

Fall 2025

Tomorrow's Sheep Today

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## Refshaw Ramblings from the Land of the Rising Sun

**Jeremy Refshaw, President**

Greetings fellow members, what a beautiful fall it has been. I think it is safe to say that everyone has been enjoying this wonderful fall weather. My wife and I recently had the opportunity to take in the SDSGA annual convention and go on a tour of the VanWell Brothers Sheep Operation near Watertown, South Dakota, I was impressed with the hard work and dedication that the VanWell family has done over the years. Through adversity and trials, they have found a way to continue the work of their family and grow their business, making a significant impact on the sheep industry in the USA. We met some old friends in South Dakota and met many great people as well. I enjoy visiting one on one with other sheep producers, hearing about their operations. I can always glean something from my conversations and take back home to apply to my own life.

Our association, along with the board of directors, would like to give our deepest condolences to our Secretary Matt, and his two precious daughters, on the loss of their beautiful and inspiring wife and mother, Kelsey. The way she lived her life should be an inspiration to all. Her beautiful smile will be missed. If you have a chance check

out the Chadwick Sheep Company website, there are some beautiful writings by Kelsey posted there.

We as livestock producers and people in agriculture have something ingrained in our souls giving us the ability to carry on and persevere. Through hard times and adversity, we just keep going even when things get tough whether it be a bad crop, low prices, damaging weather or even something as small as losing a baby lamb. If we are fortunate to live long enough, we all face losing a loved one. We need to find a way to pick up the pieces and continue. I would like to remind everyone to stop for a moment and enjoy the blessings that we have here on earth and try to make the most of it because we never know when the Lord will call us home.

As always, I would like to inform all members as to the state of our association. Our association is very strong financially we continue to register a good number of sheep and make transfers as well. The board is considering some different options regarding the youth grants this year since we had no applications for 2025. Hopefully, these

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# APSA Starter Flock Grant Program 2026

A completed application with supporting materials must be submitted to the APSA by April 1, 2026.

The following is a summary of the APSA Starter Flock Grant Program. For the full application, please scan the QR Code below or visit [www.polypay.org](http://www.polypay.org) and click on the youth tab.



**Purpose:** To promote the growth and usefulness of the Polypay Breed, and to encourage youth involvement and education in the breed.

**Who may apply?** Any American Citizen ages 13-18 whose family does not raise Polypay Sheep.

**The starter flock Grant will consist of:** A one-time \$2000 grant from APSA to be used for the purchase of registered Polypay ewes or ewe lambs from a current APSA member of their choice. A purchase agreement between the APSA member and the grant recipient must be submitted to the APSA board of directors for approval by June 1, 2025. Funds will be distributed to the owner of the flock that is chosen upon transfer of registration.

**Promotion:** The APSA Starter Flock Program will be listed on the APSA website and advertised in various magazines and outlets. Promotion by current members will be strongly encouraged.

## Policy and protocol:

1. A completed application with supporting materials must be submitted to the APSA by April 1, 2026.
  - a. Essay: The applicant must write a short paper on why they think they should be awarded the grant.
  - b. Video / Pictures: The applicant must show video or pictures that show basic facilities and feed sources that will be provided for the starter flock.
  - c. Signed Letters: The applicant will need to provide two signed letters:
    - . A letter from the applicant's parents stating their approval of the application and their responsibilities.
    - . A signed letter of recommendation from a 4H or FFA adviser or from a current APSA member.
2. Completed applications with other materials needed will be reviewed by the APSA board of directors and the top 3 applicants will be chosen.
3. Of the top 3 applicants, 1 winner will be chosen by the board of directors and notified by the current president of the APSA.
4. The winning applicant will be notified by July 1, 2026. And will be awarded the starter flock at the annual APSA meeting in Spencer, Iowa.
5. Attendance at the annual meeting will be mandatory.
6. The winner will be given a one-year membership to the APSA.
7. The grant recipient will be assigned an APSA member mentor in close proximity. The mentor will provide advice and support to the recipient and will be required to check on the animal's welfare.
8. Basic needs of the animals must be always provided. If the basic needs of the animals are not met as determined by the mentor, the recipient must return all the animals to the original flock owner at the cost of the recipient.

For the full application, please scan the QR Code below or visit [www.polypay.org](http://www.polypay.org) and click on the youth tab.

# Picturing Sheep

## Tips & Tricks

By: Zach Meinders

Without a doubt, one of the most important parts of the marketing process!

- Pick a sunny day that's not too hot and when you have a couple people to help.
- Set up a picture pen that is round (or oval), has a good background, and is made out of gates tall enough that the sheep are not tempted to jump out. I like a 20x30 foot sheep picture pen.
- Picture on short grass or on a concrete with shallow bedding and a solid background such as a wood fence.
- Make sure the sun is to your back as you picture!
- Only one animal in the picture pen at a time.
- Consider tying up a halter broke lamb on one end of the picture pen so the picture animal doesn't feel alone.
- It's best to have one person on each side of the pen to either push the sheep or get their attention to stop or get their head up. The picture pen helpers need to be very familiar with livestock behavior.
- iPhone or camera with a short lens both work great for picturing sheep.
- Take pictures with the camera at hip height level of the animal and lined up with the back legs/hip.
- THE POSE: Side view with the front legs even or with the opposite side leg slightly further back. Back legs should be apart with the closer leg back and the back side leg forward (in a comfortable position). Their head should be looking straight forward or slightly towards the camera. Ears erect and forward.



