Member Profile

Marilyn & Carroll Fogle

Forty years ago, Marilyn and Carroll Fogle started their career in the sheep industry on a winter day. At a farm auction with a neighbor, Carroll bought a lot of eleven ewes. Their daughter Whitney, then four, remembers looking out the window to see the truck backing up to the barn and hearing the sheep bawling in the back. “I remember going out to the barn to see them, being in the pen and getting knocked into the water trough. That’s how it all started.”

Carroll said he brought the sheep home on a Saturday, had them sheared on Sunday and on Monday the first lamb was born, “I thought, shoot, this is easy. It wasn’t until about a week later I figured out I got someone else’s culls. There weren’t two of the same breed in the bunch.”

The couple was much more familiar with horses, having both grown up with them. “We met showing horses. We had horses all those years and showed horses all over the country. He had Quarter Horses and appaloosas and I had a spotted horse,” said Marilyn, “We had kids and just quit showing, it was too much work. We wanted the kids to get into 4-H and start with something small.” For nearly twenty years, Marilyn and her white horse Tommy, sporting his silver parade saddle, were seen on the track at the prestigious Little Brown Jug (LBJ) in Delaware, Ohio, performing their duties as outrider. The LBJ is the premier pacing classic for 3-year-old horses and is one leg of harness racing’s triple crown. Marilyn’s duties included leading the horses onto the track for presentation prior to each race, presenting the flag for the national anthem and helping ensure the safety or horse and driver. One year, when Marilyn was expecting their first child, Carroll served as outrider.

When their children near 4-H age, the original ewes purchased at auction were sold and four registered Suffolks took their place at the Plain City, Ohio, farm. A family affair, the Fogles spent their time raising and showing their registered Suffolks and market lambs throughout their children’s 4-H careers. During that time the family traveled to county

Continued on page 7...
Presidents Message

Well, winter finally came to Michigan. Even though we broke several records (minus 21 and minus 30) that stood for 115 years, we came through okay. I know that for so many of you it was far worse. Hope you know that we were thinking of you.

We lambed through the cold and all lambs are thriving. We are there to help dry them off and see that they get their first drink. Newborn vitality of Border Leicester lambs is amazing. Sometimes I think the cold is harder on the shepherd than the sheep. Hope your lambs and ewes are all doing well. We’ve had a hint of Spring during the second week of March and it has been wonderful, but winter in Michigan will be back before its done.

Please note that as part of the annual budgeting process your board of Directors voted to raise registration and transfer fees from $5 to $7 for members and from $10 to $14 for non-members, effective July 1, 2015. An incentive to keep current in your membership status.

We are reprinting articles on the history of natural colored Border Leicesters and color genetics as part of our efforts to keep our members aware of the distinction among “white”, “colored” and “factored” genetic lines. Questions and comments are always welcome.

Peace
Linda
## 2014 ABLA Financial Report – Budget vs Actual

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(Wooster Fleece Show Premiums   $220
(Youth Buyer Credits at National Sale $250
(North East Youth Sheep Show $200
(Big E National Regional Show Premiums $225
(Big E Leadline Competition National Regional Show $ 25
(2013 NAILE National Regional Show Judge fee $150
(Other $ 25
(Northwest Regional show support $ 75
[2014 Keystone International Jr show-paid double in 2013]
[2014 NAILE National Open Show Premiums-$500 pending]
[2014 NAILE National Junior Show - $490 pending]
[2014 NAILE National Show Judge Fee- $150 paid in 2015]

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| **DEFICIT/SURPLUS** | **-$1,465** | **$1,059** |

### 2015 paid members

Look in the mail for the voting ballets for the Directors. Their bios can be found on page 12 of this newsletter!!

Also you will receive your Breeders Directory at the same time!!

### Haven’t paid your 2015 dues yet??

Pay now to be included in the directory and voting!!! Fill out the form at the end of this newsletter and mail in.
Neck of the Woods
What’s happening in YOUR neck of the woods?
Here’s an update from across the country...

It is finally starting to thaw-out here in Rhode Island. For those who were not following New England weather, it snowed here in Rhode Island every Sunday/Monday and Wednesday in February and first week of March. Some local kids had no school on Mondays for a month! I’ve never seen anything like it – Kevin had no place to put the snow! Our little town did a great job of plowing and on “good” days went around with a pay loader to push back snow on roads to them passable. Here at Maybe Tomorrow Farm, in the middle of all those storms we had 30 lambs born in 7 days (remember we all work full time) and that was really a trip! I did a barn check at one point and had three ewes lambing at the same time – and all the lambing jugs were full. We even had a ewe with twins in the grain room!! (If you are friends on Facebook you might have seen pictures.) As I write this, we are still waiting on the last Border Leicester to lamb. We started in early December with a set Natural Colored twins so it has been a longer lambing season than usual for us. I am so ready to be done! But the lambs are growing, despite all the dirty snow, ice and mud around the farm now, and we are looking forward to visiting our Border Leicester friends at the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival and the Great Lakes Sales in Ohio. Hopefully, the snow will be gone by then 😊.

A reminder to all those breeders who will be selling ewe lambs or yearling ewes to youths who will be showing them this summer and fall, please remember to nominate the ewe(s) in the Futurity Contest. Information and application forms are on our website and in this newsletter as well. Any questions you may contact a Board member or myself. Support our youth and keep the breed going!

Enjoy your spring, -Polly-

The Flint Hills have been cool and dry this past winter, excellent weather for sheep and shepherds working on the practicalities of winter grazing suggested by Jim Gerrish in Kick the Hay Habit. Other practicalities have arisen from Fred Provenza of Utah, through something called BEHAVE which is published online by Beth.burritt@usu.edu: who knew that the search for and consumption of tannin-containing plants could be taught? Or that it should be taught?

And finally, an unexpected bottle lamb, born February 4th, in the kitchen and on the porch since then. He chews the knobs on the cabinetry, the wooden barrel for kindling, the kindling itself. Why? It’s not the mothering and not some psychic distress: check out an article called Plant Triticale by Nathan Griffith and Helmut Lang in Sheep magazine, and scroll down to "Other important points": "They don’t need it (straw) the first day of grazing (Triticale) but with time they love rough feed . . . and they are nuts for trees - whatever kind of sheep breed. So I cut big cedars and firs and let them eat the bark and twigs. That way they are parasite free."

