



June 2013

President's Message

Presented by
Andrew Hebda, President PSBANS

Spring (somewhat) at last. I hope that all have had a successful lambing season, and look forward to see some of those results appearing in the Labour-Day sale. As you could see from the data provided by Rosemary Wort in an earlier newsletter the numbers of animals in our last sale were down, in all likelihood due to our hosting of the Classic in June of 2012. That, notwithstanding, it resulted in very strong prices. As purebred sheep breeders, we should get the numbers up for this year's sale. As for the last couple of years, we will be taking advantage of "social media" to try to reach a wider audience of potential buyers.

As you will see, later in the newsletter, there is a research initiative underway to monitor the occurrence and extent of a new management challenge to those of us using an extensive (pasture-based) production system. The impact of the parasite the Barber-pole Worm (*Haemonchus contortus*) appears to have been felt throughout both Nova Scotia and PEI in the last two years. I urge any producers who think they may have been affected by it to read through the note by Gwyneth and let her know if you are interested in participating in the study currently underway (a collaboration of PSBANS, SPANS, Agrifutures Nova Scotia, with support from the DalAC (NSAC) and Saint Mary's University Biology). As this is a parasite that overwinters in the sheep (and not the pastures) and appears to be developing resistance to available wormers, this has the potential to be a significant problem in our breeding and production programs.

Another initiative that is reaching its completion is the revision of the Code of Practice for the Care & Handling of Sheep. The last version was released in 1995, and there have been some substantial advances in many of the areas covered and changes in the approach to animal welfare on the farm. I note that the codes are not production manuals, but a clear definition of both requirements and recommended practices for the raising of sheep in Canada, regardless of the production system used. There are several changes from the previous code that may impact our production practices in Nova Scotia. The Draft is going to be ready for distribution by mid-July (English and French), and will be out for public/producer comment for 60 days before finalization. I strongly urge all of our members to review and comment on this document when it comes out, as it will, ultimately have an impact both on aspects of how we raise and manage sheep as well as clearly defining standards for their welfare.

Keep an eye on our web-site for additional notices regarding Association activities and be sure to send you entry forms for the Atlantic Fall Sale to Rosemary as early as possible to ensure a successful fall event.

Atlantic Fall Sheep Sale August 31, 2013

Hopefully everyone is thinking of the upcoming Atlantic Fall Sheep Sale 2013. You should receive your entry forms by June 14th either by mail or email. If you know of someone who isn't on the mailing list and they want an entry form contact Rosemary or go to the web-site. The deadline for entries is July 13th.

Remember, if you want your entry fee refunded (conditional on the sale of

your animal) your membership must be paid by July 13. You may, however, include it with your entry forms and fees.

In the past I have been forgiving and allowed late entries, however, because of how the calendar year falls this year the sale is early and if I am to have the catalogue out in early August you need to meet the deadline for entries.

If you wish to advertise in the Catalogue there is an information sheet in the entry form package outlining the details or on the website. If needed I can create your ad, for free. All I need is the information, a picture or graphic you may want to include and the size.

In past years you must have notice our small trade show for people selling crafts or other woolen or sheep related products. If you wish to participate there is no charge, however, we need to know, in advance, how many tables you require. So again please contact Rosemary.

One last important point is the need for more volunteer help. The entire sale from start to finish is organized and run by volunteers. We are very fortunate to have the help of the college to set up and prepare the pens. However, on Friday we need help to unload the trucks, paint the lot #'s on the backs of the sheep & with the vet checks. On Saturday we need help moving the sheep in and out of the ring, loading the trucks and taking the pens down after the sale. If you are available to help please call Rosemary in advance or talk to her at the information table at the sale or just let the guys running the ring area know.

We Need & Welcome Your Help !

For more information
Contact Rosemary
Ph: 902-671-2410

Email: herngatefarm@ns.sympatico.ca
Web Site: www.sheepnovascotia.ns.ca

Haemonchus Epidemiology Project

We have some funding this year to study the problem of the Barberpole Worm, *Haemonchus*, in Nova Scotia. The project is being funded by Agrifutures Nova Scotia, with support from PSBANS, SPANS, DalAC (NSAC) and Saint Mary's University Biology.

We hope to find out from the study...

