For Sweet Meadow Farm, Border Leicesters Fit The Bill

By Sally Colby
Reprinted with permission from Country Folks New England

Many people who raise livestock select certain breeds simply because they like the appearance of that breed. That’s the case for a New Hampshire family that recently exhibited sheep at the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival.

People from all over the country exhibit and attend this premier fiber event, and many of them are interested in the less common breeds such as the Border Leicesters that Stephanie LaRochelle and her daughter Sophie brought from their family farm in Webster, NH. They brought six animals to exhibit at the show, which is one of several they attend each year.

The Border Leicester is a dual purpose sheep known for its long, shiny locks of wool. Sheep of this breed have clean legs and head, and a distinct Roman nose — one of the breed’s most unique characteristics. Border Leicester wool has a spinning count in the 40s-50s range, which means that one pound of clean wool would yield about 40 to 50 hanks (560 yards) of yarn. In the micron system, a more modern wool grading system that measures the individual fiber, Border Leicester wool grades 38 to 30 microns.

Before adding the Border Leicesters about six years ago, the LaRochelles had already been raising Hampshires. “I just like them,” said Sophie as she talked about the Border Leicesters. “We have 16 ewes now, and some yearlings.” In addition to the sheep at Sweet Meadow Farm, the LaRochelle family also raises Angus and Belted Galloway cattle.

Because Stephanie works as a teacher and her husband Guy also works off the farm, they try to time breeding and subsequent lambing to take place during school vacations. The goal is to have lambs born during breaks in December and February. Because they lost several of their sheep to local dogs, which are often the main predator of sheep and goats, the LaRochelles got a llama that acts as a flock guardian.

Stephanie says that New Hampshire has an active ag commission that is involved in developing local agriculutre. “Many of the ag commissions are providing educational opportunities for families, like open barn tours,” she said.

Like many people who raise sheep for fiber, Stephanie uses the Border Leicester fleeces for projects such as knitting, felting and dying. “I really enjoy the dying,” she said. “That’s why I stick with the white fleeces.” Stephanie sends raw fleeces to two New England mills for processing wool into yarn, including Twist of Fate Spinnery in Portland, CT, which offers custom processing and fiber blending of any animal fibers in wool.

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lots of any size. She also sends wool to the Still River Mill in Eastford, CT, which also processes fibers of all kinds.

“We also sell some raw fleeces,” said Stephanie, adding that she sells most fleeces at the New Hampshire Sheep and Wool Festival and the Fiber Fest in West Springfield, MA. “We sell young lambs for Orthodox Easter and also larger, finished lambs.

Sophie is involved in both 4-H and FFA, and will soon graduate from high school. She is defer-ring college for a year as she embarks on a unique opportunity in agriculture. “I was elected president of Granite State FFA,” she said. “I’m interested in going into agriculture, but I’m not sure exactly what area yet.” Sophie is hoping that the year she spends as state president will help her narrow down her agricultural interest for the future. In addition to participating in sheep projects, Sophie has also been active in horticulture and was recently recognized for her achievements in both areas.

Taylor Howman Receives Border Leicester Ewe

Taylor Howman, 10, of Wooster, Ohio is getting to know the Border Leicester ewe, Alisa, which was awarded to her at the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival on May 6. The ewe will be part of Taylor’s 4-H project. Last year she borrowed sheep from her grandparents to show. This year she will have her very own sheep.

Taylor applied for the ewe through the Youth Conservationist Program. This program is a way of enabling youth to experience the joy and responsibility of conserving the Heritage Wool Sheep Breeds. These sheep breeds are not very common in the United States. Taylor had to write an essay addressing the question “Why I would like to help preserve a heritage breed of sheep?” Her fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Fortune, wrote the required letter of recommendation. After submitting the application, Taylor had to wait over three weeks to find out if she was a winner. She said, “I was so excited when I got the call.”

As a ewe recipient, Taylor has several requirements to complete in the next year. This news article is one of them. The sheep is to be part of her 4-H project and she will show her at the Ohio State Fair and the Wayne County Fair. When the wool is shorn, Taylor is to use it or sell it to a hand spinner. The Border Leicester wool looks a lot like mohair and makes beautiful yarn. In the fall, the ewe will be bred and hopefully have ewe lambs in the spring. Over the course of the year pictures will be taken to put in a scrapbook. The scrapbook will then be displayed at the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival next year.

Taylor will submit another news article in the spring to encourage youth to apply for a Heritage Breed Wool Sheep. This year there were thirteen different breeds of sheep donated to 15 young people. Some breeds had more than one sheep donated. Bear Hollow Farm from Newark, Ohio donated the Border Leicester ewe.

In case you are interested, the Border Leicester sheep is the breed of sheep on Mr. Hoggett’s farm in the movie Babe.

Taylor Howman of Wooster, Ohio, with her Border Leicester ewe donated by Bear Hollow Farm from Newark, Ohio. Taylor was one of 15 recipients of the annual Youth Conservationist Program awarded at the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival.
Greetings from dry Northern Illinois. We have one crop of hay up, so now it would be really nice if we got some rain.
The lambs are growing out to be really nice looking.
A big thank you goes to the Ohio group for a good time Friday night at the get together and again Saturday night at the banquet – the food was oh so good. The silent auction had some really nice items on it. The show and sale were great also. You will find the results elsewhere in this issue.
I would like to thank Greg and Jennifer for all the time they were on the board. Also a warm welcome to the three new members: Linda Koeppel, Kevin Young, and Tom Key.
We as a board will continue to go forward to keep the breed on top.
I would like thank all those who have purchased sheep from us this spring. Good luck with them in your breeding program. Looking forward to all the coming events that have classes for Border Leicester sheep.
Have a safe and happy summer showing all those good Border Leicesters!
Also, remember to send any news you have and/or pictures you may have to our editor, Stacy, and she will put them in the next newsletter.

Barb Hintzsche

American Border Leicester Board of Directors

In an historic Border Leicester breed moment, the entire Board of Directors were all present at the same time in the same place. This occurred at the 2012 Annual Meeting held May 26th in Wooster, Ohio. Seated from left to right are: Polly Hopkins, Rhode Island, Treasurer; Sally Barney, New Hampshire, Recording Secretary; Barb Hintzsche, Illinois, newly elected ABLA President; and Linda Koeppel, Michigan. In the back row, left to right: Mark Korf, Wisconsin; Tom Key, Montana; Jerry Wigginsworth, Kansas; Kevin Young, Illinois; and Greg Deakin, Illinois, ABLA Past President.

Don’t Forget The Futurity Program!

Calling all Border Leicester Breeders!
Nominate your ewe lambs or yearling ewes if you sell to a youth buyer.

Border Leicester Youth –
You can nominate your ewe lamb or yearling ewe. The ewe can be home grown or purchased.

Reminder to Youth
Who Purchased Futurity
Nominated Ewes –
Turn in your point record form signed by the show secretary.
All funds paid in nominations go into the purse that is divided amongst the participating youth. Information and forms can be found on the ABLA website.