Pay attention, Wigglesworth. You need to think about this. Your pastures are breeding grounds for Eastern Red Cedar and you burn them every three or four years to get rid of them. We all know that there’s silliness involved in burning sheep pasture to get rid of weeds . . . But something in all this reminds me of standing in line at the farm store to pay for cat food and mouse traps . . .

Our grandsons, ten and eight, arrive with the new lambs just before Easter.

Jerry Wigglesworth, Morris County, Kansas

Today is March 20th. Spring is arriving at 6:45 this evening, and here in northern Vermont, and probably a good part of New England, we are (impatiently) waiting for warmer weather, less wind, and for the snow and ice to melt. The maple sugar makers are waiting for it to warm up in the days along with the cold nights so the sap will run so they can make their tasty syrup and maple cream… yum!

In my last entry, we were having snow and rain and ice and wet and I hoped we could have a good old-fashioned New England winter. Well, since mid December, we all in New England had more cold and snow and wind than has been in New England since records began. And with the Spring Equinox knocking on the door today and I look out the windows to see snow and trees blowing to and fro, we are waiting. The frost is over 6 feet in the ground, water mains all over the state are breaking and townspeople are being asked to keep their water running at a trickle until further notice. No red winged black birds are back showing their red or peepers in the frozen ponds and swamps.

Now it is March 26th and it actually is above freezing… Yay!! This past week I have spent lot of time in our drafty barn helping baby lambs stay warm in the COLD and WIND. Baby’s ears and tails were freezing before I could get them dried off enough. Thankful
for the great hardiness of the Border Leicesters, all babies quickly got a big suck of milk from their moms and with a full stomach and the help of a heat lamp, they all made it and hours later were hopping and springing in their pens.

I used a black ram this year, and realizing the (few) white lambs I have are black factored; and as mentioned in the last newsletter, we all need to be aware that the Border Leicester registry years ago only allowed white sheep and felt colored sheep were not purebred. That has all changed now; but hopefully those of us with both colors of sheep will be able to keep at least a few lines of “white” ewes and rams in our registered flocks for the future of the (white) breed.

The past two years, I used “older” rams, one being 8 and one possibly nine (he was rented and had great NZ genetics). I had some weird problems with a number of 2014 lambs and attributed it to feeding (mainly) fescue hay that had a little more moisture in it than it should and maybe there was some mold on it? This year, I am using a 2 year-old ram, same ewes, and the babies are eating (nibbling) hay with their moms when still in their pens at 2 days of age. Could age of ram and their sperm affect babies and how vigorous they are? Something I will research in the future.

Spring should have arrived in most parts of America when this is being read. I just heard the first red winged blackbird, a true herald of Spring here in northern Vermont. Soon lambs will be weaned, we will be choosing who we keep, who we sell, who we move on to other types of pastures. The show circuit will begin, the National Sale will be in Wooster, Ohio, and the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival will happen. Those of you involved with the show circuit, I encourage you to see that the judges have a copy of the ABLA Breed Standards from which to judge the sheep in the ring. The biggest sheep in the ring may not be the best example of Border Leicesters, and if the judges according to the standards, the breed as we know it with its special traits will not change as many other breeds have these past 20 years.

I hope you enjoy your time with whatever you do with your sheep. I love to watch them run and jump and spring straight up in the air and act like big shots. Have a great spring you all!

Sue Johnson
Have you paid your dues yet??

Fill out the form on the last page of this newsletter and send it to

Bill Koeppel, Treasurer
4808 Warren Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Don’t forget!!

Registrations and Transfer fees are going up as of July 1, 2015
For members the fees will be going from $5 to $7
For non-members the fees will be going from $10 to $14
Continued from front cover...

and state fairs, various market lamb shows and the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE). An accomplished seamstress, Marilyn made all of Whitney’s lead-in outfits as well. Their son Gregg increased his knowledge and participation of the sheep industry by learning to shear and selecting and showing “off-breed” market lambs – Brockle, Columbia, Cheviot, Southdown – many of which landed him in the final drive at the Ohio State Fair. Even though Gregg knew his breed wasn’t a competitor for the champion title, it was fun just to be part of it. Whitney served as the 1990 Ohio Suffolk Queen and the Ohio Lamb & Wool Queen. Both children were active in the Ohio Jr. Suffolk Sheep Association and are graduates of The Ohio State University College of Agriculture.

With the children grown and out of the home, Marilyn and Carroll decided in 2003 to sell all the Suffolks. While on a trip to NAILE, Marilyn first saw Border Leicesters. “I just looked at them and liked them. I liked the looks of them, the quiet personality, the fact they are easy keepers,” Marilyn recalls. The Fogles purchased two yearlings and four ewe lambs. In 2004, they bred the ewes via artificial insemination with straws from Australia and had the first crop in 2005.

That same year, Carroll and Marilyn sold their 20 acre farm and “downsized” to 17 acres about an hour north in Raymond, Ohio, where they now reside with the sheep, a few chickens, and border collies Tess and Nell.

In 2006, Marilyn and Carroll decided to see how their sheep would stack up, and took them to their first show, the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival. Marilyn recalls “after the show a lady that was there showing Borders came over to introduce herself, compliment us on our sheep and tell me my sheep were too clean. But I wasn’t going to change the way we present our sheep. I like clean, pretty sheep. I don’t have very many sheep, but I cull and keep what suits my taste.”

The Fogles spend considerable time trying to increase awareness of the breed, taking sheep for displays at the Ohio State Fair breed display and the Wool Gathering at Young’s Dairy every fall in Yellow Springs, Ohio. They also help young sheep enthusiasts when they can. Marilyn and Carroll often loan ewe lambs out to young exhibitors interested promoting sheep and wool. Some of the girls keep and care for the lambs at their homes and participate in lead-in competitions. Marilyn and Carroll enjoy going to the shows to watch the girls compete and learn. The Fogles were active in starting a wool show at the Great Lakes Show & Sale and regularly sell raw wool and roving.

