



THE LINCOLN LETTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL LINCOLN SHEEP BREEDERS ASSOC.

Fall

2011

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Brian Larson, President NLSBA

Irene: Hurricane/tropical storm Irene caused a lot of distress for the east coast and many of our Lincoln breeders were right in the midst of the storm. Our secretary/treasurer Debbie Vanderwende in Delaware, director Diane Klingelhofer and breeder Bill Bankhead in Maryland, director Lori Shea in New Jersey, breeder Robin Meek in Rhode Island, and of course Joe and Carol Haddock in Vermont were deluged in rain and high winds. At the time of writing this article, many of these folks were out of power, none or reduced communication and in various degrees of isolation.

Big E: By the time this newsletter arrives, the Big E National Regional Lincoln Show may be in progress or history. At last count, there were almost 100 head of Lincolns entered in the show. Breeders from around the country donated special awards and the Eastern States Exposition upped the premiums for the event.

NLSBA Board and Officers: The biennial membership meeting was held in Springfield IL in June. Very good discussions were had on how best to strengthen and grow the NLSBA, to reach out to new members and build sustainable markets for Lincoln Longwool sheep. This will be a challenging task for the board of directors and officers during the next two years. Board members Diane Klingelhofer (MD, eastern mid-west) and Mona Lisa Pettersson (WA, west coast states) will continue on the board for two years. New board members include Helen Swartz (MO, western midwest), Pat Taylor (IL, Illinois & Indiana), and Lori Shea (NJ, northeast). Officers re-elected were Donna Lein (IA) Vice President, Debbie Vanderwende (DE) Secretary/Treasurer and Brian Larson (MI) President.

Harvey Warrick: Special thank you to Harvey Warrick (MI) who filled out the term of director Susan Hanks. We're not sure where Harvey gets all of his energy, but he was a constant source of ideas and inspiration to the board. The positive attitude that Harvey exudes may be why he was named the recipient of the "Service to the Michigan Sheep Industry Award" by the Michigan Sheep Breeders Association for 2011. This is the most elite recognition made by the MSBA each year. Harvey has been an advocate for Lincoln's place in the commercial side of the sheep industry and has built a flock of great fleeced ewes by including United Kingdom and New Zealand genetics. Harvey was responsible for the importation of semen from the Tattersall Lincoln ram from New Zealand. On the down side, this year Harvey lost his wife, Rosalie, and his long time Lincoln breeder friend, Cletus Zenk.



Harvey Warrick "Service to the Michigan Sheep Industry Award" by the Michigan Sheep Breeders Association for 2011

NAILE: Entries for the NAILE Lincoln shows (junior, white, natural colored) are due by October 1, 2011. Tom Booth, a United Kingdom Lincoln Longwool breeder, will be the judge for the open shows that begins at 8:00AM Wednesday November 16th. There will be a gathering for Lincoln breeders at a local restaurant to meet Tom Booth that evening of November 16th.

2012 National Lincoln Show and Sale: The NLSBA show and sale this next year will be held June 16 & 17, 2012 in conjunction with the Estes Park (Colorado) Wool Market and its sheep show. The Estes Park Wool Market is a popular fiber festival in the Rocky Mountains north of Denver (<http://www.estes.org/events/woolmarket.htm>). The Lincoln show and sale will also be shown live on

...continued on page 3

NEW FLAVORS FOR YOUR FLOCK!?! OR LAMBS HAVE VERY DISCRIMINATING TASTE BUDS!

In our last Lincoln Letter, we learned that sheep are really smart - good at what cognition researchers call 'executive function' decisions. This issue points out that sheep are also taste bud experts. No, we probably will not be using some of these flavors anytime soon, but it helps us understand our sheep flock better.

Sheep given a variety of feed flavors will stop gorging and start eating more small meals over the course of the day. These findings, published in the August Journal of Animal Science, could help livestock producers maximize feed intake and nutrient efficiency at the same time. Juan J. Villalba, study co-author and associate professor in foraging behavior at Utah State University, said that current sheep feeding practices usually provide animals with only one flavor of feed. "This is like humans eating only hamburger every day," Villalba said in an interview. "They get tired of eating that same flavor over and over."