If you have any questions, contact Polly Hopkins, (401) 949-4619, khop4811@aol.com

President’s Message

American Border Leicester Board of Directors

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REGISTERING SHEEP

Fill out any ABLA application for registration you may already have or if you do not have a form, please visit the “Registering Sheep” page on the website at www.ablasheep.org and download an Application for Registration Form. Send all forms for registering your sheep to:

American Border Leicester Association
PO Box 51, 222 Main Street
Milo, IA 50166
Phone: 641/942-6402
Fax: 641/942-6502
Email: klaghorn@earthlink.net

REGISTRATION FEES

Members..........................$5.00
Non-members.....................$10.00

TRANSFER FEES

Members..........................$5.00
Non-members.....................$5.00

Be sure to include all the necessary and correct information on the forms in order to register your sheep. Applications that are incomplete, incorrect, or lacking fees will be returned to the sender with an explanation of the problem. Applications will not be accepted unless an ABLA Application for Registration Form is filled out for all animals to be registered by the breeder/owner.

Start at the Top with Border Leicesters!

Greetings from the great State of Michigan. It is always beautiful here (well almost...depends on how you choose to look at the world!). The sheep are happy and healthy but would appreciate rain for the grass and everything else (as would we).

I would like to thank everyone for your confidence in my ability to serve as a productive member of the ABLA Board of Directors. I have learned so much from so many in this special organization and I will do my best to do what is asked of me. Thanks also to those who worked hard to make the Show and Sale in Wooster as fun as it was. Totally away from the sheep barn we had a great time with old friends and getting to know new ones.

Many of you across the country may not know how active and involved Michigan shepherds are – especially regarding youth programs. The Michigan Sheep Breeders Association is very active and does an especially good job of integrating interests of both commercial breeders and small flock owners and to tap into the talent and knowledge of the Animal Science staff at Michigan State University. In a few hours we will attend the summer picnic coordinated by the Small Flock Committee of the organization. In addition to food and a farm tour, there will be several presentations, among them a session on judging conformation by one of our members, Judy Moore, who judged the show in Wooster three weeks ago.

Our Michigan Fiber Festival is coming up in mid-August (15th to 19th). It is a relaxed show and Border Leicesters are well represented. It is held at the Allegan County Fairgrounds in Allegan, Michigan, a beautiful small town a few miles from Lake Michigan. The fairgrounds have a scenic site on the Kalamazoo River. Info at www.michiganfiberfestival.info.

Peace and blessings to each of you and your beautiful sheep.

– Linda Koeppel

What an excellent time Elizabeth and I – and our friend Kathleen - had at the Wooster show and sale! Gracious hosts, pleasant Border Leicester folk, great sheep, and a strong sense of community and common purpose. The fact that it was all so well organized must come from years of thoughtful experience. I would mention the weather, but we are Kansans and are expected to endure high temperatures silently; we are at home on the range, and the deer and antelope do play, but it can be hot as the Everlasting Hinges.

Meeting one’s associates whom one has never seen is a grounding experience. Elizabeth and Kathleen felt it as they encountered those people from whom they had bought wool over the past year, and I felt it finally to come face to face with the directors and officers of our association with whom I have been talking and exchanging e-mails over the past several months. The chance to talk with those present has made me all the more aware of our colleagues, spread across our land, who were not able to come to Wooster.

We did have a technical setback: we had hoped to see the videos prepared by some of our members about themselves and their Border Leicesters, but the projector did not match up with the discs. Plans are afoot to make them available to the board of directors so that it can resolve how best we can make them available to the membership and advance the interests of our breed and association. Stay tuned.

We returned home to the pasture season in full swing: the herd – 50 counts as a herd, I think – out in the morning and in at night, and we opened a new piece of grass, some 18 acres, to them all. You may have read about our efforts to ready it in an earlier column. It has a difficult terrain feature, bushes and trees and a usually dry watercourse, which made it difficult to fence but we persevered. We wondered, is it coyote-proof? Can we really trust the fence and our dogs to keep them safe?

So on the first day, the dogs and I led the procession, and we walked around it, thickets, grass and all. The sheep of course stopped at the first best grass, but we separated...and as I got to the far side, I heard a noise – something between a bark and a crow’s caw – which drew me to an area where the dogs were chasing some small reddish-brown creature back and forth. What is that? It was the creature that was making the noise. A fawn! White spots on its back and terrible reddish-brown creature back and forth. What is that? It was the creature that was making the noise. A fawn! White spots on its back and terrified. I called the dogs - Great Pyrenees - off, and as they stood back the fawn stopped still. What to do?

I stepped to it and picked it up. It must have weighed 25 pounds and it was very lean and sinewy, compared to the lambs I had been picking up, and it struggled a bit. And again: what to do?

There was no sign of its mother. I walked it over to the fence and deposited it on the other side. It lingered a bit, looking back into the place that it no doubt had been born, but then, as though called from a thicket outside the fence, it trotted away into the bush and the rest of its life. Though called from a thicket outside the fence, it trotted away into the bush and the rest of its life.

On reflection, it was clear to me that its mother had chosen our pasture because it was safe from coyotes but was unable to get her offspring out because it could not get over a fence and there was no way under or through it.

A comforting thought, perhaps, almost a testimonial.

But we still bring our herd in at night.

– Jerry Wigglesworth

Neck of the Woods

What’s happening in YOUR neck of the woods?

Here’s an update from your Directors...

Greetings from the great State of Michigan. It is always beautiful here (well almost...depends on how you choose to look at the world!). The sheep are happy and healthy but would appreciate rain for the grass and everything else (as would we).

I would like to thank everyone for your confidence in my ability to serve as a productive member of the ABLA Board of Directors. I have learned so much from so many in this special organization and I will do my best to do what is asked of me. Thanks also to those who worked hard to make the Show and Sale in Wooster as fun as it was. Totally away from the sheep barn we had a great time with old friends and getting to know new ones.

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– Jerry Wigglesworth
ABL A Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2012

Present: Greg Deakin, Jerry Wigglesworth, Mark Korf, Jennifer Bierhuizen, Polly Hopkins, Barb Hintzschke, Sally Barney

President, Greg Deakin, called the meeting to order and Sally announced that a quorum was present. The minutes of the January 9, 2012 meeting were approved as sent. It was voted by all present to approve the Treasurer’s report, subject to review of the postage charge on the March 2011 newsletter. Polly reported that the books have been closed on 2011 and if there are monies due they would come out of the 2012 budget. It was voted to run the 2011 year-end treasurer’s report in the newsletter. Sally read a letter from the Michigan Fiber Festival Wool Sheep Show requesting a sponsorship. Polly moved and Jerry seconded a motion to give $125 to the Michigan Fiber Festival Wool Sheep Show. The Secretary will inform our Michigan breeders that we have done this. There will be a notice in the next newsletter regarding this donation. Sally also read a thank you note from Emily Gibson thanking the ABLA for supporting the ABLA Futurity.

Greg reported that to date in 2012 there have been 118 Border Leicesters registered and 30 transferred. Polly reported 111 members to date including 22 juniors.

Publicity Committee: Jerry shared an idea he had regarding placing prices received for Border Leicester wool out on the website or in the newsletter. Directors had a variety of questions and thoughts regarding the opportunity and what exactly we would be referring to. Jerry suggested that such information might suggest to breeders what extra work on marketing fleeces might return to a breeder. It was suggested that perhaps the focus should be on the breed standard and working with breeders to produce a more uniform fleece across the breed. Jerry will continue to refine the suggestion and welcomed other Board members to join in the project.