In 2014 they sold off ten ewes as Marilyn faced shoulder replacement surgery. Having made a full recovery with her shoulder, Marilyn & Carroll lambed out their remaining ten ewes this winter and anticipate hitting the show circuit in the coming months. “For only having 15-20 ewes over the years I think we’ve done pretty well,” says Marilyn. Carroll grins and calls it “the 4H project that got out of hand.” And they wouldn’t have it any other way.
Marsh Creek Crossing
Border Leicesters

Canada + New Zealand Genetics = Hardy Stock, Fast Growing Lambs & Thicker Traditional Fleece

OPP Negative, Foot Rot and CL Free
Ray & Margo Hanson
Twin Valley, MN
218 261-3080
www.marshcreekcrossing.com

GRampa's HELPER - GRANDDAUGHTER ABBY
With Honey Bear, 2012 NAILE Junior Reserve Champion

P-W SHEEP FARM

JACK & VIDA PRICE
628N 1150 EAST RD.
PALMER, IL 62556
217/710-6888

DAVE, BRANDY, BEN & ABBY
WAMSLEY
2324 WHITE OAKS DRIVE
TAYLORVILLE, IL 62568
217/824-0419

Fleeces & lambs for sale, white and natural colored
Check PWSHEEP in early May for photos of our Wooster entries

Marilyn's Border Leicesters
Fogle 0984
National Reserve Champion Ram & Best Headed Ram at NAILE 2013

Marilyn & Carroll Fogle
22321 Raymond Road
Raymond, Ohio 45067
937-246-0285
Email: gfogle@emarqmail.com

Raw Fleeces, Spring Ram & Ewe Lambs Available
Fleece Show-
It’s that time of year again to start getting ready for our 7th Annual Border Leicester Fleece Show to be held in conjunction with the Great Lakes Show and Sale at Wooster, Ohio.

Friday Evening, May 22nd –
We hope everyone will join us for our casual gathering at the Best Western Motel Imperial Room on Friday evening. We share of time of swapping stories and lots of laughs. After this winter there should be lots of weather related things to pass along and as always it’s a time to share our ideas and thoughts about the sheep industry. We always have plenty of good food to share at this time too.

Saturday Evening, May 23rd –
Our annual ABLA meeting will be held on Saturday evening. We have made a change and will be meeting at Jakes Steakhouse, 6655 East Lincoln Way. Social hour will be at 6:00p (cash bar) and buffet dinner served at 7:00p. The cost of the dinner will be $23.69 per person. Keep this in mind and let me know how many plan to attend as soon as possible as I need to contact the restaurant with the number of people they can expect.

We will have a silent auction again so would appreciate any contributions.

Please join us. The evening is always a great time of fun and fellowship. The annual meeting is an important part of our association and we look forward to having a good turnout of Border Leicester enthusiasts.

If there are any questions, please contact me.

Marilyn Fogle
(937)246-0265
gfogle@embarqmail.com

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Start at the Top
with
Border Leicesters!
WOOL FLEECE SHOW & SALE

Great Lakes Show & Sale, Wooster, Ohio
Pre-Registration is due by May 10, 2015
New Location – Under the Grandstand
This show is dedicated to quality fleeces for hand spinning.

Judging time for the Open Show has been changed. The open show judging will be at 7pm on Friday. These fleeces must be checked in between 2 & 6p on Friday.

*Border Leicester classes have not changed. Border Leicester classes will be judged at 9:30am Saturday morning. They can be checked in on Friday or Saturday before 9:15am.

Sale only Fleeces can be checked in on Friday or before 9:15am on Saturday. Border Leicester fleece sale will begin ½ hour after judging.

Method of Handling fleeces available to producer:
1. Fleeces entered in competition only (Show only)
2. Fleeces entered in competition and consigned for sale (show & sale)
3. Fleeces consigned for sale only (sale only)

Please designate on entry form

All fleeces are to be brought to the Fleece Show area under the Grandstand. One entry form must be completed per exhibitor. Fleeces will not be weighed. A fleece that is NOT FOR SALE must be so marked. Checks from sales of fleeces and premium money will be mailed to exhibitors. All unsold and not-for-sale fleeces will be released at 2:00 on Sunday and must be removed by 4:00pm. Any unclaimed fleeces will be disposed of at the discretion of the committee.

Every effort will be made to display and care for entered fleeces, but we assume no responsible for damaged, lost, stolen or erroneously sold fleeces.

The entry fee is $2.00 per fleece. The pre-registration form must be received before May 10th. Late entry fee is $7.00 per fleece. There will be a 10% sale commission charged on sold fleeces.

All fleeces must be from the current wool crop. Each fleece must be clean and free of chaff, burrs, tags and second cuts. They must be skirted and in a clear plastic, untied bag. It is the responsibility of the exhibitor to enter fleeces in the proper classes.

Judging criteria will be based on suitability for spinning. The judge may choose not to award any premium based on the quality of the submission. The judge will not move fleeces to different classes.

FLEECE COMPETITION

DIVISION I White Fleeces
DIVISION 2 Natural Colored Fleeces

CLASSES: F-fine; M-medium; C-coarse; D-double coated

Premiums, each class: 1st - $6, 2nd - $4, 3rd - $2

Ribbons will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in each of the above categories. All first-place winners will be judged against each other for BEST OF SHOW.

**Special: DIVISION 3 White Border Leicester
DIVISION 4 Natural Colored Border Leicester

CLASSES: R-ram; E-ewe

This is an added show for Border Leicester fleeces only. Premiums paid by the association.

Make checks payable to: Great Lakes Fiber Show
Send completed form with check to:
Linda Reichert, 2474 N. Firestone Rd., Wooster, Ohio 44691

DIVISION I – White fleeces
DIVISION 2 – Natural Colored Fleeces

CLASSES: F-fine; M-medium; C-coarse; D-double coated

DIVISION 3 – White Border Leicester
DIVISION 4 – NC Border Leicester

CLASSES: R-ram; E-ewe

Status = SH – show only; SS – show & sale; S – sale

Price= Selling price for whole fleece

Entry Fee $2.00 by May 10th; After May 10th $7.00

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Fee Total: $______________________________

Name: _______________________________________________________
Address: ___________________________________________________________________
City: ___________________ State: __________ Zip: _____________________________
Phone: ___________________ Email: ________________________________
Hello fellow Border Leicester breeders my name is Colin Siegmund and I hail from the quiet northeast corner of Connecticut. I am an undergraduate student in animal science at the University of Connecticut where I am finishing my junior year. My flock had humble beginnings six years ago with a 4-H project ewe from Polly Hopkins. Since then my flock has grown by leaps and bounds and I currently run about a dozen Border Leicester ewes along with a handful of Oxfords. I am actively involved with my Border Leicesters in the show ring and believe this is a major way to promote our wonderful breed. I am involved heavily in production agriculture locally. I currently shear several hundred sheep every year across southern New England. I am also involved in dairy and maple syrup production in a farm in town. In addition to all this I serve in an advisory capacity of the Oxford association’s youth leadership team and as a director at large for the Connecticut sheep breeders association. I hope to promote progress in our breed to retain our functionality and relevance to a wide array of sheep producers. I would greatly appreciate your support to be elected a board member.

