



Maryland sheep news

Newsletter of the
**MARYLAND
SHEEP BREEDERS
ASSOCIATION**

SPRING 2015

Leicester Longwool sheep celebrate comeback at Festival

The Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival, May 2 and 3, celebrates the 25th anniversary of Leicester Longwool sheep returning to the United States with a special exhibit. Visit the Leicester Longwool tent to learn about the breed through presentations, demonstrations, and a card grading event, a form of livestock judging that evaluates each individual animal against its own breed standards.

Leicester Longwool is now the official name for the “new Leicester” produced by 18th-century breeding innovator Robert Bakewell, whose improvements in the breed made the sheep very desirable for their meat and for their long, lustrous fleece suitable for blankets and garments where warmth and long wear were important. George Washington, among other early Americans, commented on the difference Leicester sheep had made on his Mr. Vernon flock.

The Leicester’s primary asset, its excellence for selective cross-breeding, was ultimately

responsible for the loss of the original breed. By 1914, one writer claimed there were no purebred Leicester sheep in existence in the United States. Colonial Williamsburg took on the task of conserving this critically endangered breed.

Ivan Heazlewood, a third-generation Leicester breeder in Tasmania, personally took on the considerable task of organizing a flock of sheep for export, and in 1990 eight beautiful Leicester Longwool ewes, six lambs, and one ram arrived at Colonial Williamsburg.

Dr. Phillip Sponenberg, technical coordinator for the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy, designed a breeding plan for Colonial Williamsburg to make the most of the genetic material available. He also helped avoid inbreeding and other pitfalls of working with a small population of sheep. Following two successful breeding seasons, Colonial Williamsburg was ready to establish satellite flocks. There are now about 250 Leicester Longwool sheep in the United States.



Some ovine citizens of Colonial Williamsburg.

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Congratulations to 2015 Cover Art Competition Winner Ida Faraghan of Cinnaminson, NJ. She began to paint 21 years ago at the age of 65. “I am overwhelmed and honored to be part of the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival, that I have attended for many years.”





Ewe show & sale returns

The Ewe Show and Sale returns to the Festival this year, with a show and sale on Friday, May 1. As one of the first sales of the spring, the event gives those looking to pick up stock a choice group of animals to consider, whether the goal is to have a ewe to exhibit through the summer, start out with, or add to a flock.

Buyers at the sale have the opportunity to show their new stock—already trimmed for show—during the festival’s regular sheep shows Saturday and Sunday.

Thirty head have been consigned for the sale, which is managed by Banner Sale Management. The show for the consigned stock will be at 2 p.m. Friday afternoon, with the sale at 7 p.m. that evening, after the consignors’ dinner.

The sale catalog can be downloaded at www.bannersheepmagazine.com/salecatalogs/15-Maryland-Catalog.pdf



A Romney ewe from the 2014 Maryland sale.

This year the Festival expands on its local food theme with a Festival Farm Market, located near the main gate, which will feature local pasture-raised lamb cuts and other locally raised and made foods.

Going Local: Farm market a new feature

The new venue provides another fairgrounds location for those visitors (plus volunteers and exhibitors!) shopping local. The Home Arts Building continues to house vendors selling lamb, honey and cheese products (both sheep’s milk and goat’s milk).

Or rather, *mano a penzuña*. In addition to the beginning shepherds’ workshops (preregistration required) on Friday, conducted by Dr. Kate Hussman, Peter Austin will conduct a free, and very hands-on, session from 1 to 4 p.m. on Sunday in the 4-H Hall.

Learn how to handle, flip and immobilize sheep, trim hooves, check teeth to

Mano a mano with sheep

determine age when you are buying an animal, take a sheep’s temperature, give medication, treat prolapse, important equipment you need on the farm, how to keep informative records and what to do when a sheep becomes sick or dies.

MARYLAND SHEEP & WOOL FESTIVAL EWE SALE

Howard County Fairgrounds
West Friendship, MD

FRIDAY, MAY 1

SHOW: 2:00 P.M.

JUDGE: Ed Julian, OH

SALE: 7:00 P.M.

AUCTIONEER: Bruce Betts, DE

In The Main Show Ring

The Friday exhibitors dinner will be served in the Dining Hall from approximately 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. followed by the sale.

Consignments
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Core testing (of baled raw wool) has long been an integral part of the international commercial wool marketing system—it determines the price paid for lots of wool, with the testing results vital to sellers, and buyers, who must know if the bales will meet the specifications required for the yarns and fabrics they will become.