Newsletter: Greg reported that the newsletter was ready to go and will be in mailboxes within the next week. The Board applauded the previous newsletter. The newsletter trial was for two months; it was agreed to discuss the newsletter at the next meeting after the Board has had a chance to see the second edition prepared by Stacy Wise. The next newsletter deadline is June 15, 2012.

Website: Webmaster, JoAnne Tuncy, asked to move the request for resumes for the newsletter editor position off the front page of the Website to make room for current events and activities; the Board agreed and asked JoAnne to remove the article. JoAnne reported that she is updating the Breeder Directory.

Futurity: Polly shared that the Futurity information is on the Website. Nominations have not started coming in. It was agreed to highlight the Futurity on the ABLA display at Wooster.

Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival: Jennifer shared that she is working on finger foods for the social gathering of Border Leicester breeders after the Saturday shows at Maryland. This will be an open meeting for all breeders and Border Leicester enthusiasts.

National Sale: Greg shared that there are about 40 whites and 12 or so natural colored Border Leicesters entered into the National Border Leicester Sale at Wooster. It was agreed to have ABLA purchase sashes or other awards for the Champion and Reserve Ewes and Rams in both the white and natural colored shows. It was voted to have Barb and Sally look into this and they will have a budget of $150 for the awards.

National Sale Dinner; Annual Meeting; Fleece Show and Friday Social: Greg reported that he had heard from Marilyn Fogle and that her crew has done a great job planning many of the Border Leicester activities during the Sale weekend. The Annual Meeting and Dinner will be held on Saturday night at the Olde Jaol House Restaurant. This event includes a Silent Auction. Friday night there is a social gathering at the Best Western starting at 7:00 pm. Each breeder is asked to send a 3-5 minute video of their farm for inclusion in a video tour of Border Leicester farms. The Border Leicester Fleece Show is moving to the Fiber Fest held during the National Sale weekend. It was agreed that Polly would do a fleece skirt- ing workshop sometime Saturday afternoon.

Videos: Jerry brought the Board up to date on his thinking regarding the opportunity to show You Tube type videos on the ABLA website. Sally had suggested that perhaps the videos could focus on selling the breed as a lead-in to videos focused on management, etc. Sally agreed to join with Jerry in developing this concept further.

Other: Greg and Mark reported that Ashley Jones, Border Leicester breeder, is featured in the recent FFA publication having earned her Proficiency Award through her Border Leicester management. Polly shared that Eastern States Exposition will host a National Regional Border Leicester Show; Doris Powell is judging and juniors receive extra premiums in breed classes; in addition, the Eastern Border Leicester Breeders will meet on April 15 on the grounds of Eastern States Exposition.

NEW BUSINESS

Election: Sally reported that she had received election Bios from Tom Key, Montana; Linda Koeppel, Michigan; Coleen Smith, Oregon and Kevin Young, Illinois. There are three openings on the Board of Directors; Jennifer Bierhuizen and Greg Deakin are not running for an additional term and there is an anticipated vacancy in Anne Key’s position as illness will prevent her from completing her term. Ballots and Bios will be mailed to all current members to be returned by April 15. All ballots will be mailed to Sally. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sally Barney – Recording Secretary

– NEXT MEETING–
April 23, 2012 • 8:30 PM Eastern

Marsh Creek Crossing
Border Leicesters
Hardy Canadian & Showy New Zealand Bloodlines

Ray & Margo Hanson
Twin Valley, Minnesota
218 584-5545
www.marshcreekcrossing.com
2011 Breeders in ABLA Registrations & Transfers

It was brought to our attention that in the 2011 numbers that we provided after the 1st of the year, transfers processed on accounts other than the breeders account (such as sale managements) were not credited to the breeder. Below are corrected number and listings of the top breeders.

Top Breeders in ABLA Registrations for 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Reg</th>
<th>Breeder</th>
<th>City, State</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Montana Aerie Sheep Ranch</td>
<td>Great Falls, MT</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Deakin Family Farms</td>
<td>Cuba, IL</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Overlook Manor Farm</td>
<td>Warrenton, VA</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Blackberry Farm</td>
<td>New Tazewell, TN</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Blackberry Farm</td>
<td>Athens, WI</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Fogle Farm</td>
<td>Raymond, OH</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Fogle Farm</td>
<td>Shed, OR</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Frank &amp; Barb Hintzsche</td>
<td>Rochelle, IL</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Diana Waibel</td>
<td>Canby, OR</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Maybe Tomorrow Farm</td>
<td>Chepachet, RI</td>
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Top Breeders in ABLA Transfers for 2011

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<td>3.</td>
<td>Spring Creek Farm</td>
<td>Minnetrista, MN</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Maybe Tomorrow Farm</td>
<td>Chepachet, RI</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Twin Hickory Farm</td>
<td>Kingsville, OH</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Hintzsche Sheep Farm</td>
<td>Rochelle, IL</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Pem-Bor-Lei Farm</td>
<td>Otlaw, OH</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Fogle Farm</td>
<td>Raymond, OH</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Marissa Harden</td>
<td>Danville, IL</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Foxy Farm Critters</td>
<td>Springfield, OR</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Fairy Dust Farm</td>
<td>Lee, NH</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Seldom Seen Farm</td>
<td>Chepachet, RI</td>
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<td>7.</td>
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<td>Cuba, IL</td>
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<td>Emofa Morton</td>
<td>Chepachet, RI</td>
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NorthWestern Happenings

By Coleen Smith, Blessed Creations, Gervais, Oregon

As marketing director for Oregon Flock and Fiber Festival, I am pleased to announce that the American Border Leicester is the “Celebrated Breed” for the festival this year. This is the 16th year for the festival which started in 1997 and is held at the Event Center in Canby Oregon.

This year’s dates are September 22nd and 23rd with classes offered on the 21st. The festival now includes three days of workshops and a weekend filled with demonstrations, livestock shows, fiber art exhibits, seminars and children’s activities. We consider the festival an event for the whole family. The festival’s mission is to exhibit and demonstrate the full spectrum of natural fibers (plant and animal) from beginning to end, from the animal or raw fiber to the finished product.

The 2012 logo which will be printed on t-shirts, sweatshirts and reusable bags was created by Claudine Angus of British Columbia and features a Border Leicester head with a weaving background, a beautiful representation.

A fine representation of Border Leicester sheep will be in the barn. Already planning on attending are: Glen and Coleen Smith of Blessed Creations, Correy McAtee and Brin McAtee-Rosnau of Farmer Girl’s Friends, Troy and Loren Heath of Distracted Acres and Dan and Susie Wilson of SuDan Farms. We would like to encourage other breeders in our area to come out and promote our wonderful breed.

If you would like more information please check out the website http://www.flockandfiberfestival.com/ or email for a catalog to whistlestop.bc60@rocketmail.com

Another exciting side note for NW breeders, for the first time in many years the Oregon State Fair will have a stand alone class for Border Leicester. We no longer have to show with all other breeds white wool as we have brought our numbers up high enough to have our own class. I must say it is going to be a very exciting summer!