In one part of Villalba's experiment, young sheep were given a choice of plain feed, sweet-flavored feed, bitter-flavored feed, and umami-flavored (savory) feed. Though all the feed types had the same nutritional value, the flavors were meant to indicate the presence of certain elements. Bitterness tastes like plant toxins, sweetness indicates a high-calorie feed, and umami indicates high protein content. The growing sheep disliked the bitter feed and favored the umami feed. Previous studies that only compared plain feed and sweetened feed had shown that young sheep favor sweeter feed, but sweet feed wasn't the favorite in Villalba's study. He said it is probably not that sheep dislike sweet feed, they probably just like umami feed more. "That reference for protein is more relevant to growing animals," he said.

By measuring feed intake, the researchers discovered that offering a variety of food helps animals continue eating throughout the day. Instead of gorging on one type of feed at the very beginning of the feeding period, the animals switched between flavors and came back for more meals throughout the day. Not only did this behavior increase feed intake, it kept ruminal pH from fluctuating. Stable pH is important because an increase in acid from eating too much starchy feed can lead to damage of rumen and abscesses in the liver. "You won't find those peaks and valleys in pH that you typically see in animals fed in feedlots," said Villalba. According to Villalba, pacing feed intake could also help animals process the nutrients more efficiently. He said that producers could apply these findings in their own flocks. He suggested mixing umami flavor into feed at different ratios. "Producers do not need to increase feed rations," Villalba said. "Flavors can also satiate the animal, not just nutrition."

The desire to eat a variety of flavors is actually an evolutionary advantage. In the wild, and in some pastures today, sheep encounter many kinds of plants. By eating different plants, sheep can get a variety of nutrients as well as minimize exposure to any plant-specific toxins. "Ruminants didn't evolve in an environment where they had just one food to eat all the time," Villalba said. Interestingly, Villalba and his colleagues found that sheep given a variety of flavors at an early age were more willing to accept changes in feed later in life. This is good news for producers who want to switch feed types without reducing intake.

Umami is one of the five basic tastes together with sweet, sour, bitter, and salty and is associated with natural glutamate in foods. The glutamate-containing umami foods are fish, shellfish, cured meats, vegetables (e.g. mushrooms, ripe tomatoes, Chinese cabbage, spinach, etc.) or green tea, and fermented and aged products (e.g. cheeses, shrimp pastes, soy sauce, etc.).

The paper is titled "Feed behavior and performance of lambs are influenced by flavor diversity." It can be read in full at jas.fass.org.

JUNIOR LINCOLN NEWS

All-America Junior Lincoln Show: Lincoln Juniors had a great show at the Delaware State Fair Ground on the July 4th weekend! The Shehab family spent the spring and summer raising funds to attend and to help the NLSBA with expenses. Many thanks to the Shehab family from New Jersey for their bountiful enthusiasm! Participants at the show were: Zion Bowman (WV), Anthony Caruso (DE), Catherine Cincotta (DE), Kallan Latham (MD), Caitlin and Ethan Plank (MI), Ashton Shea (NJ), and Badia, Cricket, Laila, Owen Jeffrey, and Rockwell Shehab (DE). Winners were: Champion Ram - Caitlin Plank, Reserve Champion Ram - Ashton Shea, Champion Ewe - Ethan Plank, Reserve Champion Ewe - Kallan Latham, Best Fleeced Lincoln - Zion Bowman. Lincoln Juniors were active participants in nine age groups of showmanship, two age groups in Skill-A-Thon, and Judging contest, plus Logo, Poster, and T-shirt contests. Thanks to Debbie Vanderwende for being the NLSBA representative at the check-in and show.



BEST FLEECE, Zion Bowman

NorthEast Youth Sheep Show: A small, but energetic group of Lincoln juniors competed in Springfield, Massachusetts at the NorthEast Youth Sheep show. Our own Emily Mombourquette, now of New York, was the show's coordinator. Participants were: Faith Belleavoine (RI), Ashton Shea (NJ), Laila Shehab (DE), and Amber Shippee (RI). Winners were: Champion Ram - Ashton Shea, Reserve Champion Ram - Faith Belleavoine, Champion Ewe - Ashton Shea, Reserve Champion Ewe - Ashton Shea.

