



Mar. 10/11

Dear Members:

The Directors of the Purebred Sheep Breeders' Association of Nova Scotia met on Jan 22/11. It was decided at this meeting that as members, in good standing, you are entitled to the following.

- 1) Sheep Canada magazine, one copy per household.
(first membership to which magazine will be mailed cost \$30 , remaining membership cost \$20)
- 2) Members of the Association participating in the annual Atlantic Sheep Sale will receive a full refund of their registration fees, if their animal sells. Non members registration fees will not be refunded, regardless if their animal sells.
- 3) Discount rates for participation in events sponsored by PSBANS.
- 4) Discount rates for participation in promotional projects.
(Breeders' Directory, Sale Catalogue sds, ads on PSBANS website or a link to the website.)

To take advantage of these and to have voting privilege at the 2011 AGM your membership needs to be paid by March 31, 2011.

Andrew Hebda
President

Scrapie Surveillance; what's my role?

Everyone should have received a copy of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) pamphlet Scrapie Surveillance, Eradicating Scrapie from Canada in the mail recently. Take the time to read it. It is important to the sheep industry and your farm!

Scrapie is a fatal disease that affects the central nervous system of sheep and goats. Scrapie is a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) and as such a federally reportable disease. On a practical level it is preventing us from exporting breeding stock to the US and other markets and limiting our ability to sell our sheep and lambs.

Everyone has a role to play to help reduce the incidence of the disease and eventually eradicate it. As producers you can help by submitting sheep over 12 months that die on you farm or sheep that exhibit symptoms like; unexplained weight loss, problems standing or walking, or changes in behaviour.

The easiest way for producers in Nova Scotia to submit a dead sheep for surveillance is to take it to the NSDA pathology lab in Truro. (902-893-6540). If you have a live sheep that you want to



submit for sampling you can contact the local CFIA office and they will make arrangements for sampling (902-893-6861). For more information please feel free to contact me.

Improving lamb Survival

Most of you can look through your records and figure out how many lambs you sold and kept for replacements last year. Do you know how many didn't make it to market? Some lamb loss around lambing is unavoidable in every flock. However there are many lambs that die could have been saved. Many of the lambs lost die of the result of things that happen before the actual birthing. Ewes that are in poor condition or over conditioned are likely to have lambs that are prone to problems. These problems range from the ewe not having enough milk or lambs that are too big and suffer from hard deliveries.

As a flock owner you should look at all the lambs that die and figure out why you lost them. This could help you to change your management, improving your lambing results. Several years ago we had Dr David Henderson of the Modern Institute in Edinburgh (retired 1999) visit Nova Scotia. At that time he talked about how he had worked with sheep producers in Scotland in helping them improve their lambing results.

Dr Henderson explained how he had encouraged producers to keep a list of lambs that died and why they died. They recorded every lamb that was lost, what condition the ewe was in, how old in hours the lamb was when it died, why they thought it died, and then he showed them how to look at the lamb and figure out what happen. I would encourage everyone to take the time and critically look at your lambing losses and keep some records. This could help you figure out why some of the lambs died and identify thing that you could change to reduce or eliminate some of the death losses. The only way that you will improve your results is by being honest with yourself and keeping records. It is not likely that you will remember from one lambing to the next what happened last year.

If you keep the records you can see if you are doing better this year than last year or the year before. Set yourself a goal for the year. Base this on what you achieved last year and try to improve. If you have a flock of 100 ewes and you reduce your lambing losses by 3% you would have an extra 3 lambs to market at the end of the year at today's prices that would put about \$550 dollars in your pocket!

If you are interested in reading more about improving you lambing look at "Keeping Lambs Alive" at:

http://www.hccmpw.org.uk/medialibrary/pdf/EN_541_Keeping%20lambs%20alive.pdf

If there is any way that I can help you please feel free to contact me at 902-896-0277

Jonathan Wort

Livestock Specialist, AgraPoint

902-896-0277.