But owners of small or medium-sized flocks can for a small outlay gain information that will help them achieve tangible, and marketable, improvements in their wool clip.

Are you aiming to make your fine-wool flock fleeces finer? Find out how uniform your fleeces really are from shoulder to britch? Make sure your flock's fleeces meet the breed standard? See if your breeding program is really making a difference? Want to show potential buyers of a fleece or breeding stock exactly what they are getting? Need to identify the best replacement ewes or new ram?

Individual fleece testing can give you the data to help accomplish each of those goals. Testing fiber samples from individuals in your small flock provides *objective* measurement of fleece characteristics, which you can use in selection of replacements to advance the quality and quantity—and value—of your clip.

As you'll see, a lot of data comes from a test, at a small price, and you can massage that information to make real improvements in your fiber.

Here is a look at the test results from one flock's fleeces, and how the data has been used.

This shepherd took fleece samples were taken from the sides of the animals on the day before shearing, using hand shears, trimming as close



Image by Barbara Klein, of Nancy Cox Starkey's Kep

to the skin as the electric shears would do, to get a realistic staple length measurement. Taking samples from side and britch area (or side, britch and shoulder) would provide a comprehensive evaluation of the fleece (but not as comprehensive as core sampling an entire fleece).

**Fiber test results:
what they look like**

You could also take a sample from shorn fleeces—but to get that mid side sample, you'll need to be able to “read” the fleece on the floor (difficult with breeds in which the fleece comes off in locks and does not hold together as a single fleece).

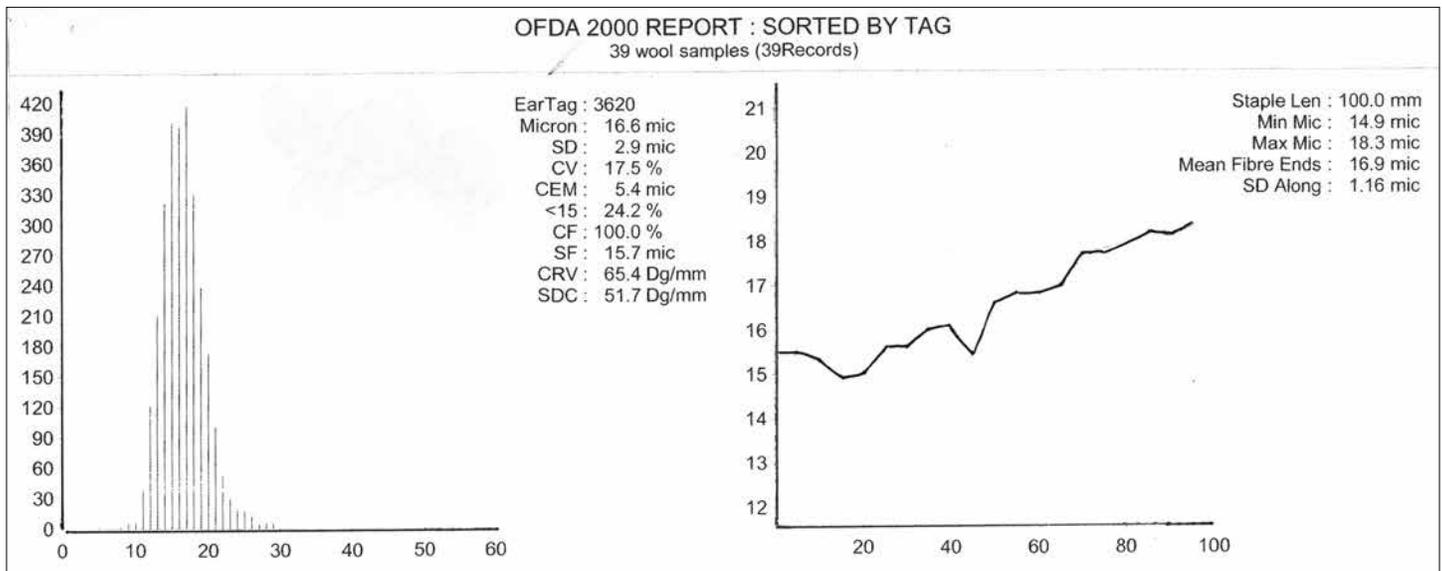
The figure below displays the test results obtained from an optical fiber diameter analyzer (OFDA) for one individual in a flock, with data on multiple characteristics. On the following page is a table defining the terms in the graph.

