

Summer 2018

Tomorrow's Sheep Today

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## View from the Great Lakes State

Brett Pharo, APSA President

As with much, if not most, of the country, weather is a big concern in northern Michigan right now. You'd think with all the water around us (our farm is at the curve in the road in the lower left corner of the above picture) that we couldn't get this dry. But we are. We just upgraded to moderate drought on the drought monitor map, and there doesn't seem to be any rain in sight. Of course that pales compared to some of our members who are dealing with D3 extreme drought conditions. At the same time, other members have been so wet this year that crops didn't get planted.

It seems we still have a nasty division in our membership. This just doesn't make sense to me. We're too small of an organization. Our members have a wide variety of interests, and make a wide variety of management choices. Those should not divide us, but should make us stronger as we appeal to a wider variety of potential customers.

As an example, I recently had a member request that we not mention in our ads that a majority of our sheep are enrolled in NSIP. Why? Choosing to use the NSIP tool, or not, by enrolling in NSIP, or not, is

*Cont. on p. 4*

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## Polypay Sheep Show Up in Abundance at Sales

Both the Midwest Stud Ram Sale in Sedalia, MO and the Center of the Nation NSIP Sale in Spencer, IA drew a lot of consignments this year. Sedalia had 56 sheep consigned from 11 consignors, while Spencer had 76 sheep consigned from 18 consignors. The Eastern NSIP Sale in Wooster, OH, which is in only its second year, added 24 sheep consigned from 9 consignors. There was concern that the abundance of available quality Polypay sheep at these sales would possibly put Polypays in a position of supply outpacing demand. Buyers, though, showed up in force, both commercial and purebred producers. While prices were smokin' hot at Spencer, they were softer at Sedalia and Wooster. They were better at Wooster than most other breeds, though. A lot of good quality Polypay breeding stock changed hands at the three sales.

### Midwest Stud Ram Sale Results Sedalia, MO

15 Rams sold at an average price of \$503.

32 Ewes sold at an average price of \$447.

High selling ram was sold by Sammons Polypay for \$850 to Ivy Sheep Company of Stockton, MO.

High selling ewe was sold by L&K Sheep Company for \$1000 to Robert Sando of Arcanum, OH. WOW!



*Champion Polypay ram at the Midwest Stud Ram Sale in Sedalia, MO. He is a fall-born ram consigned by Sammons Polypay. Pictured are Gordon Sammons, judge Evan Snyder, and Erik Sammons.*



*Champion Polypay ewe at the Midwest Stud Ram Sale in Sedalia, MO. A January ewe lamb, she was consigned by Shady Lawn Farms. Pictured are Diane and Kevin Hermann of Shady Lawn.*

## Center of the Nation Sale Results Spencer, IA

48 Rams sold at an average price of \$1,067.

25 Ewes sold at an average price of \$604.

High selling ram was sold by University of Wisconsin for \$2,200. Five rams brought at least \$2,000 and two more sold for \$1,900 apiece.

Ewes at the CNS sell in pens. High selling pen of ewe lambs was a pen of five ewe lambs sold by Dakota Krome POA & Polypays for \$850 each to Timothy Kinsley of Murdo, SD.



*High selling Polypay ram at the Center of the Nation NSIP Sale. He is a fall-born ram consigned by the University of Wisconsin, managed by Todd Taylor. He was sold to the University of Kentucky.*



*High selling Polypay ram at the Eastern NSIP Sale. He is a February-born ram consigned by Don Hausser.*

## Eastern NSIP Sale Results Wooster, OH

19 Rams sold at an average price of \$628.

5 Ewes sold at an average price of \$525.

High selling ram was sold by Hausser Polypays for \$1,400. Four rams brought at least \$1,000.

High selling ewe lambs were a pair of ewe lambs sold by University of Wisconsin for \$650 each.

*View Cont. from p. I*

just a management decision. At this time, I don't personally lamb out of season. That's a management choice. Just because I don't do it, I don't expect the organization to not advertise this asset of the breed. I may well lose a sale because I don't fall lamb or accelerate; another breeder may lose a sale because they don't have NSIP data. We all know that's a possibility when we make those management decisions, and we make the decisions that best fit our management desires. But both out of season breeding and a high enrollment in NSIP are strong assets of our breed and should be advertised. It helps us all.