1. Information on the levels of infection with *Haemonchus* and other gastrointestinal nematode worms (GIN's) from different flocks throughout the province
2. The seasonal pattern of increase in fecal egg counts throughout the summer compared to this year's weather patterns (since temperature and rainfall are important factors)
3. Whether drench failure, which may be an indication of anthelmintic resistance, is common in the province.

How we plan to study the problem ...

We will analyze fecal samples from farms wishing to participate. We are particularly interested in ewes during lactation, when FEC's are increased, and in lambs or yearlings in their first grazing season. We also plan to collect samples from market lambs coming to the Atlantic Stockyards, as a general survey from throughout the region.

Samples we would like to collect from farms include:

1. From lambed ewes, up to 1-2 months after lambing, especially from young (1-3 year old) ewes and those with multiple lambs. Sampling can be repeated in 2-4 weeks if the data would be useful (e.g. to monitor reduction in FEC's after the end of lactation). We would like to collect from 10-20 animals per flock, although any number is acceptable
2. From young grazing animals. Since it takes several months of exposure to the parasites for an immune response

to develop, the first grazing season is typically when most problems occur. Lambs can be sampled after they have been on pasture for at least 2-3 weeks, where they will have picked up worms that overwintered in the soil. *Haemonchus* does not overwinter well, so we expect to see those counts rise in late June or July. We want to follow groups of lambs / yearlings (preferably the same individuals) throughout the summer to see how the FEC's change and when to expect the greatest danger from *Haemonchus*.

3. If we sample the same animals every 2-3 weeks, we will be able to determine when FEC's have risen so that we can carry out fecal egg count reduction tests to see whether there maybe some resistance to anthelmintics (Ivomec, Safeguard/Valbazen); this will probably be in late June or early July. We would need one group of 10-15 lambs for each anthelmintic tested, with another group of 10-15 as untreated controls. For the test, we conduct FEC's at the time of dosing, and repeat this after 14 days.

4. Later in the summer (Aug-Sept), repeated samples from these animals may show which ones are controlling their worm burdens more successfully, or still have high counts and perhaps should be culled.

We can collect samples on farm, within reasonable travelling distance from Truro/Windsor, or they can be collected by producers, and picked up by arrangement. If you are interested in taking part in all or some of these investigations, or want to know more, please get in touch with Gwyneth Jones: Ph:(902-369-2969) or Email: gjones@smu.ca
Please Note: Gwyneth Jones is a parasitologist, not a veterinarian, and this research project is not intended to replace the need for veterinary consultation. We hope that the results will be useful in discussing parasite problems with veterinarians, as well as revealing how widespread these problems have become. All producers are strongly recommended to submit fecal samples for analysis, to the Pathology Lab or to the vet's office, every year for monitoring this ongoing situation.

Oh oh



2013 Fleece Competition



It's time to think about entering the fleece and handspun competition at the 2013 Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition held in Truro, in mid August. This competition is not only for the fibre producers among us. There are classes for fleeces from Longwool Breeds (Border Leicester, Romney, Cotswold, etc.), Shortwool Breeds (everything from Texel to Suffolk to Rideau to Finn), Specialty Breeds (Shetlands, Icelandics, etc.), as well as, Crossbred.

We are only judging ewe fleeces, not ram or lamb fleeces, since these would be either much heavier or much lighter than the others in the class and difficult to compare.

So Why enter? This competition has been popular with the public, and showcases an aspect of the industry that doesn't get much attention in any other venue. The comments from the judges are helpful for improving the quality of fleece, potentially for improving its value in the hand spinning market. The judges look for a uniform fleece (in fineness and crimp), well skirted and with relatively little hay contamination, and a strong fibre with no weak points from nutritional or lambing stress. So any good clean fleece, rolled and tied and unwashed, will be ideal to send in to Truro in August.

The handspun yarn part of the competition shows the public the end product – if you can spin, send in a skein: single ply, two ply or a wool blend. If you don't know how to spin – come to the Exhibition and we'll give you a lesson!

Entry forms will be sent out with the Fall Sale entry forms and will also be available on our website

For more information, contact:
Gwyneth Jones:

Ph: (902) 369-2969

Email: gjones@smu.ca

Gillian Fraser:

Ph: (902) 893-6024

Email: gfraser@dal.ca
or

Website: (www.sheepnovascotia.ns.ca)