NAILE Junior Lincoln Show: The Junior Lincoln show at NAILE is currently 'on probation' due to low entries. If the show does not meet the '25 head shown' level, it will be dropped from the NAILE schedule. Entries are due October 1, 2011.

Congratulations to 2011 All-American Lincoln Champions!



*CHAMPION RAM
1st Feb Ram Lamb - Caitlin Plank*



*RESERVE CHAMPION RAM
2nd Feb Ram Lamb - Ashton Shea*



*CHAMPION EWES
1st Feb Ewe Lamb - Ethan Plank*



*RESERVE CHAMPION EWES
1st Yearling Ewe - Kallan Latham*

A SLICE, SCOOP AND HANDFUL "I KNOW A GOOD ONE WHEN I SEE IT!"

Can the eye or tape measure or the scale best evaluate your flock and its potential? Let's look at an example to exercise our thoughts on the subject! Two large studies asked that very question in regards to meat production in lambs. The bottom line of both studies was that visual examination, even with a measuring tape, is not an effective tool to identify superior sheep for carcass value! Actually, we see that all the time in live judging combined with carcass evaluation contests! One multi-state (OH, IL, ND) study and one USDA study (Dubois, ID) looked at 50+ live animal measurements on every lamb to determine which were predictive of carcass value (also large number of measurements taken on carcass). Each of the two studies thoroughly examined over 1,500 lambs - so, 3,000 lambs x 50+ live measurements/lamb = > 150,000 total number of measurements!

So when you hear a judge say (while judging sheep to evaluate meatiness) that since "this animal is taller, longer bodied, longer loined, heavier muscled over the shoulder or is heavier boned, so it will have the best carcass" - don't put too much faith in the judge's comments being reality! Both studies show that those visual appraisals or measurements do not predict carcass value. Interestingly, one study showed that leg thickness was the only live trait measured that was associated with carcass value and one study did not. What both studies did find was that when rams were used with high EPD's for carcass value - guess what? - lambs had higher carcass value! That was the message delivered at our biennial membership meeting in Springfield, IL by James Morgan, a representative for the National Sheep Improvement Program.

According to a multi-state study participant, Dr. Charles Parker (retired sheep specialist Ohio State), "The most valuable live measurement of body conformation was the predictive value of leg thickness for muscle development. Muscle thickness is also positively related to dressing percentage (CSU and ID studies). I have also suggested the goal of 5 sq. in. of LEA/CWT of carcass as ideal. Generally fewer than 15% achieve this level at most carcass competitions. Parker added that "carcasses from today's slaughter lambs have less loin eye area / 100 lb of carcass than 30 years ago, ever since we've been selecting for long & tall sheep."

"I think the most important assessment of growth and maturity measures relate to what is the marketing goal--the ideal for a flock owner. Now slaughter weights in demand range from 45 - 100 pounds for the ethnic market and to 150 pounds in the traditional market. Note that 58% of lamb in the U. S. is now consumed by minorities and second generation immigrants often demand 150 lb lambs. So what is the desired slaughter weight - its about market demand, feed costs and prices."

"Absolute rate of gain without measuring for degree of maturity seems to drive traditional thinking. However high rates of gain are related to mature size, heavier birth weights and a slower rate of maturity. Those criteria were the exact cause of what got beef cattle in trouble for calving ease and re-breeding. Some argue for heavier birth weights to improve lamb survival. Research has shown that too light and/or too heavy are not ideal for lamb survival (MARC and other research locations). Thus ram test stations based on evaluating rate of gain over a fixed time, example 90 days without any assessment of maturity (degree of fatness) is of limited value."

...continued on page 3

NLSBA SHOW AND SALE RESULTS

The National Lincoln Sheep Breeders' Association 2011 show and sale was held June 18, 2011 in Springfield, Illinois. The judge was Judy Moore of Eagle, Michigan, auctioneer was Tyler Lobdell of Lena, Illinois and the sale manager was Banner Sales Management Service, Cuba, Illinois.