Mistwood Farm

Barbara Thompson
Border Leicesters

406 Evans Road, Chepachet, RI 02896
401-949-0264
mthompson5@cox.net

Seldom Seen Farm

Barbara Thompson
Border Leicesters

406 Evans Road, Chepachet, RI 02896
401-949-0264
mthompson5@cox.net

A small flock on the move...
AMERICAN BORDER LEICESTER ASSOCIATION

Standard of Excellence
Guide for Judging Border Leicester Sheep
(Applies to both White & Natural Colored animals)

HEAD & NECK (10 Points)
Head:
- High, erect ears
- Spots on ears permissible
- Roman nose
- Black nose and lips (dark mottled with grey acceptable)
- No mottling on muzzle
- Both sexes polled

Neck:
- Moderate length, fitting into shoulders gracefully

FOREQUARTER (5 Points)
Shoulders:
- Well rounded
Legs:
- Straight, wide apart, no wool below knees

BODY (15 Points)
Chest:
- Deep and wide, but not fat
Ribs:
- Well-sprung, long, showing no signs of excess fat
Back:
- Broad, long and level
  - Somewhat narrower in front than rear
  - Hindquarters should be 1/3 or less in proportion
Wool Cover:
- Belly and armpits well-covered with wool (minimum of skin) and consistent with balance of fleece

HINDQUARTERS (10 Points)
Hips:
- Level, smooth and wide apart
Thighs:
- Deep and full
Legs:
- Straight, wide apart, free of wool below hocks
  - No evidence of low pasterns
  - Black hooves

Udder & Scrotum:
- Ewes - Udder should show evidence of two good teats
- Rams - Testicles well-developed and hanging down a distance from the body

CONDITION (10 Points)
Animals should be in working condition, well-muscled, and not overly fat or thin

GENERAL APPEARANCE (10 Points)
Stance:
- Overall appearance to be regal in structure
Quality:
- Should be strong boned
  - Rams to appear masculine
  - Ewes to appear feminine

WOOL (40 Points)
1. Locks with purled tips ending in a curl
2. High Luster
3. Minimum of kemp hair
4. Uniform fleece and belly wool
5. No black spots in white, no white spots in black wool

The fleece weight from mature females ranges from 8 to 12 pounds with a yield of 65 to 80 percent. The staple length of the fleece ranges from five to ten inches with a numeric count of 36 to 48 which is 38.5 to 30.0 microns.

Border Leicesters are typically shown with 3-5 months of wool growth, so that the judge can accurately evaluate the fleece, one of the most important characteristics of the breed. They are relatively easy fit for exhibition. They should appear clean and neat, but never shampooed, as this would remove the natural oil from the wool. A light spritzing with luke warm water can emphasize the natural curl of the fleece, but it needs to be done well before the show so that the dampened locks have time to dry thoroughly. Stray locks may be trimmed, but Border Leicesters should not be combed, carded, or blocked, which would disturb the natural lock formation and detract from the character of the fleece.

A ram at maturity should weigh 175-300 pounds and stand about 32 inches at the shoulder. He should have a wide, level back. Ewes usually weigh 150-225 pounds.
4TH ANNUAL ABLA FLEECE SHOW

The ABLA National Fleece Show was held May 26th in conjunction with the Great Lakes Show and Sale and Fiber Festival. We had a total of 23 fleeces entered with 10 white ewes, 7 natural color ewes, 2 white rams and 4 natural color rams. We hoped to gain more exposure and allow people to see and purchase our fleeces and sales were good.

Thanks to everyone for their entries and support. If you have comments or suggestions please let us hear from you.

**White Ewes**
1. John Moran
2. Marilyn Fogle
3. Linda Koeppel
4. John Moran

**White Rams**
1. Linda Reichert
2. John Moran

**Natural Color Ewes**
1. Linda Koeppel
2. Linda Koeppel
3. Kent Knappenberger
4. John Moran

**Natural Color Rams**
1. John Moran
2. Linda Koeppel
3. Kent Knappenberger
4. Kevin Young

**Champion White Fleece**
John Moran

**Reserve Champion White Fleece**
Linda Reichert

**Reserve Champion Natural Color Fleece**
John Moran

**Supreme Champion Fleece**
Linda Koeppel (Natural Color Ewe Fleece)

**FRIDAY EVENING CASUAL GATHERING MAY 25TH**

Our Friday evening gathering at the Best Western was well attended. Everyone enjoyed lamb sandwiches, relishes and fruit, homemade cookies, chips and snacks. We had a good evening of laughter and got to know some unknown and interesting facts about one another. Sally Barney and Judy Harris entertained everyone telling about their seven hours spent in a truck stop waiting for their truck to be repaired. Quite interesting and much laughter as a result of their stories.

**BANQUET AND ABLA ANNUAL MEETING MAY 26TH**

The Saturday evening banquet was held at the Olde Jaol House Restaurant and 64 people attended from 12 different states with lots of newcomers. Since it was Memorial Day weekend, we started the evening with a few well spoken words from Bill Keoppel of Michigan. Then Colin Siegmund of Connecticut led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

After dinner the ABLA Annual Meeting was held and our new board members were introduced. During the evening a silent auction was held.

**SILENT AUCTION ITEMS, DONORS AND BUYERS**

- **Candle** - Donated by Art Siegmund, Jr. (Conn.), purchased by Judy Harris (Mass.)
- **Basket of 3 Bottles of Wine** - Donated by Bear Hollow Farm (Ohio), purchased by Brenda Lelli (Mich.)
- **Sheep Photographs** - Donated by Bill Koeppel (Mich.), purchased by Pat Bradish (Ohio) and David Frewes (Indiana)
- **Virginia Ham** - Donated by Cathie Shiff (Virginia), purchased by Stephanie LaRochelle (N.H.)
- **Two Hand Woven Border Leicester Pillows** - Donated by Elizabeth and Jerry Wigglesworth (Kansas), purchased by Stephanie LaRochelle (N.H.)
- **Basket of 12 Michigan Craft Beers, Cheeses and other Goodies** - Donated by Linda & Bill Koeppel (Mich.), purchased by Stephanie LaRochelle (N.H.)
- **Handmade Basket with Ohio Wine and Goodies** - Donated by Jerry & Dena Early (Ohio), purchased by Elizabeth Wigglesworth (Kansas)
- **Sheep Lawn Ornament & “Show Snacks”** - Donated by Mark Korf Family (Wisc.), purchased by Tom Key (Montana)
- **Sheep Glasses & Dish** - Donated by Colin Sigmund (Conn.), purchased by Jack Price (Illinois)
- **Rhode Island Basket of Goodies** - Donated by Polly & Kevin Hopkins (R.I.), purchased by Sally Barney (N.H.)
- **Bottle of Wine** - Purchased by Cathie Shiff (Virginia)
- **Donation** - Don Morehouse and John Moran (Ohio)

As you can see, we had a tremendous amount of support. We had a great evening and a big THANK YOU to everyone!
Border Leicesters were in hot demand at the 2012 National Sale held in conjunction with the Great Lakes Sale in Wooster, Ohio. 48 head of White & Natural Colored Border Leicesters sold at a breed record $675 average.