My name is Jack Price, and I live in south-central Illinois. Our family started in sheep over 30 years ago with Southdowns, then Hampshires, Oxfords, and, 5 years ago, Border Leicesters. I guess as you get older you get smarter? We really enjoy the Borders and it has been pointed out to me that if I want the breed to continue and grow, I need to be active with the folks who are raising Borders. I am 71 years old and semi-retired (plan to make that REALLY retired at the end of this year) and have both the time and interest to serve as a member of the Board of Directors. I am a veteran, a former police officer, an administrative law judge, and, mostly, an old country boy. Some of you have met our grandson Ben as he showed Borders at the NAILE, and our granddaughter Abby will probably be there this year. Look out, Louisville, Abby is as outgoing as Ben is quiet! I mention the grandkids because they are a large part of the reason we bought into Borders – they are great for kids, and I mention the grandkids because if we want the Borders to survive as a unique breed, we need to get the youth involved.

We like to show (though not as much as we did when we were younger), and are very interested in the wool activities. As a Director, I would support youth activities, more shows for Border Leicesters, activities that will help market the sheep and/or market the wool.

I ask for your consideration when Directors are selected.

My husband Bill and I have raised Border Leicesters at our farm near Ann Arbor, Michigan for 25 years. My interest in sheep began years earlier when I learned to spin wool. My entire outlook on sheep began with wool; here it is our primary focus and our most important product. I tried spinning wool from many breeds before settling on Border Leicesters. They were the first and only breed of sheep we have ever had. We started with colored Border Leicesters and eventually expanded to have a parallel flock with all white genetics. We are slowly reducing our numbers and have now returned to an exclusive focus on color. This evolution of our flock has given me first-hand experience with white wool sheep who have colored genetics in their pedigree (factored, or black-factored). While our flock focuses primarily on fleece, we believe that Border Leicester potential in commercial operations is underdeveloped.

I have been a member of the Board for three years, and President for the past year. I would like to continue on the Board and ask for your support. Three years ago I identified the need for members to understand the difference between an animal with white wool (and colored ancestors) and an animal with white wool and all-white ancestors. The Board is addressing this question in a number of ways and will continue to do so.

How our breed is presented in the show ring was another question I identified. Bill and I came to livestock when we were in our mid-forties and learned as we went along. We never had an opportunity to participate in 4-H and show livestock there as many of our adult and junior members have. Many of our members probably do not take their sheep into the show ring, but I am impressed by the number of families we know who have three generations showing sheep. Our youth are our future and I will continue to be supportive of all ABLA programs that encourage their participation.

The show ring is a two-edged sword – it gets our breed out of our barns and into the public’s eye. That is a good thing. It also puts our breed in a position where judges’ opinions can unduly influence our breeding decisions. We should not allow this to happen. I believe we have the responsibility to preserve our breed in its historically true form. We show a few times a year because it gives us a chance to evaluate our sheep against others and enjoy our friends in the show barn. We value fleece and believe that we should show Border Leicesters in full fleece. Some judges prefer to evaluate conformation with their eyes, not their hands; this puts those who present their sheep in full fleece at a disadvantage. So be it. I will continue to encourage all of our members to show with longer fleeces. There has been progress on this in the last few years but we have a way to go.

I thank you for your consideration. We greatly enjoy and value Border Leicesters and the people who raise them.

Sincerely

Linda Koeppep
Let Your Wool Be Used For The Wool Judging Contest

The National Western Stock Show's Collegiate Wool Judging Contest takes place each January and attracts collegiate students from across the nation. In 2015, nearly 75 students from eight universities competed. That's 75 young people every year from across the nation who become educated and engaged in the wool industry. However, to organize a quality contest, it takes approximately 200 different types of fleeces. Producers are being asked to support this endeavor by volunteering to have their fleeces used in the contest. After the event, fleeces will be returned or they can be sold and the proceeds sent to the producer or donated to the program. Producers interested in helping the Collegiate Wool Judging Contest acquire the fleeces needed to put on a worthy competition can contact Heather Pearce at 720/254-6289 for more information. Transportation and storage of the fleeces is available. Producers supporting the contest are eligible for the Supporting Producer of the Year Award, which was presented to Colorado producer Steve Raftopoulos in 2015.

Let Your Wool Be Used For The Wool Judging Contest

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American Border Leicester Association Newsletter
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Bischof Farms
BORDER LEICESTERS

The West’s Largest Flock!

Breeding Stock For Sale!

DON & DEBRA BISCHOF
503/806-7536
Jake Riester • Flock Consultant & Sales • 360/835-3676 or 360/601-3245
11495 SW Tooze Road • Wilsonville, OR 97070 • d.dbischof@gmail.com

Transport To The Midwest Is Available!
GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH SHOWMAN

TWO GREAT SHOWS = ONE GREAT LOCATION

Here a great opportunity for Border Leicester youth showman – two great shows at the same fairgrounds, one week apart in July – how can you go wrong?!?!!

This year the North East Youth Sheep Show will be held a week earlier than usual making it closer in time to the All American Junior Show. The North East Youth Show dates are July 10 thru 12, 2015. Both youth events will be held in the Mallary Livestock Complex at the Eastern States Exposition Fairgrounds in West Springfield, Massachusetts. Both shows are open to Border Leicester youths 21 years old and younger as of January 1st (please note some other breeds may have different age requirements, however, the North East Youth Show is open to all kids 21 years and under as of January 1st).

