

# Black Welsh Mountain Sheep Club Newsletter

## March 2001 Second Issue

### Voting Rules

If you are a current paid voting member of the club then enclosed with this newsletter is a form for voting for the officers, board members and on the proposed bylaws changes and two envelopes. Please fill out your vote and place it in the smaller envelope marked ballot. Take the sealed smaller envelope and place it in the larger envelope that is addressed to the club post office box. Sign your name on the return address line so we know you have voted.

As ballots come in I will be checking the outside of the envelopes to verify that you are a current member. Then I will be taking the smaller unmarked envelopes out and saving them for final counting. That way no one will have their individual vote known and your votes will be anonymous.

I am asking my veterinarian to observe the counting of the ballots, as there are no other members' close enough to come witness the counting.

If you do not have a ballot enclosed, and still wish to become a member of the Club and vote in this election you must call or e-mail me immediately. My phone number is Colorado is (970) 527-3573 and my e-mail address is oogiem@desertweyr.com I will send a ballot and voting form to you and will verify it once I receive your membership dues.

Our bylaws require 2/3 of a quorum for bylaws changes. Your vote is important, whether you agree or disagree let your voice be heard. I can guarantee no hanging chads and will keep ballots on file as I do for all elections so any member may verify the voting results at any time now or in the future.

### 2000 Wool Pool

Several breeders have contacted me, if you have not and still plan to participate let me know by the middle of May.

### Club Donors

I keep an ongoing list of members who have graciously donated extra to help the club. If you have donated money or fleece to one of the wool pools **thanks**, your support is allowing us to put additional ads in various sheep and farming

magazines and is generating interest in the breed.

**Stanley Ward \$40.00**

**Barbara Childs \$40.00**

### Pedigree Data and Database Re-creation

**Tom Wyman** has provided me with his entire pedigree record from initial importation to present. I am just over half done entering the data into a computer system with over 2700 individual sheep entered. Once I complete initial data entry I will be sending both the computer files and original records off to at least 2 other people for verification. If the bylaws are approved this will form the basis for the new registry database.

### UK Foot and Mouth Outbreak

The UK FMD outbreak is seriously affecting hundreds of farmers. Over half a million sheep, most of them not infected with FMD, are being slaughtered in a preemptive cull around known infections.

As of 28 March 2001 I had checked approximately half the UK counties and cross-referenced it with my 2000 UK Flock Book and no BWMS breeders were on the infected list. I did not search all counties and as there are new cases daily I could have easily missed some. Although no breeders were listed in the areas I searched I cannot tell whether any Black Welsh Mountain Sheep flocks have been affected in the mandatory slaughter around existing infections. I do not know how many UK breeders flocks are within the kill zones. Farms that are depopulated cannot be restocked for at least 6 months.

Several breeders are drafting a letter to go to the UK society offering our support and also offering our animals for the collection of embryo's or semen for export back to the UK if needed to repopulate after the massive killing has stopped. If you wish to participate let me know, While we can do nothing until the outbreak is controlled some people feel that our offer alone may help raise the spirits of embattled farmers trying to save their flocks and farms.

In a related note, the UK semen that has already been imported is not affected by the new restrictions on import of agricultural products. It

is already in this country and was collected before any FMD outbreak. The two donor rams spent many months in quarantine and the semen is considered safe according to the USDA. However, it is unlikely that we will be able to collect semen from any additional rams in the foreseeable future. I fervently hope that this disease will be controlled and that we will have the opportunity to bring in additional semen in future but feel that it will be years before additional rams can be collected.

## **US Sheep and Goat Identification**

The UK FMD outbreak is being used as a reason for the US government to move rapidly with the proposed sheep and goat identification system. Once adopted this law would require all owners of sheep and goats in the US to use permanent tamperproof ID on every sheep and goat in the US. This ID must be sufficient to identify the premises of birth at a minimum and the individual animal as a goal. Currently approved ID includes Federal Scrapie program ear tags, microchips and tattoos. Farm ear tags are not an approved ID.

Movements of all sheep and goats, even those traveling in slaughter channels would be required to be maintained for 5 years after the animal is sold, died or been butchered. If you are not already keeping complete records of the animals you sell, to whom and any that die or are butchered you should consider starting now to work out the bugs in your system. Soon every owner of sheep and goats will be required to keep these records.

## **Michigan Scrapie Genotyping**

Michigan has adopted a program to require the use of genetically resistant rams in breeding. Currently the program is in the formative years and non-resistant genotypes are allowed to be used on the farm of their birth but not sold. However, as the program evolves, producers will be required to use QR and eventually only RR rams for breeding.

Some ram sales and certain other states are considering similar programs. Current plans for the new registry are to include the genotyping data on registration certificates as an optional piece of information for use in states with a genotyping requirement.

## **Member News**

Lambing has started for many members, let me know what is happening with your flock.

## **Secretary/Treasurer Notes**

Club bank balance is currently at \$255.60 before taking out the costs of publication for this newsletter and mailing of ballots. The extra donations have made it possible to significantly increase our advertising presence this year and should generate more interest in these sheep.

The March information packet including the bylaws changes was sent to over 100 people who had either expressed an interest in BWMS, were current members of the club, had sold or registered sheep with Mr. Hocter's registry in 1999 or 2000 or who could be found on a search on the internet for North American breeders and owners. While I tried to make as complete a mailing as possible I am sure I missed some folks. Please, if you know of anyone who has BWMS and who should receive information about the club send me their name and address and I will ensure that a full packet gets sent to them immediately.

The E-mail list is generating much interest and comment and more people are welcome to join in. We are still planning to move the list to a non-intrusive private server as soon as the server system is up and running. All current subscribers will automatically be moved to the new system. I check email daily during the week and at least once on weekends. Join in and share your experiences, ask questions and discuss our lovely black sheep. Recently there have been many comments concerning the proposed registry, what members want to see on registration papers and what may be required by the US Government. These discussions are important and interesting, with many different viewpoints being discussed. We welcome your comments.

## **Editors Notes**

Please send articles, we need them.

Send info to [oogiem@desertweyr.com](mailto:oogiem@desertweyr.com)