Stampede are proudly hosting Canada's largest purebred sheep show and sale in 2009. They are presenting a world class exhibition and celebration of superior genetics and breeding stock. The event will take place in the Pavilion of the Calgary Stampede from July 9th – 13th 2009.

SFIP

Numbers of participants in Ontario continue to fall. Ontario Sheep encourages producers to join and support this worthwhile production recording system.

Ontario Sheep

519-836-0043 Extensions 23 or 27
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District AGMs

District 1

Thursday, September 3rd at the Coldstream Community Centre.

District 2

Thursday, September 10th at 7:30 pm at the Sprucedale Agromart in Hanover

District 3

Thursday, September 10th. Location to be determined.

District 4

Date and location to be determined

District 5

Wednesday, September 16th - 6:30pm at the home of Bert Nieuwenhui, District Chair.

District 6

Wednesday, August 26th, 7:00pm at Church's Farm Supplies

District 7

Wednesday, September 9th in the basement boardroom of the OMAFRA building at 322 Kent Street West, Lindsay.

District 8

Tuesday, September 8th from 7-10pm at the Wesdale Park Public School in Napanee. General Manager, Murray Hunt will be our guest.

District 9

Wednesday, September 9th. Location to be determined.

District 10

Thursday, September 10th. Location to be determined.

District 11

Thursday, September 3rd. Location to be determined

Next Board Meetings

July 22nd 2009 – Conference call

August 26th 2009 – District 7 will be hosting the board meeting on August 25th and 26th the board has been invited to tour farms in district 7. Special thanks to Judy Dening, District Chair for organizing this event.

Invitation – Producers, industry partners and anyone or organization interested in serving the Ontario Sheep Industry are encouraged to contact either OSMA Directors or the office with ideas, comments, questions or suggestions that may be beneficial to Ontario Sheep as it carries out its mandates.