Thanks to the hard work of Emil Gibson of New Hampshire, over the past two years to raise matching funds with ABLA, the Border Leicester breed will also be included in the All American. See another article in this newsletter for information on the All American Jr. Show. For those who are not familiar with the North East Youth Show weekend events, the sheep and exhibitors must arrive by 11:00 p.m. Thursday, July 18th. The NEYSS activities begin on Thursday afternoon with a Quiz Bowl. Friday will be Exhibitor check-in in the morning, weighing of market lambs, Skillaton contest, and Market Lamb Show. The evening will hold the New England Sheep & Wool Growers sponsored ice cream social and scholarship raffle, as well as the awarding of the NES&WG youth grants and scholarships. Saturday hosts the New England Private Treaty Sheep Sale, the Used Equipment Auction and judging of the Youth Fleece Show. The afternoon will bring the Youth Show Fitting and Showmanship Classes and the choosing of a Supreme in each age group, along with some breeds to be shown Saturday night. Sunday’s activities include judging of the rest breed shows starting at 8:00 a.m. ending late afternoon with the finale of the Supreme Champions in the afternoon. The Border Leicester breed will be shown on Sunday. The judges for the weekend will be Ed Keeney, Maryann Johnson and Mark Johnson. The Committee raises funds all year long for this event, collecting $25 T-shirt sponsors from January to May, selling promotional items (clothing) at the show, sell recycle shopping bags at the New England Fall Fiber Festival in November, just to name a few fundraisers. All funds raised go back into the show expenses, such as ribbons, premiums, judges and facility clean-up, etc. Supreme Banners and Champion awards are donated by Claudette Choma of Connecticut, who makes them all herself! Reserve Champion Sashes are paid for by Hopkins Southdowns, Lightning Ridge Farm and the Goblet Family.

One of the Co-chairmen of this yearly event is “one of our own”, ABLA’s Newsletter Editor Sarah Jakeman, of New York, who starting showing at this event when she was three years old! She still is very active and a familiar face to the kids at the show, and her husband has joined in as a member of the Rule Enforcing Committee and an official photographer joining with her brother, Christopher, at the photo booth. If you have questions feel free to contact Sarah and she will be happy to encourage support and youth to join the weekend – it is a great family event.

I run the Border Leicester breed show at NEYSS. If anyone would like to make a donation to our breed show, please send your check made payable to “NES&WG” with notation of NEYSS-Border Leicester on the subject line and mail it to me (494 Evans Road, Chepachet, RI 02814). Each Border Leicester exhibitor receives something special from all moneys collected, in the past it has been a ‘bucket of useful goodies’ or educational sheep related books. I would like to thank all those who have supported this show in the past, and look forward to continued support this year and in the future. It is greatly appreciated. For more information on this show visit the website: www.nesheep.org, the entry information will be posted in May with entries closing June 15th.

- Polly Hopkins -

The 2015 All-American Junior Sheep Show is going to be held at the Eastern States Fairgrounds, West Springfield, MA from July 3-5, 2015. The All-American is the premier junior breeding sheep show in the country. The breeds participating this year are: Polled Dorsets, Horned Dorsets, Dorset Advantage, Hampshires, Southdowns, Border Leicesters, Cheviots, Cotswolds, Shropshires, Oxfords, Montadales, Romneys, Shetlands, Lincoln, Natural Coloreds, Tunis, Dorpers, and Corriedales. Several meat breeds will feature slick shorn classes once again this year at the All-American and new to the line-up is a show division several wool breeds as they expect strong participation in the Northeast. Judges for this year’s event will be Kyle Thayer, Cummington, MA and Nick Miniter, North Scituate, RI. The National Junior Southdown Show and National Junior Tunis Show will be held in conjunction with the All American Junior show this year.

If you have never attended an All-American Junior Show please make plans to attend this very special event! It is much more than just a sheep show, as there are several activities for the whole family. The show features a lamb camp for the young sheep owners, a 3-on-3 basketball tourney for the exhibitors, a sheep skil-a-thon competition, a sheep judging contest, free pizza and BBQ dinners for exhibitors and their families, free show morning breakfasts and an ice cream social, a team showmanship competition, wool show for breeds, promotional contests for exhibitors once again featuring a power point presentation category and an adult photography category, a college scholarship program for older exhibitors, and much more! Special to this show will be the fact that the 3-on-3 Basketball Tourney will be held in the National Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame. The kids will play on their court while the actual Hall of Fame will be open free of charge to our show attendees for viewing free of charge.

There will also be discounted tickets available to exhibitors and their families for Six Flags New England, Agawam, MA. Show attendees just need to go to: www.sixflags.com/newengland and in the upper right hand corner enter our show code: Sheep15 to bring up the option to purchase tickets. Show attendees may purchase tickets for any day of their stay during the show (Thursday July 2 - July 5) weekend. The discounted price is $32.00/person (regular price $61.99). The actual amusement park is just 10 minutes away from the fairgrounds and is opening up a newly designed roller coaster this summer.

On Saturday night there will be a free Chicken BBQ for all of our show’s attendees along with some fun activities with an onsite water slide and obstacle course. Also, later on Saturday evening an Adult Showmanship Challenge is going to be conducted for the purpose of raising funds for the participating breeds’ Junior Associations. This will include individual and team showmanship divisions for adults. Nominations and buyouts will take place all day Saturday with the actual classes taking place that night. Come join in on the fun and raise money for your breed’s junior association! If your breed does not have a separate junior association then the money will go towards the AAJS Scholarship program. Last was the first time for this special fundraising activity and they raised over $500 for breed’s junior associations!

Honor Show Chows has become a major show sponsor and will be back with us in Massachusetts. Sydell has generously donated the trimming stand for the All American Raffle fundraiser. Weaver Leather is also a major show sponsor including providing embroidered wether blankets for the champion and reserve champions market lambs. Eastern States Exposition is generously donating a large cost on the rental of the facility to make it affordable of us to have the All American at this great venue. Banner Publications, Novel Designs, Kalmbach Feeds and other companies are donating high ticket items to be sold at the Big Ohio May Sales and Midwest Stud Ram Sale for the special All American Benefit auctions.

Featured this year at the Massachusetts All American will be the Friday Ice Cream Social sponsored by the Strawberry Fields Farm, the Morning Exhibitor Breakfast Vouchers sponsored by the Connecticut Sheep Breeders Association, Central Connecticut Co-Op Farmers Association, Claudette Choma, the National Junior Suffolk Sheep Association and Pioneer Valley 4-H Shepherds; a Saturday night Chicken BBQ sponsored by the New England Sheep & Wool Growers, Woolmark Farm, Fairy Dust Farm, Birch Hill Hampshires, Birch Branch Romneys, Massachusetts Farm Bureau, Sullivan Paving Co., Hope Hollow Farm, Worcester County Sheep Breeders and Baaay State Blankets. The Friday night pizza party will be sponsored by the Northeast Southdown Breeders Association. The Rhode Island Sheep Co-Op and Rhody Warm Blanket Project will be sponsoring the basketball tourney at the Naismith
Basketball Hall of Fame. Tractor Supply will be providing prizes for the ever popular exhibitor thank-you booth. Dutchess County Sheep Breeders will be sponsoring the awards for the skil-a-thon and judging contests. A BIG THANK-YOU to all of these sponsors as without their assistance this show would not be possible!