The champion white Lincoln ram was consigned by Pettersson Farms (WA). Their first place yearling ram was purchased by Lindsey Reister (KS) for \$1,250 to top the sale. The reserve champion ram & best white fleece Lincoln was the second place yearling from Larson Lincoln Longwools (MI) and he went on a bid of \$750 to Willow Pine II (MN). Boersma Ranch (IL) placed third in the class and he sold to Tor Sorensen (AZ) for \$400 as the 3 head of yearlings averaged \$800. Two white fall rams were offered in the sale. The class winning Mohr Lincolns (IL) entry sold to Willow Pine II (MN) for \$300; the same price Brian Larson (MI) gave for the second place James & Donna Lein (IA) entry. Boersma Ranch sold their white spring ram lamb for \$350 to Robert Sando & Family (OH).

The champion natural colored Lincoln ewe also won best natural colored fleece was consigned by Mohr Lincolns. Their winning fall ewe lamb sold to David Hammer (WI) for \$625. The reserve champion white Lincoln ewe was the first place spring ewe lamb from Pettersson Farms and she was purchased by Robert Sando & Family for \$700. Sando also picked up the second place spring ewe lamb from Boersma Ranch for \$400. Willow Pine II took home the third place entry from James & Donna Lein for \$450; while Jean Shaw (IA) picked up a Sando Farms (OH) entry for \$300. James and Donna Lein sold their other spring ewe lamb for \$725 to Willow Pine II as the 5 head averaged \$515. The reserve champion natural colored Lincoln ewe was the first place spring ewe lamb from Wyncrest (MO) and she sold on a bid of \$650 to Prairie Lane Farms (MO). The 17 total head of Lincolns averaged \$566 (Content courtesy of Banner Publications).

Continued from page 1 - President's Message

the internet - watch future Lincoln Letters for connection details. Preparations are being made for sale bidding to be available by phone, on-line, e-mail and live in Estes Park. Estes Park is located next to the Rocky Mountain National Park. This is a great time of year and location for a fun family vacation - AND Lincoln Longwool sheep! There will be a Bar-B-Que and member meeting for the Lincoln enthusiasts.

Official Lincoln Longwool Signs Are Available: Contact Brian Larson. Attractive, come with hanging bracket, add two lines of your own farm information, just \$75!

Associated Registries Moves to New Location: The NLSBA registry, also known as Associated Registries, has a more spacious building and a new address, PO Box 51, 222 Main St. - Milo, IA 50166. The old address will continue to forward mail to the new location, but look for the new address to be added to new correspondence. (New forms are included in this Newsletter)

Wool/Fleece Shows: Wool/fleece shows appear to be in a decline. Entries are down dramatically at some shows such as NAILE. Seems like a great opportunity wasted! Lincoln entries are almost non-existent at these shows. A few Lincoln fleeces are shown from time to time, usually very good fleeces but in their natural state with ample lanolin. Maryland Sheep and Wool festival has now separated covered fleeces from those in natural state - a good move. However, judges seem to prefer select fleeces as show winners that have been protected from the elements. Additionally, some fleeces seem to be too soft and fluffy to have not been cleaned in some way. Thus, there appears to be fleece show techniques that have not been mastered by Lincoln breeders or perhaps should not be mastered.



Traditional Lincoln Longwool Fleece in the UK from Tardebigge

Continued from page 2 - A Slice, Scoop and Handful

"Ohio had a central ram test that was conducted over several years where body condition was used as the end point for individual ram on test--.25" over the ribs was the end test condition score and the ram was weighted off test at that time. The test continued for 120 days after a one week adjustment. A few rams never reached the end body condition but were commonly above average in rate of gain. A desired market weight and optimal degree of finish should determine the ideal slaughter animal."

Yes, the above discussion on carcass value was oriented to a 'meat' breed, but was intended to stimulate thought regarding how does one maintain or improve upon breed characteristics and usefulness. Recent discussions in the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy News have focused on how breeds with small genetic bases negotiate their future. Part of that enlightening discussion has helped define what is a 'breed': BREED = GENETIC RESOURCE + NATURAL ENVIRONMENT + HUMAN MANAGEMENT & SELECTION PRESSURES.