If you want to show sheep, show them. If you don't want to, don't. If you want to enroll in NSIP, do so. If you don't, don't. If you want to accelerate your lambing, go for it. If you don't, don't. If you want to pull wool samples, do it. If you don't, then don't. If you want to sample fecals for parasites, dig in. If you don't, then don't. Just because someone else is doing things you aren't, or are doing things differently, doesn't make either of you right or wrong - just different interests.

We're all in this together. There is certainly one of the greatest show opportunities anywhere at Sedalia every year for those that want to show. There is one of the most successful sheep sales anywhere at Spencer for those that are on NSIP. And all of us can market our own unique niche at the farm gate. Let's support each other rather than critisize each other. I assure you that I am as excited by a good sale at Sedalia as I am by a good sale at Spencer, and I'm as bothered by a disappointing sale at Wooster as I am by a disappointing sale at Sedalia. It's not us and them; it's all of us in this together.



*Let's not let the American Polypay Sheep Association get hung up between competing viewpoints that are ultimately just differences in management choices.*

# Annual Membership Meeting

The 2018 annual membership meeting of the APSA was held following dinner Friday, July 27 at the Clay County Fairgrounds in Spencer, IA. Approximately 20 members were in attendance. Discussion centered around progress being made in the organization as well as where to go from here. Both memberships and registrations are the highest they've been in several years. Brett also discussed his upcoming trip to the US Sheep Experimental Station in Dubois, ID.

## APSA/Let's Grow FEC Project

2018 is the third, and final, year of our grant from ASI's Let's Grow Committee for work on genetic resistance to parasites.

We've had some good participation in the first two years, but can always use more. By having more members submitting the data, we've shortened the timeline for having useful EBV's. Actually, they are becoming useful already. In some parts of the country, that EBV has become one of the most important EBV's for ram buyers. The more data collected and submitted, the more accurate the results.

Of course, the secondary part of that grant, the collection of blood cards on sires with phenotype data available, may eventually be the most important contribution to the industry from this grant. Genomic research, which this card collection is slated to support, was a topic of discussion at a recent ASI Genetic Stakeholders Committee meeting in which I recently participated.

This project takes a little effort and a little time, but it's worth the input.

Contact Cristopher Schauer, christopher.schauer@ndsu.edu, with any questions or to participate.



## USSES Trip

Brett Pharo

As most of you know, the US Sheep Experiment Station in Dubois, ID seems to have won it's struggle to keep funding. This is a very important thing for the sheep industry as it, along with MARC in Clay Center, NE, are key to research within our industry. The Polypay breed was created there almost 50 years ago by Dr. Clarence Hulet and his brother Reed as a breed intended to enhance the commercial sheep industry.

They are making an effort to reconnect with the various breeds, including Polypays. I have been invited, at their expense, to fly out to Dubois for a couple full days of talking Polypays and looking at what they should be focusing on in their research. We will be discussing many areas of interest and how the APSA can help USSES and vice versa.

They are currently in the process of moving Sheep Station Polypay records onto NSIP, which they see as a very important tool in moving forward with the breed. Other areas they are looking at include creating new Polypay lines, optimizing weaning rates for range-based systems, and looking at wool on Polypays. Dr. Taylor says that Polypays with 26 micron wool or better are bringing a high premium. We can do that, if we know what the target is and can make testing affordable.

There are several other areas of interest that I've brought up, with input from our membership, that we'll also discuss. Getting an upclose look at their facilities and what they can and can't do will help narrow the focus. One thing we will push in discussions is how we can help get their flock back in the registry.

## Advertise

Advertising in the APSA newsletter is available. Rates are

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 you would like put in the Fall newsletter would need to be sent to brettpharo@gmail.com by October 31.

## Add to Your Newsletter

The APSA puts out a small newsletter four times a year. If you would like to contribute an article promoting Polypays, the sheep industry in general, or of interest to Polypay breeders, we would very much like to include it. Also, if you have pictures of your operation, we can always use them. Sometimes more, sometimes less, depending on how the layout goes. You can send to brettpharo@gmail.com.