Leading off the sale was the National Grand Champion Ram bred by Deakin Family Farms, IL. The ram had previously won Grand Champion Ram honors at the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival held a few weeks earlier. He sold to Roger Green, MN for $1,200. Reserve Grand Champion Ram honors went to Montana Aerie, MT, on their second place yearling. He sold to George Muehlheim, OH for $300.

The third place Diana Anson yearling ram topped the class at $1,700, selling to Deakin Family Farm & Vast Plains Border Leicesters, IL. Deakin Family Farms’ 4th place yearling ram next sold to Iris LaRochelle, NH for $500 to round out the higher yearling ram prices.

One January ram lamb was offered in the sale by ZNK Border Leicesters, OH. He sold to Miller Farms, OH for $250.

In the February ram lamb class, Deakin Family placed first and sold to Callie Taylor, PA. Roger Green, MN then picked up the 2nd Place Montana Aerie lamb for $300.

The sales’ real excitement then began with the offering of the yearling ewes. Seldom Seen Farm, RI won both the National Grand & Reserve Champion Ewe honors with their 1st & 2nd place yearlings. After a spirited round of bidding, Connor Vincent, DE, owned the Champion Ewe on a new breed record ewe price of $2,700. The Reserve Champion penmate next sold to Colin Deakin, IL for $1,400. Third place honors went on a Deakin Family yearling ewe to Paige Vincent, DE for $1,800.

Montana Aerie next sold a pair for $450 each to Callie Taylor, PA and to Meikayla Korf, WI. Vast Plains, IL sold their yearling ewe to William & Sharon O’Donnell, OH for $650. George Muehlheim, OH next bought a Deakin ewe for $550 and a Montana Aerie ewe for $450. A Tiffany Deakin yearling brought $550 from Shelly Nussbaum, NJ to round out the better yearling ewe prices. The 11 head averaged $881.82.

One January ewe lamb was offered in the sale and she was bred by Wool Away Farm, Amber Millikan, IN. She sold to Thomas C. Key, MT for $600.

Next to sell were the February ewe lambs. The breed’s second high selling ewe price was then established by a Maybe Tomorrow Farm lamb from Rhode Island. She sold to Callie Taylor, PA for $2,600. Deakin Family then sold their 2nd place ewe lamb for $700 to Jacob Korf, WI. Another Maybe Tomorrow Farm ewe lamb sold to Callie Taylor for $700 and Cape House Farm, Bill & Linda Koeppel, MI, sold a lamb for $575 to Ben Wamsley, IL. Dennis Jones, ME, then picked up a pair of Montana Aerie ewe lambs for
$500 each as the 31 White Leicesters averaged $726.61.

National Grand Champion Natural Colored Ram honors went to Vast Plains, IL with their 1st place ram lamb. He sold to Emily Gibson, NH for $300. Twin Hickory Farm then sold their winning yearling ram for $300 to Kent Knappen-berge, NY for $300. Tiffany Deakin then sold her 2nd place ram lamb for $350 to ZNK Border Leicesters, OH to round out the better ram prices.

The National Grand Champion Ewe honors were won by Bear Hollow Farm, OH. Their winning yearling ewe sold to Emily Gibson, NH for $1,450. Bear Hollow swept the Championship Ewe honors as their Reserve Champion & 1st place ewe lamb sold to Ben Wamsley, IL for $1,100. The 2nd place yearling ewe was bred by Twin Hickory Farm and she sold to Tiffany Deakin for $500. Bear Hollow next sold a yearling ewe to Thomas C. Key for $450. A pair of ZNK ewe lambs placed 2nd and 3rd, and they sold to David J. Freds, IN for $650 each. Bear Hollow sold another ewe lamb for $750 to Thomas Key, MT and Cape House Farm received a bid of $525 from Shelly Nussbaum, NJ. Nussbaum also picked up a Tiffany Deakin ewe lamb for $450 and Thomas Key selected a Twin Hickory ewe lamb for $500.

The 15 Natural Colored Border Leicesters averaged $568.33. Winning the Townsend Best Consignment Award was Deakin Family Farms, IL.

### National Sale History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No. Head</th>
<th>Average</th>
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<tr>
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<td>31 White</td>
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<tr>
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<td>15 Natural Colored</td>
<td>$568.33</td>
</tr>
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</table>

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IN THE WINNER’S CIRCLE!

Thanks to all our private buyers off the farm, at the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival, the National Border Leicester Sale & Illini Spring Sale!

Grand Champion Ram, Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival, National Sale Grand Champion Ram, sold to Roger Green, MN.

Deakin 1662 RR

T. Deakin 1734 QR

Grand Champion Natural Colored Border Leicester, Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival (1st Junior Ram Lamb)

3rd Yearling Ewe, National Sale, sold to Paige Vincent, DE.

Deakin 1653 RR

T. Deakin 1615 RR

Grand Champion Natural Colored Ewe, Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival (1st Yearling Ewe)

Winners of the Townsend Best Consignment Award at the National Border Leicester Sale!

Looking for your next stud? Since 2008, 9 of the 10 National Sale Champion Rams & Ewes have been sired by 5 DIFFERENT Deakin studs by 3 different breeders!

Thanks to Kaitlyn Verhaeghe & John Passwaters for their help fitting & showing our sheep!

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Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival

1st Natural Colored Flock & Premier Breeder, Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival

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309/785-5115
Email: ads.banner@syberTech.net

Kevin Herwig, Shepherd

4th Yearling Ram, National Sale, sold to Iris LaRochelle, NH.

Tansy

Thanks to Ray & Mindy Holtry, PA, who bought our February ewe lamb at the Ohio Ram Showcase!
Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival Results
Held in West Friendship, Maryland • May 5-6, 2012 • White Border Leicesters

**BORDER LEICESTERS**

**YEARLING RAM** – 1) Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 2) & 3) Carroll Fogle, Raymond, OH; 4) & 5) Nancy Weik, Overlook Manor Farm, Warrenton, VA

**SENIOR RAM LAMB** – 1) Sophie LaRochelle, Sweet Meadow, Concord, NH

**JUNIOR RAM LAMB** – 1) & 3) Carroll Fogle, Raymond, OH; 2) & 4) Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 5) Polly & Kevin Hopkins, Maybe Tomorrow Farm, Chepachet, RI

**PAIR OF RAM LAMBS** – 1) Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 2) Carroll Fogle, Raymond, OH; 3) Polly & Kevin Hopkins, Maybe Tomorrow Farm, Chepachet, RI

**CHAMPION RAM** – Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL (Yearling)

**RESERVE CHAMPION RAM** – Carroll Fogle, Raymond, OH

**YEARLING EWE** – 1) & 2) Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 3) & 4) Carroll Fogle, Raymond, OH; 5) Callie Taylor, State College, PA

**PAIR OF YEARLING EWES** – 1) Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 2) Carroll Fogle, Raymond, OH; 3) Polly & Kevin Hopkins, Maybe Tomorrow Farm, Chepachet, RI; 4) Callie Taylor, State College, PA; 5) Sophie LaRochelle, Sweet Meadow, Concord, NH

**SENIOR EWE LAMB** – 1) & 2) Sophie LaRochelle, Sweet Meadow, Concord, NH

**JUNIOR EWE LAMB** – 1) & 3) Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 2) & 5) Carroll Fogle, Raymond, OH; 4) Nancy Weik, Warrenton, VA