### Editing Pictures

- Adjust lighting if needed.
- Crop the picture horizontally.
- Zoom in so the animal takes up most of the frame.
- Straighten the animal if needed.
- If you want to get fancy, you can photoshop some dirt or mud off them.



All the same animal...which picture is going to make her sell the best?

# In Memorium

**KELSEY WATSON**

**CHADWICK**

**January 23, 1990 — August 28, 2025**

Kelsey Watson Chadwick, age 35, went to be with her Lord and Savior on Thursday, August 28th at Frankfort Regional Medical Center after an unexpected medical emergency. She was born on January 23, 1990.

Kelsey loved people and went out her way to share her love of Jesus with everyone she encountered. She would want everyone to know that she is at home today in the arms of Jesus. Her heart's desire was to watch young people grow in the best version of themselves. She served for over a decade in the children's ministry alongside her husband at Chief Cornerstone Baptist Church. She worked for the University of Kentucky as a 4H agent in Carlisle and Graves counties before serving as a professor at Murray State University in the Family and Consumer Science Department. She most recently returned to UK extension this summer as 4H State Specialist. She held multiple bachelor's degrees from Murray State, a Master of Social Work from the University of Louisville and a Doctorate of Social Work from the University of Kentucky.



Kelsey loved her family with a passion that was second only to Jesus. She is survived by her husband of over 16 years, Brother Matthew Chadwick, two beautiful daughters, Dava Noel Chadwick and Daphne Marie Chadwick; her loving parents, David Johnson Watson and Lesa Jones Watson; aunts and uncles include Jobeth (Larry) England, Yvette (Billy) Pyle, Dan (Gail) Watson, Lawanda (Michael) Glover, Susan Jones, Joey Michael (Sherry) Jones, along with many cousins. She is preceded in death by her grandparents Dwight and Elizabeth Watson, Dale and Ernestine Jones, and uncles Larry Jones and Gary Jones.

Celebration of life service was held on Monday, September 1st, 2025 at Chief Cornerstone Baptist Church, Mayfield, KY with Bro. Keith Allred and Bro. Matthew Chadwick officiating.

Expressions of Sympathy can be made to Chief Cornerstone Baptist Church Building Fund, 5772 State Route 464, Mayfield, KY. 42066.

Online condolences can be made at [www.jhchurchill.com](http://www.jhchurchill.com)

## APSA Board of Directors

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# What I've Learned Raising Polypay Sheep

By Scott Wollin, Snow Camp, NC

These words are food for thought and reminiscing over fifty plus years of raising sheep. None of this is meant to be a suggestion or recommendation for your sheep operation.

First, the most ewes I ever had at any one time is seventy, so I can't relate to the time and effort and management diligence it takes to manage hundred or thousands of ewes not only for once-a-year lambing but also in an accelerated system.

These thoughts are based on years of experience, reading lots of articles, conversations with other sheep producers, and Google. Sometimes what you thought was a good plan didn't turn out so good. Experience sometimes is the best teacher.

My latest learning curve came when I moved from northwest Minnesota to central North Carolina. Worm load management is way different here, and much greater. It's nice to have area producers, county extension and veterinarians to consult with to form a plan. Pasture forage and types of hay and grains available are different. Lots of fescue and not much alfalfa here. A few producers still grow alfalfa and orchard grass, but not many; they say heat, humidity, disease and bugs keep alfalfa from having a long stand. A lot of alfalfa is shipped in and therefore is quite expensive compared to the readily available alfalfa up north. Finding a reliable local farmer to get it from is a must. Corn is readily available here but much higher price. Local feed stores handle all these products but much higher in price than local farmers. I have been fortunate through help of county extension agents and neighbors to find private producers who treat me very well. The county extension system here in North Carolina is awesome and, in my area, we also have NC State for a support system. North Carolina in gen-

eral has made it a priority to support their livestock farms, there are numerous online presentations you can attend for free from your living room. I am retired so I don't have to make a living from my few sheep, but I still want to make good management decisions and so I continue to stay alert for feed options that can cut costs.

Let's talk some now about breeding rams. From articles I have read and people I've talked to, the general thought seems to be whatever routine management you want to do with the rams, do a minimum of one month before breeding and ideally 8-10 weeks to avoid infertility. I once asked a vet what can kill ram sperm and affect fertility and the vet chuckled and replied, "Everything." Antibiotics can even cause some infertility. Some routine management would be foot trimming, worming, shearing, vibrio vaccination. I had a ram that a few days int breeding had a little limp. I checked his feet, he had no foot scald or rot, ankle joint wasn't hot so I gave some banamine for pain relief and possible fever. The ram felt better quickly, the limp was gone, but id did affect his fertility for a few weeks. I had to put on another ram, which spread out the lambing season. Later, I learned that banamine will affect fertility.