In order to further get us thinking, I'm going to suggest that there is a very high probability that the same evaluation/prediction inaccuracy as discussed for carcass value above occurs when judges make pronouncements about breed character, conformation and quality of fleeces on live animals in shows for wool breeds (especially Lincolns). Does a judge, who has never bred or raised a Lincoln and sometimes has never seen (except in the show ring) or touched one before, pose a problem for a breed such as Lincoln. Question: Do show judges affect your breeding and selection decisions?

So what is a unique dual-purpose breed like Lincoln Longwools to do?

- 1) We can continue as in the past to let the judges' eyes and instincts continue to do their guiding and individual breeders' form their own perceptions.
- 2) We could establish a Lincoln Longwool sheep judges school and require that any judges of association-sponsored shows must participate.
- 3) We could mandate show ring preparation and fitting procedures (shear dates, wool preparation, trimming rules) to ease exhibition comparison.
- 4) We could set targeted breed evaluation priorities for use in building EPD's in a NSIP-like manner (very breed-specific as the Katahdin breeders have done).
- 5) Other ideas or combinations of above?

Think about the role(s) that the Lincoln Longwool breed can play in the US flock, talk to your fellow breeders, contact your directors and officers and share your opinions.



Steve Higgins and Tardebigge Finbar
United Kingdom Lincoln Longwool ram being used LAI by
US breeders this year (photo by Christiane Payton, OR).

Associated Registries is now at a new address!

We have moved to a bigger building in Milo.
Our new facility is just a short distance from the old location so there is minimal effect to our mail service, but we will now be using a PO Box.

NLSBA
PO Box 51, 222 Main St
Milo, IA 50166

Our telephone and fax numbers will remain the same as:
(641) 942-6402 phone (641) 942-6502 fax

As inserts in this newsletter you will find the updated forms for your work with the new address.

Make sure to mail upcoming work to the New Address!

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE LINCOLN BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

A society of Lincoln breeders was started in England in 1796 and the present Lincoln Longwool Sheep Breeders' Association was founded in 1892.

In the United States, the National Lincoln Sheep Breeders' Association (NLSBA) was started in Michigan in 1891. By 1900 the membership consisted of approximately 150 members of which one-third were Canadian. Registration of colored Lincolns in the U.S. began in 1984.

The registry maintained by the American association is open for offspring of animals recorded in Lincoln breeders' registries from other countries. For example, animals that have qualified for registration and are recorded in the Canadian Livestock Records can be transferred and recorded in the American registry.

Lincoln Longwool judging guidelines, reflecting desirable characteristics of the breed, were updated in 1993. The registry and generation of registration papers were computerized in 1997 to offer a standard three-generation pedigree (with a five generation option) and to identify the fleece color phenotype as "white" or "colored".

During odd numbered years, at a central location, the NLSBA holds a biennial meeting, white and colored sheep and wool shows, breeding sheep sale, and election of officers and directors. Officers include president, vice president, secretary-treasurer and director regions including



eastern, mid-eastern, midwestern, western and one at large. In alternating locations throughout the U.S. on even-numbered years, the association holds a membership meeting, shows and sale. Youth activities are conducted nationwide.

**National Lincoln
Sheep Breeders Association**
PO Box 51, 222 Main St.
Milo, IA 50166



Lincoln Longwool for Many Reasons!

Lincoln Longwool pure genetics is a resource lost in most other 'breeds'.

Lincoln characteristics are valuable to small farm flocks, craftspeople, and large producers.

Long Lustrous Fleece • Muscular, Sturdy Body • Attentive Mothers
Environmentally Adaptable • Good Milk Production
Calm, Gentle Dispositions
Multiple Births • Long Productive Lives
Outstanding Crossbreeding • Strong, Long Lasting Teeth
Excellent Feet, Rot Resistant
Genetically No Scrapie

There's a Lot to Like About Lincolns!

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Visit the Lincoln Association Website for Updates and Information

www.lincolnsheep.org