The graph on the left visually shows the variation in fiber diameter in the fleece sample. The narrow, vertical character indicates a sample that is very uniform, with few fibers that are much finer or coarser than the average.

The graph on the right shows the variation in diameter along the length of a fiber, and provides a picture of the 12 months of the ewe's health and nutrition, expressed in fiber growth.

The table on the next page shows part of a table

Graphs of the fiber measurements for a mature ewe. The narrowness of the fiber distribution (at left) is a visual representation of the uniformity of the sample.



Management ►

Management Calendar

May 1

Integrated Pest Management/ FAMACHA workshop, West Friendship, sheepandwool.org/2015-festival/shepherd-workshops.

May 30

West Virginia Fall-born Ram Lamb Performance Test Sale, Petersburg, WV.sheepandgoats.wvu.edu/r/download/203016

of data from a group of animals. Plugging this data into a spreadsheet allowed the producer to sort columns according to characteristics such as micron count, comfort factor, and staple length, and then rank animals.

Skirted fleece weights at shearing and visual fleece characteristics were added to the data from the test. This data enhanced other data on individuals (number of lambs born to mature ewes, comparison of sire and dam statistics to test results for progeny) collected by the shepherd, and clarified selection decisions to

be made for flock improvement, including: identification of replacement ewes and potential replacement rams, culling decisions, plans for breeding programs and goal-setting for future flock improvement. Copies of individual results accompanied fleeces marketed online and at sales to fiber artists.

The analyses shown are from the Agrilife Research, 7887 U.S. Highway 87 North, San Angelo, TX 76901-9714, 325-653-4576. The price per sample tested is \$3.

Glossary of abbreviations used in OFDA 2000 reports

Mic Ave	Average fiber diameter of the testes sample expressed in microns
SD Mic	Standard deviation of fiber diameter expressed in microns. This is the spread of individual fiber diameters around the mean fiber diameter—the lower the SD the more uniform and desirable the wool is. There is evidence that lower SD values for a given micron give better spinning results.
CV Mic	Coefficient of variation of fiber diameter expressed as a percentage (= [SD Mic ÷ Mic Ave] x 100). 15% is exceptionally uniform, whereas 30% suggests a much poorer style. CV is the most effective breeding factor in terms of accounting for diameter variability.
CEM	Coarse edge micron. The number of microns above the average diameter where the coarsest 5% of fibers lie.
< 15%	The percentage of fibers finer than 15 microns
CF%	Comfort factor; the percentage of fibers equal to or less than 30 microns. Fibers over 30 microns in diameter tend to bend less and produce a painful “poking” sensation on the skin’s surface. With more than 5% of the total number of fibers the effect tends to be quite noticeable. A comfort factor of 98% means a “prickle factor” of 2%.
SF Mic	Spinning fineness; it represents “spinning quality” and is calculated from CV Mic and Mic Ave. Spinning fineness evolved from the knowledge that in commercial tops a 5% increase in CV is equivalent to 1 micron increase in mean fiber diameter in terms of “spinnability.”
SL mm	Average relaxed staple length expressed in millimeters
Min Mic	The finest point along the staple expressed in microns
Max Mic	The coarsest point along the staple expressed in microns
FPFT mm	Finest point from the tip of the staple expressed in millimeters. The tip of the staple is at the left-hand side of the staple profile
MFE mic	Mean fiber ends; the average fiber diameter of the fiber ends (tip and base) expressed in microns
SD along	Standard deviation of fiber diameter (microns) measured along the staple. Lower = more uniform
CRV Dg/mm	Average fiber curvature expressed in degrees per millimeter, an estimate of crimp
SDC Dg/mm	Standard deviation of fiber curvature expressed in degrees per millimeter

Below is part of a table of a group of fleece sample results. A producer can render these data in a spreadsheet, and sort to classify characteristics of flock individuals as part of a flock improvement plan.

