

2020 SPANS Report

We experienced an extremely hot, dry summer this year in Nova Scotia, with some areas experiencing drought conditions. Fall arrived with cooler weather approaching early on and hopefully delivered plentiful harvests for all.

With COVID-19 Public Health regulations in place, SPANS have decided to make the move to virtual workshops rather than in-person meetings for this fall. We have been recording Virtual Farm Tours – where producers have the opportunity to see how other farms are operating, from the comfort of their home! These are planned to begin launching in early November, rolling into spring 2021. Please keep an eye on out on the website, social media and monthly updates for these releases on the SPANS YouTube channel: NS Sheep Producers. If you would like to be focused on one of these tours, or know of a fellow producer doing something unique on their operation, please reach out to the office with the suggestion.

The Sheep Industry Enhancement Program, a Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture (NSDA) CAP Program, has an application deadline of November 30, 2020. This program aims to improve industry competitiveness and resilience through disease prevention and control, improving animal health and welfare, as well as enhancing genetic potential. Please visit <https://novascotia.ca/programs/> for a complete listing of all government programs and eligibility.

SPANS, in cooperation with the Maritime Beef Test Society (MBTS) and AgSights have teamed up to offer a 2021 Central Ram Evaluation in Nappan, NS. This Central Ram Test is designed to provide Canadian purebred and commercial sheep producers with the necessary tools to evaluate the genetic potential of their performance-tested ram(s) as breeding stock, while offering important information used to evaluate their own flock's genetic improvement program. The information generated in a Central Ram Evaluation can improve the marketability of rams and provide valuable information used as a selection tools to increase a sheep flocks productivity and profitability. Additional information can be found at <http://nssheep.ca/category/sheep-news/>. Although intents to consign were originally due mid-October, please contact the SPANS office by December 1, 2020 if you are interested in consigning.

We have been actively working on strategic planning for the industry, with representatives of the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and select SPANS members. We expect that the strategy will be completed in 2021 and will be working closely with stakeholders on its implementation.

SPANS have available resources pertaining to the amended transportation regulations from this past February on our website, under the Animal Health section. This includes CFIA resources and a fillable livestock manifest document. We also have livestock transport manifest books available at our office for a \$10.00 per book fee, for 50 triplicate copies. If you are interested in getting customized books printed, please contact ASE Print directly at (902) 895-8804.

Maritime sheep producers now have the opportunity to listen in to important industry topics discussed by local, regional and national guests on Maritime Agcast. This podcast created and directed by the Agri-Commodity Management Association (ACMA) launched early September 2020, and features bi-weekly episodes of hot topics. Additional information be found at <https://anchor.fm/maritime-agcast>.

SPANS routinely send out a monthly update to all members occurring the last Friday of each month. If you are not receiving these updates, please contact the office so they may confirm your email address and you can begin receiving these industry updates.

Make sure you check the website and social media for a full listing of upcoming events, both in-person and virtually. As always, if you have any questions/comments or suggestions for workshop topics, don't hesitate to contact the office.

Sincerely,

Fred Hamilton

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