**PAIR OF EWE LAMBS** – 1) Carroll Fogle, Raymond, OH; 2) Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 3) Sophie LaRochelle, Sweet Meadow, Concord, NH; 4) Nancy Weik, Overlook Manor Farm, Warrenton, VA; 5) Polly & Kevin Hopkins, Maybe Tomorrow Farm, Chepachet, RI

**CHAMPION EWE** – Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL (Yearling)

**RESERVE CHAMPION EWE** – Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL (Yearling)

**FLOCK** – 1) Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 2) Carroll Fogle, Raymond, OH; 3) Sophie LaRochelle, Concord, NH; 4) Polly & Kevin Hopkins, Maybe Tomorrow Farm, Chepachet, RI

**BEST FLEECE** – Linda & Bill Koeppel, Cape House Farm, Ann Arbor, MI

**PREMIER BREEDER** – Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL
BLACK BORDER LEICESTERS

YEARLING RAM – 1) Tiffany Deakin, Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 2) & 3) Nancy Weik, Overlook Manor Farm, Warrenton, VA; 4) Sarah Jakeman, Some Day Soon, Gloversville NY; 5) Lili Weik, Warrenton, VA

JUNIOR RAM LAMB – 1) & 3) Tiffany Deakin, Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 2) Linda & Bill Koeppel, Cape House Farm, Ann Arbor, MI; 4) Sarah Jakeman, Some Day Soon, Gloversville, NY; 5) Nancy Weik, Overlook Manor Farm, Warrenton, VA

PAIR OF RAM LAMBS – 1) Tiffany Deakin, Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 2) Sarah Jakeman, Some Day Soon, Gloversville, NY; 3) Nancy Weik, Overlook Manor Farm, Warrenton, VA

CHAMPION RAM – Tiffany Deakin, Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL (Junior Lamb)

RESERVE CHAMPION RAM – Tiffany Deakin, Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL (Yearling)

YEARLING EWE – 1) & 5) Tiffany Deakin, Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 2) & 4) Linda & Bill Koeppel, Cape House Farm, Ann Arbor, MI; 3) Nancy Weik, Overlook Manor Farm, Warrenton, VA

PAIR OF YEARLING EWES – 1) Linda & Bill Koeppel, Cape House Farm, Ann Arbor, MI; 2) Nancy Weik, Overlook Manor Farm, Ann Arbor, MI; 3) Tiffany Deakin, Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 4) Sarah Jakeman, Some Day Soon, Gloversville, NY; 5) Ben Wamsley, P-W Sheep Farm, Palmer, IL

JUNIOR EWE LAMB – 1) & 2) Tiffany Deakin, Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 3) & 5) Linda & Bill Koeppel, Cape House Farm, Ann Arbor, MI; 4) Shelley Nussbaum, Nussbaums River Bend Farm, Farmingdale, NJ

PAIR OF EWE LAMBS – 1) Tiffany Deakin, Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 2) Linda & Bill Koeppel, Cape House Farm, Ann Arbor, MI; 3) Nancy Weik, Overlook Manor Farm, Warrenton, VA; 4) Shelley Nussbaum, Nussbaums River Bend Farm, Farmingdale, NJ

CHAMPION EWE – Tiffany Deakin, Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL (Yearling)

RESERVE CHAMPION EWE – Tiffany Deakin, Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL (Junior Lamb)

FLOCK – 1) Tiffany Deakin, Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL; 2) Linda & Bill Koeppel, Cape House Farm, Ann Arbor, MI; 3) Nancy Weik, Overlook Manor Farm, Warrenton, VA

BEST FLEECE – Linda & Bill Koeppel, Cape House Farm, Ann Arbor, MI

PREMIER EXHIBITOR – Tiffany Deakin, Deakin Family Farms, Cuba, IL
Show Scenes at the Great Lakes National Sale!
maryland sheep and wool festival
PROMOTE BORDER LEICESTERS!

If you are planning on attending any shows or festivals and would like to use the ABLA Display Kit to promote Border Leicesters, contact the President. The cost is free, and all promotional information can be printed off the website.

NEW FOR 2012! Additional Junior Premiums being offered for all breed shows. The Big E will be offering Junior Exhibitors additional premiums for single classes in all breed shows as follows: 1st: $15, 2nd: $12, 3rd: $10, 4th & Lower: $8. Group classes are exempt. Separate Junior Show Grand & Reserve Champions will be selected and presented with rosettes. The Junior Show will be judged simultaneously with the Open Show, the junior premium winners will be awarded with additional ribbons and announced. It should be noted that Junior Exhibitors will still be eligible for open show premiums and awards, including premier exhibitor and breeder, as long as all animals are owned by that Junior Exhibitor identically. All other Open Sheep Show rules apply.

In order to receive the junior premiums the following stipulations must be met:
- The animal must be owned in the individual junior name or in a youth partnership. No family, farm names or partnerships with adults allowed. Sheep entered must be registered in the junior exhibitor’s name or be in the process of being registered to the junior exhibitor before August 15. No leased animals will be allowed.
- The junior exhibitor cannot be older than 21 years of age as of January 1, 2012. Please make sure to check the junior exhibitor box on the entry form.
- The junior exhibitor must be present show day and be actively participating in showing their animals in the show ring at all times.

The North East Border Leicester Breeders are working on special awards for the show, and don’t forget the many other events happening during The Big E:
- Spinning Bee
- Fleece Show
- Leadline & Make It With Wool Contest
- Awards for Best Pen Display (with cash prizes!)
- Shepherd’s Award
- Shopping in the Fiber Nook
- Working Sheep Dog Demos
...and so much more!

Check out The Big E website for all the details!
www.thebige.com

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Thanks to Callie Taylor, PA on her purchase of our 1st & 4th February Ewe Lambs at the National Show & Sale!
Registered stock, market lambs, and fleece sheep, sheepskins, raw fleeces, natural & dyed roving (processed locally).
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Our new purchase! Best Fleece Natural Colored Ewe at the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival.
COLORED BORDER LEICESTERS
Margaret Anne Moss Key, 61, died at her home in Great Falls, MT on April 7, 2012, after living with a leiomyosarcoma for 16 months.

Anne was born in Cameron, SC to Thomas Connor and Virginia Dukes Moss. Anne grew up in the rural South and graduated from the University of South Carolina with a BS in Nursing. It was there that she met Tom Key. They were married on March 25, 1972. While Tom pursued medical education at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) in Charleston, Anne worked as a nurse director for eight years in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at MUSC. Two children followed, and the family moved to San Diego in 1981 for Tom’s additional medical training. They made San Diego their home for 13 years. As a young mother, Anne was an avid runner, completing the San Diego Marathon and many other long-distance races. A “professional” volunteer, she kept busy with the children’s many activities. Anne was an active member of San Carlos United Methodist Church, where she served as the Sunday School Superintendent for many years. When Tom entered private practice in 1989, Anne returned to nursing and joined his staff as an office nurse.