Mic Ave	SD Mic	CV Mic	CEM	<15 %	CF %	SF Mic	SL mm	Min Mic	Max Mic	MFE Mic	SD Along	CRV Dg/mm	SDC Dg/mm
21.9	4.0	18.4	7.6	3.3	95.4	20.9	80.8	20.1	23.7	21.3	1.11	75.5	55.0
20.0	4.0	20.2	8.0	6.8	98.7	19.3	35.0	18.7	21.7	19.7	1.27	73.5	58.5
19.1	4.4	23.1	8.5	13.4	97.9	18.9	40.0	18.1	19.8	19.4	0.53	75.1	56.5
27.6	5.2	19.0	9.1	0	72.4	26.4	90.0	25.4	29.3	27.0	1.19	76.6	55.4
19.8	3.2	16.2	6.1	2.8	99.2	18.6	80.0	18.7	21.3	19.0	0.82	84.8	64.0
21.3	3.6	17.1	6.8	1.3	97.7	20.1	90.0	20.1	22.6	21.2	0.80	94.1	61.6
24.0	4.0	16.8	7.3	0.6	94.5	22.6	100.0	22.2	25.8	23.1	1.03	93.8	63.9
22.8	4.1	18.0	8.1	0.6	95.2	21.7	90.0	20.6	26.3	21.5	1.64	69.1	46.9
23.5	3.9	16.5	7.2	0.6	95.7	22.1	80.0	22.1	25.3	22.6	1.00	77.1	56.8
24.7	4.3	17.5	7.6	0.7	91.1	23.4	70.0	23.4	26.0	23.9	0.76	98.5	64.7
26.0	4.1	15.9	7.7	0	86.8	24.3	70.0	24.7	26.8	25.0	0.62	82.6	64.8
22.9	3.6	15.7	6.4	0.7	97.1	21.4	85.0	20.1	24.3	20.6	1.42	90.9	62.0
23.3	4.6	19.9	9.2	0.5	91.9	22.4	80.0	22.0	25.7	23.3	1.01	65.5	47.9
21.3	3.4	15.8	6.4	1.3	99.0	19.9	70.0	19.8	22.5	20.1	0.82	101.5	70.9
21.7	4.4	20.3	9.2	1.5	95.2	21.0	85.0	19.9	22.4	21.1	0.76	64.3	48.3
20.6	3.5	17.2	6.4	2.4	98.2	19.4	90.0	19.1	22.8	20.0	1.09	54.8	38.4
24.1	4.6	18.9	8.3	1.0	91.9	23.1	95.0	20.0	28.5	24.6	2.43	76.6	53.9
19.4	3.1	16.0	5.9	3.5	99.5	18.1	75.0	17.8	20.7	18.7	1.03	105.5	74.0
23.2	3.7	16.1	7.0	0.4	96.4	21.8	85.0	22.2	25.0	23.0	0.67	79.3	56.5

The nomination period is now open for the 2015 Western Maryland Pasture-Based Meat Goat Performance Test. It will extend until June 1. All nominations received by the deadline will be treated equally.

The test is open to goat producers in any state, who may consign up to five male goats, of any breed or breed cross to the test. Goat birth dates must be between January 1 and March 15, 2015. They must weigh between 40 and 70 lbs. upon delivery to the test site on June 26. Health papers are required.

The goats will be evaluated for growth performance, parasite resistance, and parasite resilience. They will also be evaluated for structural correctness and reproductive soundness and be scanned to determine the size of their longissimus dorsi (rib eye) muscle. Goats will be rotationally grazed and receive pelleted feed. The first half of the test will be a "growth challenge." The second half of the test (day 42-84) will serve as a "parasite challenge," with animals grazing pre-infected pastures. The test will conclude on October 2.

For more test details, guidelines, and the nomination form go to mdsheepgoat.blogspot.com.



Marketing

It's time to start planning for the Maryland Wool Pool, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. June 17, at the Maryland State Fairgrounds in Timonium. This pool is made possible through the volunteer help of our Maryland Sheep Breeders Association members. We need *you* to help operate our Lycowool presses and bale up the wool into

Wool Pool June 17

350-400-pound square bales. Please help!

Contact the wool pool coordinator (Emily Chamelin- aeriedairy@yahoo.com, 443-244-2702) for more information.

We also offer service volunteer hours for any high school students interested in helping out on that day. Every one is welcome on wool pool day. Just show up and we can put you to work.

For producers, any amount of wool is accepted at the pool. Price lists will come out in early May.

Marketing Calendar

May 1

Ewe Show and Sale. Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival, Howard County Fairgrounds. Show 2 p.m., sale 7 p.m. Registration deadline March 10.

June 17

Maryland Wool Pool, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., State Fairgrounds, Timonium

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More than 140 people, including 35 youth, attended the first-ever Maryland Small Ruminant Expo, February 28 at the Frederick County 4-H Camp & Activities Center in Frederick, reports Susan Schoenian, University of Maryland Extension Sheep & Goat Specialist.

A separate educational program for youth (ages 8-18), featured sessions on dairy, wool, and meat.

Ruminant expo popular

In the dairy session, youth learned how to make soap. They felted wool and made wool



grading posters in the wool session, and learned how to cook goat meat in the meat session. In the final session, "No Guts, No Glory," Dr.