Breeding soundness exams by a vet can provide valuable information, mainly is the ram very fertile, mediocre, or not fertile. Especially here in North Carolina where we have a lot of heat and humidity all summer long and into September, breeding soundness exams are a must. I realize not all producers have access to these vet services, something I didn't know before leaving Minnesota. I have an awesome vet clinic in North Carolina.

In my years of raising sheep, I've tried many different breeds---Polypay, Dorset, Columbia, Hampshire, Suffolk, Finn, Romanov, Coopworth, Clun

Forest. All breeds have value if you use them in the system for which they were designed. For instance, you would not want to put the Clun Forest in a confinement system on full feed as they were designed to gain weight on pasture alone. Each producer has their preference on what they like based on their situation and circumstances. I really like the Polyps, and the Poly/Romanov cross, but their wool is pretty much junk because of the hair from the Romanovs, but I felt it was a great maternal cross. Since the Polypay is a four-way cross, there are still a lot of variances in the breed, especially size. The upside is that you can develop what size you want. All registered animals are subject to the guidelines of the breed for registration.

I'm not qualified to say much on NSIP, EBVs generated by NSIP are only as accurate as the information submitted. The more animals involved in the database, the more accurate the info can be. Whether you are looking at just phenotype or genotype or both, EBVs can have value. There seems to be a common thought out there that it is easier and quicker to see results if you try to change one or two traits at a time instead of trying to change many traits at one time. Phenotype = genotype + environment. Environment plays a big part in the outcome of an animal and its productivity.

In summary and going forward, producers all have preferences, but let's remember this thought for the Polypay breed. The US sheep experiment station in Dubois, Idaho developed five primary goals for the breed:

- High lifetime prolificacy
- Large lamb crop at one year of age
- Ability to lamb more frequently than once per year
- Rapid growth rate for lambs
- Desirable carcass quality

## Refshaw Ramblings - Continued from page 1

options will allow more youth to get involved with Polypays. We had two successful sales this summer, the Ohio sale, and the Center of the Nation Sale in Spencer. I would like to remind everyone of our upcoming Annual meeting on October 21 at 7:00 pm CDT on Zoom. We are hoping for a good turnout. Well, enough ramblings; take care everyone and God bless.

Respectfully,  
*Jeremy Refshaw*  
APSA President



## ADVERTISE

### *Advertising rates in the APSA:*

**FULL PAGE:** \$85

7.5" w x 10" h

**HALF PAGE:** \$45

7.5" w x 5" h

**QUARTER PAGE:** \$25

7.5" w x 2.5" h

3.75" w x 5" h

*Ads for the next Newsletter should be sent to*

**BEV BERENS**

[uphillfarm494@yahoo.com](mailto:uphillfarm494@yahoo.com)

## 2026 Sale Dates

### **OHIO SHOWCASE SHOW AND SALE**

**May 7-9, 2026**

Darke County Fairgrounds  
Greenville, OH

Sale by Select Livestock Services, LLC

[www.selectls.net](http://www.selectls.net)

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### **CENTER OF THE NATION SALE**

**July 24-26, 2026**

Clay County Fairgrounds  
Spencer, IA

## NSIP Online PolyPay Sale Report

July 9, 2025

- 10 rams averaged \$740
- 10 ewe lambs averaged \$532
- 20 head total averaged \$636
- Top selling ram \$1400 consigned by Brendon Klaseen
- Top selling ewes \$755 consigned by Big Prairie Polypays

## Center of the Nation NSIP Sheep Sale Report

July 26, 2025

- 41 rams averaged \$1271.25
- 30 ewes averaged \$618.33
- 71 head averaged \$991.43
- Top selling ram \$3300 consigned by Brendon Klaseen
- Top selling ewes \$800 consigned by Taylor Made Polypays

# American Polypay Sheep Association

## Member Recognition Nomination Form

**Due Date: April 30, 2026**

Thank you for taking the time to nominate an outstanding individual for their contributions to the American Polypay sheep breed. The APSA board will review all applications and may follow up with additional questions if necessary. One member or couple will be recognized each year at the annual meeting of the American Polypay Sheep Association. Please complete the form below with as much detail as possible. Producers may be nominated as an individual or as a couple.

### Nominee Information:

Full Name of Nominee (or Couple): \_\_\_\_\_

Farm Name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Years in Polypay Sheep Production: \_\_\_\_\_

### Service Roles Supporting the Breed:

Breed Association Leadership

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Research & Development

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Educational Outreach

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Industry Advocacy

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Breeding and Genetic Advancement

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Other (please specify):

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**Key Contributions to the Breed:** (Please summarize in a narrative form the information provided above and include the impacts on the Polypay breed. This paragraph is what will be used for media materials and for the presentation at the APSA board meeting. Please type and attach if you prefer.)

### **Nominator Information:**

- Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Your Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Your Email: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Your Relationship to the Nominee: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Additional Comments:**

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*Please submit this completed form by April 30, 2026, to Jeremy Refshaw, 1339 290<sup>th</sup> St., Waubun, MN, 56589. Thank you for recognizing those who have made a lasting impact on the American Polypay sheep breed!*