The family had the opportunity to move to Montana in 1993, and they quickly became immersed in life under the Big Sky. While Tom established his medical practice in Great Falls, Anne once again became a community volunteer. She was involved with the Electric City Soccer Club, working with others to bring competitive soccer into the high schools. As a dedicated member of First United Methodist Church, Anne served on the Board of Trustees, was president of United Methodist Women, taught Sunday School, played in the Hand Bell Choir, led Sarah Circle, and completed training for and served as a Stephen Minister. She was an active member of P.E.O. (Chapter AH), serving for three years as its president.

Anne and Tom established the Montana Aerie Sheep Ranch in 1994. Anne was passionate about her work with sheep and the wool industry. She enjoyed sharing her many experiences with family and friends, as well as outreach into the schools. Under Anne’s guidance, Montana Aerie grew to national prominence, producing National Champion Rams and Ewes in three breeds, Columbia, American Border Leicester, and Natural Colored Border Leicester. She also produced many national and international champion fleeces. She and Tom have been Champion Consignors at 10 national shows, holding the distinction of receiving this prestigious award for 4 years running in the Columbia sheep breed. Anne and Tom were jointly named National Sheep Persons of the Year in 2009 by Columbia Sheep Breeders of America. At the time of her death, she was a national director of the American Border Leicester Association and has served many years as President of the Columbia Sheep Breeders of Montana.

Anne is survived by her soulmate of 40 years, Dr. Tom Key; her children and their spouses, Lauren Key Burns and Alex Burns of Pittsburgh, PA, and Clinton Key and Kelly Sheeran of Saxapahaw, NC; her grandchildren, Margaret and Charlie Burns; her father, T.C. Moss; her sister, Mrs. Gene (Clare) Allen; her brother, Tom (Lynette) Moss; and many special nieces and nephews. Anne was preceded in death by her mother, Virginia Moss.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to First United Methodist Church, 610 2nd Ave N, Great Falls, MT 59401 or to Peace Hospice, 1101 26th Ave S, Great Falls, MT 59405.

Condolences may be posted online at www.schniderfuneralhome.com and/or www.gftribune.com/obituaries.
New DNA Test for Susceptibility to the OPP Virus

By Judy Lewman, Spring Creek Farm

Some may recall an article nearly two years ago* in which I bemoaned the fact that OPPV genetic susceptibility information specific for Border Leicesters would probably never be available due to funding limitations for OPP research. Today, thanks to the persistence of two USDA researchers with a shared interest in sheep and OPP, I’m happy to report that I was wrong...and that a genetic test that may help reduce our breed’s known susceptibility to OPPV is now available.

Dr. Jim Keen, formerly with the USDA Meat Animal Research Center (USMARC) in Clay Center, Nebraska (and now at the Great Plains Veterinary Education Center, also in Clay Center) first documented the economic impact of OPP in the late ’90s. Dr. Mike Heaton joined USMARC at about the same time, and the two began working on OPP a few years later. Mike’s subsequent involvement with the International Sheep Genomics Consortium offered a breakthrough, the outcome being a USDA non-funded cooperative agreement with GeneSeek®, a Neogen Corporation Company based in Lincoln, Nebraska: http://www.neogen.com/GeneSeek

This collaboration between GeneSeek and the scientists at USMARC, along with their USDA colleagues at the Animal Disease Research Unit in Pullman, Washington, and the U.S. Sheep Experiment Station in Dubois, Idaho, resulted in the development and validation of a commercial test that determines risk status for OPPV infection. While animals at lowest risk can still become infected, removing the most susceptible animals should be beneficial in efforts to reduce the overall level of OPPV in a flock.

According to Dr. Heaton’s unpublished data, “About 14% of the Border Leicester rams in the U.S. currently have the desired 1,1 genotype for moving forward.” Dr. Kreg Leymaster, also of USMARC, adds this caveat: “Although 1,1 rams are the goal, they will not be common and therefore producers need to recognize that 1,2 and 1,3 rams are better than 2,2 - 2,3 and 3,3 rams. We simply want to increase the frequency of 1’s by avoiding 2’s and 3’s to the extent possible.”

Be forewarned that this work is far more complex than the RR, QR, QQ scrapie genetics that we’re familiar with. The enclosed info sheet, which was prepared for the OPP Society by Drs. Heaton and Leymaster, provides further detail. More information, including GeneSeek’s test submission form, can be found on the OPP Society’s ‘Library’ page: http://www.oppsociety.org/Library_.html (click on “Genetic Susceptibility”).

* “OPP—Hype or Hazard?” in ABLA’s Fall 2010 newsletter

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Our flock is test negative for OPP, SFCP enrolled, and scrapie genotyped.
Research on genetic susceptibility to ovine progressive pneumonia at the USDA Meat Animal Research Center (USMARC), Clay Center, Nebraska

By Mike Heaton, PhD and Kreg Leymaster, PhD
April 9, 2012

The Problem. Ovine progressive pneumonia virus (OPPV) and Visna/Maedi virus (VMV) cause an incurable, slow-acting, wasting disease that affects millions of sheep worldwide. These are ovine lentivirus strains that target the immune system causing persistent retroviral infections. The disease affects multiple tissues, including those of the respiratory and central nervous systems. In North America, OPP is one of the most costly diseases affecting sheep due to decreased productivity, “hard bag”, lameness, and early culling of ewes. Previous research at USMARC showed that infected ewes are 20% less productive than uninfected ewes. A study reported in 2003 by USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service showed that 36% of sheep operations and 24% of all animals tested in the U.S. were infected with the virus. Once infected with the virus, sheep are carriers throughout life as there is no effective treatment or vaccine. Our aim at USMARC was to identify sheep genes that influence OPPV infection.

A Genetic Approach. We designed a genome-wide association study to test whether or not sheep have genetic variation that protects against OPPV infection. Our study became possible with development of the OvineSNP50 BeadChip in 2009 by the International Sheep Genomics Consortium (ISGC). The OvineSNP50 BeadChip is a commercially available set of 50,000 genotyping tests. These tests were applied to matched pairs of ewes that had received a lifetime of natural OPPV exposure at USMARC. Each pair of sheep contained one infected ewe and an uninfected ewe of the same age, breed, and flock. In other words, they were matched “case-control” pairs.

The Findings. Using this approach we discovered a gene (TMEM154) that affects susceptibility to OPPV infection.1 There were three major variants (called haplotypes 1, 2 and 3) of the TMEM154 gene. In more than 6000 sheep tested, 97% had some combination of these three haplotypes. Haplotypes 2 and 3 were strongly associated with OPPV infection and considered to be “susceptibility alleles”. Only one copy of haplotype 2 or 3 was needed to increase susceptibility to OPPV infection. Studies are underway at USMARC to determine whether or not haplotypes 2 and 3 are expressed in an additive or dominant manner compared to haplotype 1. In contrast to ewes with one copy of haplotype 2 or 3, those with two copies of haplotype 1 were many times less likely to be infected. These findings were quickly confirmed with the help of other USDA scientists at the Animal Disease Research Unit in Pullman, WA, and those at the U.S. Sheep Experiment Station in Dubois, ID. We suggest that our genetic strategy to reduce OPPV is to reduce the overall frequency of TMEM154 haplotypes 2 and 3.

