

American Black Welsh Mountain Sheep Association Newsletter

Paonia, Colorado

August 2003

About Black Welsh Sheep

Stanley Ward

Tilden Little Farm

In Britain there are approximately 65 breeds of native sheep. There is a continuum of size from very large breeds, such as the Lincoln Longwool, with ewes weighing greater than 180 pounds to the very small Soay, with ewes weighing less than 50 pounds. No miniature breeds are recognized.

Within a widespread breed such as the Welsh Mountain (white) which has at least six different geographical variations, considerable difference in size is found — from the true mountain sheep of North Wales where ewes may be as little as 60 pounds to the much larger sheep of South and Central Wales where ewes may approach weights of 90 pounds or more on the lowlands. No type within the breed is considered to be miniature. In fact many of the smaller sheep will gain weight, but not size, if kept under lowland conditions.

Black Welsh Mountain Sheep ewes in Britain average between 70-80 pound. Few if any are kept on the high country. Mostly they are to be found on small farms in the lowlands. Over the past one hundred years, intensive selection has lead to a much improved fleece both in weight and quality than the true Welsh Mountain sheep (white) that is found on the wild, wet and windy Welsh mountains rising up to 3500 feet. (I assume all breeders realize that BWM sheep were selected, about one hundred years ago, from recessive black sheep that occur in the white flocks found throughout Wales.)

In my opinion, it would be a very big mistake for our sheep here in America ever to become associated with the word miniature. It would ruin any credibility that we may gain in the commercial sheep industry, which is the only place our breed will be able to survive in the

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Association Update

Election Results

There were 28 fully paid voting members eligible to vote in the election and a total of 26 ballots were returned. We did have write in candidates for various offices.

The election results were as follows:

President

Tom Wyman	22
Ed Lutkewich	1
Abstain	1

Vice President

Ed Lutkewich	21
Stanley Ward	1
Tom Wyman	1
Abstain	1

Secretary/Treasurer

Eugenie McGuire	24
Luke Vaughn	1
Abstain	1

Board of Directors (Top three are elected to the BOD for two year terms.)

Sue Goetz	23
Stanley Ward	23
Mark Whitaker	23
Abstain	3

These results were counted and certified by a notary public. The ballots and results are available for review by any member at any time at the Secretary's Office.

Additionally, after the ballots were returned and counted there were an additional ten members who paid dues for 2003 — none of whom returned a ballot although most were renewing members. We still have an additional 16 former members who have not yet renewed for 2003.

long run. We should not lose sight of the basic utilitarian characteristics of the breed that are needed for commercial meat and wool producers to make money.

Sheep in Britain are classified according to the environment in which they traditionally come from and the use to which their wool is used for. For example, Mountain, Hill and Lowland. Most flocks of BWM sheep in Britain would be classified as Mountain and Hill because there is considerable variation in the quality and quantity of the wool.

In British terms I think it is best to think of the Black Welsh Mountain breed as a Grassland/Hill breed that produces excellent lamb from grass and a medium quality fleece. In American terms, the breed is whatever we decide to make it. ❖

ABWMSA

www.blackwelsh.org

The purpose of the American Black Welsh Mountain Sheep Association is to advance the public's knowledge and use of the purebred Black Welsh Mountain sheep by promoting the identity and versatility of these animals, conserving and protecting this rare breed.

Officers

President.....Tom Wyman
Vice President.....Ed Lutkewich
Sec'y/Treasurer.....Oogie McGuire

Newsletter Credits

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Please send all submissions
for newsletters to:
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Scrapie Certification and Eradication Programs Overview

The Scrapie Certification Program is a voluntary effort among producers, allied industry representatives, accredited veterinarians, state animal health officials, and USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). The program provides participating producers with the opportunity to protect their sheep from scrapie and to increase the marketability of their animals through certifying their origin in scrapie-free flocks.

Flocks are monitored over a period of five years or more to identify flocks that are free of scrapie. If you are interested in participating in the certification program, please see the attached Fact Sheet on the Scrapie Certification Program.

The Scrapie Eradication Program is different from the Scrapie Certification Program. The mandatory eradication program establishes an identification system so diseased, exposed or high risk sheep can be traced back to their herd of origin so that the spread of scrapie within these herds can be prevented.

So what's required of you as a sheep owner? First, you must determine if your sheep need official ear tags (or other approved official identification) to move interstate. Secondly, you must request a flock ID number from your local APHIS, veterinary services office or the state veterinary office. Next (after you have received your flock ID) producers must obtain official ear tags. Tattooing is also permissible but must be in compliance with the program conditions.

Then you must set up a record-keeping system to record the animal identification numbers. Each animal has its own unique ID. Prior to shipment of your sheep, make sure they have health certificates from an accredited veterinarian. The certificate cannot be older than 30 days prior to shipping. Retain your ID records for 5 years. For more detailed info see the attached reports: *What You as a Producer Need to Know About the New Scrapie Eradication Program* and *How to Comply with the New Scrapie Eradication Program*. You may also call toll-free 1-866-USDA-TAG.

Note: Animals currently participating in the Scrapie Certification Program will not need additional identification.