A schedule change has been made for this year, as the large Northeast Youth Sheep Show, has been moved to be held the following weekend. This show is in the same facilities and arrangements have been made so you may extend your stay to be able to show in both events!! If you want to participate in both shows and would like more detailed information please contact: Deb Hopkins, (401)647-4676, cdcdorset@cox.net or visit the NEYSS show website at: www.neswga.org. Featured at this show is the New England Junior Regional Dorset Show.

Our New England host committee is being organized by Nancy Miniter and big thank-you also goes to all of the Northeast sheep families involved in the local planning committee. Several local sheep breeders and youth supporters have stepped up to the plate to organize events and volunteer to help out. It is thanks to all of you that this show will be a special All American for our junior sheep exhibitors and their families.

Camping is available at the Eastern States Fairgrounds right outside the sheep barn, $15.00 per night for electric (20 & 30 amp service), sewer and water. 50 Amp service is also available to special request and price. No pre-reservations are needed as you will pay for the All American show nights stay when entering the fairgrounds. Room blocks have been reserved at the following area hotels: Sheraton Springfield, One Monarch Place, Springfield, MA 01144-1099 (413) 781-1010, $99.00/night non-smoking, double queens; Hilton Garden Inn Springfield, 800 Hall of Fame Ave., Springfield, MA 01005, (413) 886-8000, $119.00/night, non-smoking, double queens; and Comfort Inn & Suites, 106 Capitol Drive, West Springfield, MA 01089, (413) 736-5000, $99.00/night, non-smoking, double queens.

Entries close: MAY 25th, 2015. There will be a higher entry fee for any late entries submitted after the deadline date and post entries at the show. Check out the All-American Website: www.allamericanjuniorshow.com for entry and further information.

The All-American Junior Show Committee has three major fundraising activities that are held to help raise funding for this special junior show. Following is information on these activities and the show would certainly appreciate your support in these fundraising efforts:

ALL-AMERICAN GIFT BASKET SILENT AUCTION
Gift Baskets will be on display during the duration of the All-American Show for bidding. Bidding will close on Sunday, July 5th at noon. Basket donations would be greatly appreciated. Just bring them to the show in West Springfield or contact Gretchen Burnett at burnettbg@aol.com.

ALL-AMERICAN JUNIOR SHOW RAFFLE TICKETS
Cost $5.00 each or 5 for $20.00
1st Prize: $1000 Cash Prize
2nd Prize Sydell Hydraulic Trimming Stand ($530 value)
3rd Prize: Kindle HD Fire 7 ($130 value)

Tickets are available at the Continental Dorset Club Office, P.O. Box 506, North Scituate, RI 02857. Many sponsoring breeds mail out raffle tickets with their office work and annual dues notices so when you see them PLEASE lend your support! Final drawing will take place on Sunday, July 5th. Need not to be present to win.

ALL-AMERICAN JUNIOR SHOW FUNDRAISER AUCTIONS

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2015
(During the Midwest Stud Ram Sale Supreme Champion Show)
EVENING, SWINE BARN
MISSOURI STATE FAIRGROUNDS, SEDALIA, MO

BIG OHIO MAY SALES, MAY 9, 2015
PREBLE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS, EATON, OH

More information to come!
2015 American Border Leicester Association Newsletter

Nomination Form

Fill out the following to nominate a Border Leicester ewe lamb or yearling ewe in the Futurity Contest.

Check appropriate line:
___ White owned yearling ewe
___ Natural Colored owned yearling ewe
___ White home-raised* yearling ewe
___ Natural Colored home-raised* yearling ewe
___ White owned ewe lamb
___ Natural Colored owned ewe lamb
___ White home-raised* ewe lamb
___ Natural Colored home-raised* ewe lamb

* “Home-raised” shall be defined as dam owned by youth member when futurity nominated ewe was born.

Breeder Name: ____________________________
Phone: ____________________________
Farm Tag #: ____________________________
Registration #: ____________________________
Animals’ birth date of animal: ____________________________
Youth Name: ____________________________
Youth Address: ____________________________
Youth Phone No.: ____________________________
Nominating person’s signature: ____________________________

Please make sure all above information is complete and correct, and form is signed.

Mail form with $25.00 nomination fee (make check payable to “ABLA”) to:
Polly Hopkins,
494 Evans Road, Chepachet, RI 02814

If you have questions contact Polly at:
401-949-4619 or khop4811@aol.com.

Futurity Point Record Form

__________________________, as ____________________________,
(Youth’s Name) owner, exhibited the Border Leicester Ewe:
Farm Tag No.__________________________and
Registration No.__________________________at the
__________________________, (Name of Fair or Event)
This ewe was shown in the
__________________________ (Name of class)
and placed ___________________ in a class of
(Placing in class) ___________________ sheep on ___________________.
(Number in class) (Date of show)
The official judge was: ___________________.
(Name)
I verify the above to be true and correct:
________________________________________
(Signature of Show Secretary or Superintendent)
Title: ____________________________
Telephone No: ____________________________
Date signed: ____________________________

This completed form should be mailed by youth exhibitor within 10 days of the show, to:
Polly A. Hopkins
494 Evans Road
Chepachet, RI 02814
CONTEST RULES

1. All Jr. members, 21 years as of December 31st of current year and younger, with paid membership are eligible.
2. All ewes must be registered and nominated by breeder and fee of $25 per ewe paid by same; unless re-entering as a yearling ewe, then the current youth-owner will pay the fee.
3. Divisions:
   A. White owned yearling ewes
   B. Natural Colored owned yearling ewes
   C. White home-raised* yearling ewes
   D. Natural Colored home-raised* yearling ewes
   E. White owned ewe lambs
   F. Natural Colored owned ewe lambs
   G. White home-raised* ewe lambs
   H. Natural Colored home-raised* ewe lambs
   * “home-raised” shall be defined as dam owned by futurity nominating youth member when futurity ewe lamb was born.
4. “Owned” futurity ewe lambs or yearlings may be purchased through sales or privately.
5. Ewes must be solely and individually owned by the youth member.
6. Points are not transferable to any other ewe or person.
7. Futurity nominated ewes must be exhibited by the youth owner to receive futurity points. If a youth has two futurity ewes entered in the same class, the second ewe must be exhibited by another youth.
8. Futurity point scale:

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9. Point Record Form must be completed and signed by the Superintendent of the show and forwarded within 10 days of the show to Polly A. Hopkins, 494 Evans Road, Chepachet, Rhode Island 02814. This is youth exhibitor’s responsibility.
10. A futurity ewe may earn points from both open and junior shows at the same fair when a different judge is involved or the shows are held on a different day.
11. The futurity ewe may compete in an unlimited number of shows and youth should send in all Point Record Forms from all shows; however only the top 5 point cards will be used for each futurity ewe to determine the final score and placing in the futurity contest. It is encouraged that youth send in all Point Record Forms from all shows attended. In case of a tie, the sixth highest scoring Point Record Form may be counted.
12. Futurity entry fees and prize money donations will be prorated between all divisions based on total number of entries.
13. When a futurity ewe lamb becomes a yearling, she may be re-nominated by the junior member-owner as a futurity nominated yearling ewe. The fee is $25 per head with the same divisions as the ewe lambs. (See #3)

Questions? Contact Polly Hopkins, 494 Evans Road, Chepachet, Rhode Island 02814, Tel: 401-949-4619 or email: khop4811@aol.com

Start at the top with Border Leicesters

(Pictures are 2014 winners)
Raising & Selling Great Sheep!

Check the website in May for pictures of our entries in the National Sale in Wooster, OH!!

**Maybe Tomorrow Farm**
Polly, Kevin & Chris Hopkins
494 Evans Road
Chepachet, RI 02814
401-949-4619
Khop4811@aol.com

**Someday Soon Farm**
Sarah & Jack Jakeman
137 Kingsboro Ave
Gloversville, NY 12078
401-787-8316
Cheviot99@gmail.com

The ABLA Newsletter is published quarterly. It is a compilation of submissions from members. We value your contributions.

The submission deadline for the next issue is June 15th.

Please send you news to Sarah Jakeman at newsletter@ablasheep.org

Have a recipe you want to share??
We are looking for more recipes for the upcoming newsletters!!
Send them to newsletter@ablasheep.org

Border Leicesters Pass The Test & Stand With The Best!
Border Leicesters are unmatched for • Ease of lambing • Care of the lambs in the lambing barn • Converting forage and grain into fast gaining lambs • Wool quality • Hand spinner’s top choice for wool quality, feel & spinning performance • Easily maintained throughout the year

RESERVE SUPREME CHAMPION EWE, WI State Fair • SUPREME EWE, WI Sheep & Wool

SUPREME CHAMPION RAM
Michigan State Fair

SUPREME CHAMPION EWE
KILE Junior Show

SUPREME CHAMPION EWE
Champlain Valley, Vermont

CHAMPION OVERALL FLEECE
Wisconsin Sheep & Wool Festival

Don’t Forget Associated Registries Moved!!
PO Box 231 • 305 Lincoln
Wamego, KS 66547
Phone: 785/456-8500
Fax: 785/456-8599
Fill out any ABLA application for registration you may already have or if you do not have the 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 231, 305 Lincoln
Wamego, KS 66547
Phone: 785/456-8500
Fax: 785/456-8599

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.

STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE
Applies to both white and natural colored Border Leicesters

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, 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):
- Locks with purled tips ending in a curl, High luster, Minimum of kemp hair, Uniform fleece and belly wool; no black spots in white wool, 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%. The stable length of the fleece ranges from 5-10 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.
WHITE OR BLACK?

The Importance of Understanding the Genetics of our Sheep

Our Border Leicester breed is basically a white breed, however we assume that there are black genes in white breeds of sheep. That according to a special man and great teacher, Glen Eidman. The beautiful and perfect ewe just purchased could have a black grandparent.

We need to ask when we buy, but as important, we need to know that an F (Factored) or B (Black) on our registration papers mean that there is a natural colored sheep somewhere in their background. This is important for the future of our breed. Whether you raise your shee for fleece or as terminal sires for commercial production, knowledge of this could affect the purity of our Border Leicesters in the future.

We knew from the beginning of our sheep adventure many years ago that our focus would be on the natural colored side of our breed. We used the best pure, genetically white rams we could find on our black ewes, and have continued to do so.

Enjoy your sheep!!! However, know what you have, set your goals and move forward. I wish you and your flock all the best. -LK

*******************************

Color Genetics in Border Leicester Sheep
By D.P. Sponenberg

Border Leicester sheep are an interesting breed resource that is widely used throughout the world in both purebreeding and crossbreeding systems. Most of this activity is geared towards the production of lamb and mutton, but the wool of Border Leicesters has become an important component of the international specialty wools market. The wool is especially highly regarded by handspinners, who appreciate colors as much as they do white wool.

Border Leicester color is determined mainly by two separate genetic mechanisms, with another two that are common enough to warrant some attention. Color genetics of the Border Leicester is consistent with the genetics of most other Longwool breeds. The genetic mechanisms interact to give a fairly wide range of colors.

The main color control in the breed is the result of the instructions at two genetic sites: Agouti and Brown.

One mechanism for color is the Agouti locus (locus is Greek for address, and just means a specific site), which controls the distribution of white and dark fibers over the body of the animal. What this means, in practice, is that the darker patterns can pop up as surprises following mating of the paler patterns, but the paler patterns do not pop up out of the darker ones.

The Agouti patterns in the Border Leicester are most likely limited to about three choices. The first of these is the familiar white, which is white all over and has pigmented skin. White sheep, obviously are the palest of the Agouti patterns, and so can mask the other choices. This masking phenomenon is the reason that the darker patterns can occur as surprises.

A second reasonably common Agouti pattern in the Border Leicester, is the blue pattern, sometimes called English blue. This pattern is very common in all longwool breeds. The blue pattern consists of subtle gradations of pale and dark areas, so that the fleece has a variety of shades of grey in it. Most blue sheep have distinctive pale areas under the eyes (tear drops) and pale areas on the muzzle. Blues vary from light and nearly white, to very dark and nearly black.