We also observed six additional TMEM154 haplotypes that occur at low frequencies, yet may also confer low susceptibility like haplotype 1. For example, it appears that haplotype 4 encodes a non-functional protein and may confer OPPV resistance. Although rare, sheep with two copies of haplotype 4 (referred to as “4,4 knockouts”) have remained uninfected despite a lifetime of significant OPPV exposure. Because the scientific and production information on 4,4 knockouts are very limited, additional research is needed to determine the effects of haplotype 4 before any recommendations can be made to use this haplotype to lower OPPV infection. Currently, the effects of TMEM154 variants on OPPV infection rates are being studied at USMARC under conditions of natural challenge to provide selection guidelines for industry use.

USMARC ewes and lambs with different TMEM154 genotypes under conditions of a natural OPPV challenge.

The Caveat. Although these findings are promising, OPPV is a highly adaptable virus and it is not known if selection for TMEM154 haplotype 1 will reduce the incidence of OPPV infection in all flocks. To that end, research is being conducted at USMARC to determine if some OPPV strains have adapted to infect sheep with TMEM154 haplotype 1. Other sheep genes are also being evaluated as possible gateways for OPPV infection in the presence of specific TMEM154 haplotypes. Additionally, adverse production conditions like high animal density, indoor housing with poor ventilation, and moist climates, may enhance virus transmission and overcome sheep genetic resistance.

Opportunity for Genetic Testing. In collaboration with animal genotypic provider GeneSeek®, a Neogen Corporation Company based in Lincoln, Nebraska, USMARC is developing a TMEM154 genotyping test for commercial use. Scientists at both institutions have validated the test performance in USMARC sheep and the results will be submitted to a scientific journal for publication. The aim of this test is to correctly determine the TMEM154 haplotypes for each animal tested. The genetic test is expected to be available to producers by May 2012. Additional information on sample submission and testing will be available at http://www.neogen.com/GeneSeek/.

As strategies for TMEM154 genetic testing are evaluated under field conditions, additional genetic guidelines for reducing the incidence of OPPV infection will emerge. Ultimately, information and products of this research will be used to select for animals less likely to be infected by OPPV.

Mike Heaton is a member of the ISGC and has conducted genomics research with sheep and cattle at USMARC for 16 years. His research is centered on the host-pathogen interface and includes DNA-based traceback of diseased animals.

Kreg Leymaster has conducted genetic research with sheep at the USMARC for 34 years. His major focus has been the evaluation of maternal and paternal breeds in terminal mating systems and helping producers to use experimental results.

1Heaton et al., 2012 PLoS Genetics http://www.plosgenetics.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%
Warm Woolens Cooperative

The Warm Woolens Cooperative is a group of dedicated farmers from all over the U.S. who raise sheep with high quality wool. The purpose of the Warm Woolens Co-op is to allow members to get quality blankets made from our own wool. This co-op is open to the following longwool breeds: Leicester, Romney, Perendale, and Coopworth sheep and their crosses. We will also include Blue Faced Leicester if the wool is long enough.

Members provide enough washed wool from their flocks to cover the pounds of wool needed for the blankets they want to order. Fleece must be well skirted, as we want only the best wool for our blankets. Please do not send belly wool, britching wool or kempy wool. Members can provide white and/or natural colored wool.

Approximate weights needed for blankets:
- Baby blanket: 45” x 45” = 2.5 lbs. washed wool (approx. $26)
- Throws (ordered in pairs): 45” x 60” = 5.5 lbs. washed wool (approx. $37.50)
- Twin: 72” x 90” = 5.5 lbs. washed wool (approximately $52)
- Double: 80” x 90” = 6 lbs. washed wool (approximately $55)
- Queen: 90” x 90” = 7 lbs. washed wool (approximately $61)
- King: 90” x 106” = 8 lbs. washed wool (approximately $71)

Exact prices are determined after I contact the mill for this year’s prices. Shipping is extra and will be calculated at time of shipping.

Pattern will change from year to year. Corners are rounded. Edging is done in a blanket stitch. Blankets are lightly napped (fuzzy). Our private Warm Woolens Co-op labels are sewn onto each blanket. Our blankets are made in America!

If you are interested, please let me know and I will send emails detailing what you will need to do. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

We will ship wool to the mill between July 15th and July 30th. It takes 5-6 months to get our blankets back. However, things come up like broken equipment and employee illness. Do not make any plans for your blankets to be back by a specific date.

My contact information is:
Kathryn Shirley
Humbug Farm
6512 Rex Rd
Holly Springs, NC 27540
Ph. 919-557-0471
Email: humbug7@att.net

Michigan Fiber Festival

August 18-19, 2012
Festival Workshops: August 15-19, 2012
Allegan, Michigan

Michigan Fiber Festival is now in its 15th year! Each festival brings new changes, event growth, attendance, and activities. Even with each addition and expansion, the festival is still a personal endeavour that provides each vendor, member, and attendee with a sense of that comfortable “down home get together” feeling. We are excited each year to see everyone enjoying the festival. 10,000 people attended the Michigan Fiber Festival in 2011!

The American Border Leicester Association has voted to support the Michigan Fiber Festival with a donation of $125 toward breed promotion. Please show your support and enjoy this year’s festival! For more information, visit www.michiganfiberfestival.info

JUNIORS!
Send us your news!
**Put Gene Check to Work on Your Farm**

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<td>Codon 171, 136 or 154</td>
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<td>Spider Gene*</td>
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*Subsequent tests on the same sample: Scrapie: $9/Spider $11

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George Muehlheim, OH  Callie Taylor, PA
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Ron Dreher, Flock Manager • Brian Hart, Shepherd
AMERICAN BORDER
LEICESTER ASSOCIATION

Membership Application

The American Border Leicester Association was founded in 1973 to promote and register Border Leicester sheep in the United States and Canada. Both white and natural colored Border Leicesters are eligible for registry with the ABLA. Our association is experiencing some exciting growth, both in membership and numbers of sheep registered. We invite you to join us!

We provide the opportunity for our members to promote themselves and their farm products through our Member Directory. Please provide the information that you’d like included with your listing. Our membership year runs from January 1st to December 31st.

For more information about Border Leicesters and the American Border Leicester Association, visit our website: www.ablasheep.org.

Name:___________________________________________ Farm/Ranch Name: __________________________________________

Mailing Address: _____________________________________________________________________________________________

City/State/Zip:______________________________________________ Phone: ___________________________________________

E-mail:______________________________________________ Web Address: ___________________________________________

What farm products would you like listed in the Directory? ___________________________________________________________

To better serve you, your board would like you to answer these five questions on your renewal form. Thank you!

1) What are your primary interests in raising Border Leicesters? ________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2) Would you consider yourself:   A) a business operation   B) a hobby farmer   C) Other (please specify) _______________________

3) Would you be interested in receiving your newsletter via the internet instead of in the mail?     Yes ______     No ______

4) Website or Newsletter suggestions:_____________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________

5) How would you like your membership fees spent? (1-most important, 5-least important)

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Other (please specify) __________________________________________________

Helpful information, but not included in the directory:

Total flock size: ________________

Number of white Border Leicesters ------- Ewes: ________ Rams: ________

Number of colored Border Leicesters ...... Ewes: ________ Rams: ________

Please send this form, along with your check made out to “ABLA” to:

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Chepachet, RI 02814

Questions?
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