A youth begins a necropsy.

Lindsey Lane taught the kids how to dissect lambs and kids to determine their cause of death.

Greene honored

David Greene, long known in the state and the region as a shepherd, extension agent, and leader, was recognized at the American Sheep Industry convention in January with the Campender Award, which recognizes industry contributions from a professional in a position or field related to sheep production. "Greene has and continues to exhibit innovation and efficiency in lamb and wool production and marketing," ASI states in its recognition.

Maryland's Make It With Wool winners at the ASI convention in Reno (from left to right): Stephanie Ransom, Frederick County, Adult Champion; Corinne Darragh, Frederick County, Senior Champion; Hannah Higginbotham, Montgomery County, Junior Champion; and Grace Higginbotham, Montgomery County, Preteen Champion. You can meet our winners and see their creations close up from noon to 12:30 p.m. Saturday of the Festival at the Pavilion. Judy Williamson coordinates this state event.

"David has served as a trainer, educator and facilitator of thousands of workshops and seminars on sheep management, including wool harvesting and lamb production. These events provide hands-on experience for participants in his home state of Maryland, along with the entire region and internationally. He has provided service to ASI in many ways and for many years, including committee and council work and leadership on the Executive Board," ASI stated.

"The entire sheep industry works together and we all learn from each other, which makes my work worthwhile and rewarding," said David. "I'm very honored to be chosen for the Campender Award."

We too honor you for your work, David.



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Ad Rates

Size	Specs (inches)	Price
Full page	7.5 x 9.5	\$95, \$320/year
Half vert.	3.3 x 9.5	\$60, \$200/year
Half horiz.	7.5 x 4.25	
Third	7.5 x 3	\$45, \$150/year
Quarter	3.3 x 4.25	\$30, \$100/year
Biz card	3.3 x 2	\$15, \$50/year
Classified	230 characters	\$10

Acceptable formats are PDFs, Word docs or jpegs.

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Send copy to: Martha Polkey, Editor
 sheep@budiansky.com

Send payment to: Treasurer, MSBA
 1126 Slingluff Lane
 New Windsor, MD
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Maryland Sheep Breeders Association:
marylandsheepbreeders.org

Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival:
sheepandwool.org

like us!



The Maryland Sheep Breeders Association meets every other month on the second Monday. Meetings are open to members. For minutes of meetings and meeting times, contact the MSBA Secretary, Lee Langstaff, lmangstaff@gmail.com.

Membership application MARYLAND SHEEP BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

Name: _____

Farm Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please include me in the MSBA Breeders Directory.

Web URL: _____

Breed(s): _____ No. Ewes: _____

What do you offer?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breeding stock | <input type="checkbox"/> 4-H club lambs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lamb for the freezer | <input type="checkbox"/> Ram leasing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fleeces | <input type="checkbox"/> Roving |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yarn | <input type="checkbox"/> Blankets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crafts | <input type="checkbox"/> Finished products & wearables |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shearing services | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (attach details) |

Send form and \$25 check made payable to MSBA to Kris Thorne,
Membership Chair, 1130 Martin Drive, Westminster, MD 21157

Join *the*

MARYLAND SHEEP BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

...and become part of an active organization that sponsors the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival—the premier event of its kind in the nation—the Maryland Wool Pool, Sheep Shearing School, various youth activities, and a variety of educational functions.

Here are sponsored events and activities for 2015:

- April 17 & 18: Beginning Shearing School
- May 2-3: MD Sheep & Wool Festival (Check out the free Shepherd Seminars and Shepherd & Fiber Arts Workshops)
- June 17: Maryland Wool Pool (Timonium, State Fairgrounds)
- Date TBD Annual Meeting & Dinner

As a member you will:

- join an active and friendly community of shepherds.
- receive the quarterly *Maryland Sheep News* and keep up on events, get educational articles, and have a local, place to advertise.
- pay a reduced commission on all fleeces sold at the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival Fleece Show & Sale.
- receive a copy of the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival catalog.

Annual membership/subscription fee: \$25. (If you bring wool to the Maryland Wool Pool, membership in MSBA is deducted on wool sales over \$40.) The membership year runs from October through September. Dues for membership received prior to June 1, 2015, will be accepted as paid through September 30, 2015. Dues received on or after June 1 (including dues deducted at the Maryland Wool Pool and the MD Sheep & Wool Festival) will be accepted as paid through September 30, 2016.