A third option at Agouti is the “no pattern” or black choice. This is reasonably rare in most Longwools, and results in black lambs without the distinctive pale areas of the blue pattern. In most situations the black sheep are born black, but then fade to some shade of grey with age. This fading is controlled by other, poorly characterized, genetic factors.

A second locus, Brown, interacts with the Agouti locus to give the final color of the sheep. Options at Brown include black, which is dominant, and brown, which is recessive and can therefore occur as a surprise among black-based matings. The combination of the black choice here with the various Agouti patterns includes white, blue, and black. With the brown choice at this locus, the Agouti patterns become white, pale beige, and darker brown. The browns are usually called moorit in wool parlance. Moorits vary from a dark chocolate brown through fairly warm honey colors, to beige.

It is important to note that with white sheep it is difficult to tell if they are black-based or brown-based. A few hints can help, though. One is that the skin of black-based sheep is usually dark, while the sheep of brown-based sheep is usually much lighter. This detail can be important to breeders specifically aiming for certain colors of lambs.

A third mechanism for color variation is more rare, and this is called “dark brown.” It is a dominant modification of black. The lambs with one copy of this gene are born nearly black, and then lighten a little to a distinctive dark brown. The brown carries all the way to the skin, and the hair on the face and ears is also brown rather than black. When dark brown sheep are mated together a few of the lambs can come out black, some dark brown, and some are a pale silvery brown. These pale lambs are the result of two doses of the gene – and are pale rather than dark brown.

To slightly confuse the issue even further, on some occasions colored x colored matings give white lambs. This happens in Romney and Coopworth flocks more commonly than in Border Leicesters, and the most likely culprit is the Extension locus with two choices: dominant black, and “normal” or “wild” type. This genetic variant is not usually associated with Longwools, and it could have arrived in them either by mutation or by some crossing in the past. Regardless of how it came into the breeds, it is in them, and the animals with the variant appear to be typical purebreds with no obvious outside breeding.
The dominant black is just that – completely black unless modified to be brown by the genetic mechanisms for moorit or dark brown. The “wild type” alternative allows the Agouti instructions to come through, leading to the familiar white, English blue, or black at that locus. The trick here is that it is impossible to distinguish the blacks that have dominant black from the blacks that have recessive Agouti black, and this can create unusual lambs popping out in some breeding programs. A dominant black sheep can carry white, so that when mated to a blue or recessive black mate it is possible to get white lambs back again. On the other hand, colored sheep from white parents are certain to have missed the dominant black gene, as white cannot cover it up.

Breeders interested in colored wool production can use genetics to their advantage, and can make previously rare colors relatively common in their own flocks. Throughout the entire world, colored lambs are relatively common in Border Leicester and other longwool flocks. The fate of these depends on the breeder’s goals. In commercial sheep production, especially in Australia and New Zealand, it is critically important to keep colored sheep out of white flocks. Even a few colored sheep can contaminate the whiteness of the clip of an entire flock. In those countries, colored lambs are culled early.

Breeders interested in the colored wool market can use these colored lambs to good advantage. When mated to one another, color is going to always produce color in most Longwool breeds. The only exception is those flocks which have the dominant black. While colored to colored matings generally assure the production of colored lambs, it can be important to introduce fresh genetics into a colored flock. One way to do this is to introduce a white sheep that has been highly selected for traits that need to be strengthened in the colored flock. This white sheep will likely produce only white lambs, but each of them is assured of carrying color from the colored parent. These lambs can then be used with colored mates to produce white lambs about half of the time, and colored lambs half of the time. An alternative is to mate these “color carriers” to one another, and produce colored lambs in about one fourth of the lamb crop.

Another strategy is to try to locate sheep in white flocks that have previously produced colored lambs. These are assured of carrying color, and can be used to more rapidly introduce desired traits into a colored flock.

The range and depth of color in the wool is subject to age-related changes as well as to genetic factors. In most flocks producing colored wool it is an advantage to have a variety of colors available. It appears that the darker shades are generally recessive, and so some selection for the darker end of the spectrum is going to be necessary if good, dark blacks are going to be produced.

The moorit colors are also interesting, and generally more rare than the black based colors. These moorits can be used with one another to produce only moorits, but their rarity usually assures that they will also be mated to other color types. If moorits are mated to white sheep, white lambs are the usual result. If these white lambs are mated back to a moorit, the usual ratio is going to be 50% white lambs, 25% black based lambs, and 25% moorits. When moorits are mated to black-based colors the usual result is black based lambs. When these lambs are mated back to moorits, they produce 50% black based and 50% moorit lambs. Moorit colors are therefore more difficult to produce from most other colors, but will consistently produce moorit when mated to one another.

Moorit colors present another challenge to the breeder, which is that the moorit color is generally somewhat “weaker” than the corresponding black-based color. So, a “moorit-blue” combination is likely to be very pale. A “moorit-no pattern” combination is going to be darker, but still might fade considerably from a rich chocolate brown birth coat.

One strategy to darken the moorits is to use very, very black sheep as the outcross to these. In most flocks the darker end of the spectrum is more difficult to secure, so put pressure on this end rather than the lighter end which usually takes care of itself. If pale moorits are mated to dark blacks, the result should be blues and blacks that tend to grey with age. If these are mated to one another, or to dark moorits, the result is going to be a low percentage of moorits that are dark and remain that way. Once these are produced, they can be mated again to dark blacks, and using the resulting lambs in a breeding program will increase the percentage of darker moorits.

Color genetics is intricate and complicated. Considering the different components of the final color makes it possible to understand how the color arises. The basic components are pattern (Agouti locus), black-based or brown-based (Brown locus), or rarely dark brown and Extension, and then the relative depth of the color (control of this is unknown). It is fascinating that a few controls can result in the incredible wealth of colors and shades available in Border Leicester wool.

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Our thanks to Dr. Sponenberg for reworking this article just for us!

Reprinted from the Fall 2004 ABLA Newsletter.

Due to printing space in this newsletter reference another article on the History of Natural Colored Border Leicesters, printed in the Fall of 2004. This can be found on the website www.ablasheep.org under the Newsletter tab.
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.

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In addition to Border Leicesters, what other breed of sheep or animals do you raise? ____________________________  

Helpful information for the Board and Editor (will not be included in the directory):
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Number of white Border Leicesters………Rams _____ Ewes _____  
Number of colored Border Leicesters………Rams _____ Ewes _____  
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