

Winter 2022

Tomorrow's Sheep Today

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A Big Prairie Perspective

Mark Meurer, President

Opportunity knocks and knocks and knocks! What a time to be in the sheep business and to be raising Polypays. I've never seen markets this high and I've never witnessed the demand for Polypay genetics to be this strong. Opportunity stands at the door and is knocking!

Our breed is positioned extremely well, right now. There are many great breeds of sheep in our industry, but the interest in Polypay genetics is growing and will continue to grow. As seedstock providers, we all know that demand is unbelievable for our genetics, at this time. In our case, we've already got next year's crop of ewe lambs sold and I won't turn the rams in with ewes until April! We can all be proud of the work and dedication that we've put into our breed. Thank you to all of the APSA membership for continually striving to make Polypays better. Through performance testing and sound phenotypic selection, we're doing an excellent job of taking advantage of the opportunities that are knocking at our doors, individually and as an association. Again, thank you for your dedication to our breed and to the commercial sheep industry.

Please enjoy this edition of the APSA newsletter. It's full of great information and full of opportunities to find and sell some great Polypay genetics. You'll see in the newsletter that the APSA board has launched a "Fall-Born" ram and ewe lamb online sale for this March. Please consider entering the online sale, if you have Fall-Born genetics that you'd like to share with the industry. One of the main strengths of Polypay genetics is our ability to breed out-of-season. As a board, we thought this would be a great marketing opportunity for our breed to capitalize on the growing interest in out-of-season breeding. If the sale is successful, we're thinking of launching a "Spring-Born"

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Big Prairie Cont.

online sale in the near future, as well. These sales are open to all of the APSA membership.

Again, opportunity is knocking. I'm proud to say, that as breeders and as an association, we're answering the call. Keep up the great work and if you ever have questions or concerns, please call at any time.

COLOSTRUM: One Word Says It All

Kathy Ewert, DVM

What is THE most important thing that you can do for your newborn lambs? Make sure that they ingest colostrum as soon after birth as possible. In fact, I believe that colostrum is so important that if I have a ewe that has multiples, I often milk her out and bottle feed a small amount (about 30 ml or 1 ounce) of colostrum to the lambs before they get up and try to nurse. Normal, healthy lambs are born hungry and have a suck reflex at birth. They rapidly figure out the nipple (Pritchard teats are my preference) of the bottle. This little bit of colostrum gives them the boost of energy that they need to get going, but it does not deter their desire to find mom's teat once they are able to stand.

What is colostrum and why is it so important? Colostrum is the first secretion produced by the pregnant ewe's udder. It is made only once and is rapidly replaced by milk as the lambs nurse. Colostrum is the "life line" to assist the lamb as it makes the transition from a warm, sterile uterus to the harsh, non-sterile environment of our world. Colostrum contains fat, energy, and a variety of vitamins and minerals to jump start the new born lamb; however, one of the most important functions of colostrum is to provide temporary immunity (antibodies) to the lamb until its own immune system can respond to its new environment. Lambs may survive without receiving colostrum, but are at a much higher risk of acquiring an infection because they have no antibodies to fight off viruses or bacteria. Some mammals, like humans, for example, have a placenta that allows transfer of antibodies from the mother to the fetus during gestation. Sheep, however, have a placenta that does not allow maternal antibodies to pass to the fetus. In sheep, maternal antibodies are transferred via ingestion of colostrum.

What is the best time period for a lamb to ingest colostrum? Preferably, the first colostrum meal should occur within the first hour after birth. The optimal time period for colostral antibodies to be absorbed is from birth to 18 hours. During this time period, the walls of the lamb's intestinal tract are more porous so that the large antibody molecules can pass through. By about 24 hours after birth, the intestinal walls are closed and antibodies can no longer be absorbed.

How much colostrum does a lamb need? A lamb should ingest a minimum of 10% of its body weight in colostrum by time it is 24 hours old. For example, a lamb weighing 10 pounds should ingest 1 pound or 16 ounces of colostrum within the first 24 hours. In reality, a lamb with a good milking mother ingests much more than that.

What is the best way to optimize the quality of colostrum that a ewes produces? Ewes in a good plane of nutrition during gestation will produce a higher quality colostrum than a ewe that is "just getting by." Ideally, ewes should be placed in the location in which they will lamb for the last 30 days of gestation. This allows them to respond to any potential pathogens in that environment and to produce antibodies that will be incorporated into the colostrum. For the same reason, ewes should be vaccinated according to your farm's vaccination protocol 6-8 weeks prior lambing. At a minimum, every pregnant ewe should be vaccinated for over-eating and tetanus so that she can produce antibodies to pass on to her lambs.

What should be done if a ewe has little or no colostrum? The lamb(s) should be fed colostrum from another ewe. The ideal source of colostrum for a lamb is from its mother; however, the next best option is colostrum from another healthy ewe in the same flock. Some producers use dairy cow colostrum, but cow colostrum is lower in fat (4%) than sheep colostrum (8%) and probably will not contain antibodies that will be useful to the newborn lamb. Additionally, if a cow is positive for Johne's disease, that bacteria will be passed in the colostrum to the lamb.

The best solution is to plan ahead and maintain a colostrum bank. Milk out one side of the udder of any

ewe that has a single. Freeze the colostrum in 2 or 4 ounce containers. Thaw it gently and slowly when needed. Placing the colostrum container in a hot water bath works well. Do not thaw colostrum in the microwave as the rapid heating will clump the colostrum and destroy the antibodies. Only collect colostrum from ewes that are negative for Ovine Progressive Pneumonia and Johne's disease, since both diseases can be transmitted through colostrum.

Every sheep producer should have a colostrum bank. So easy to do. And.... It will save the lives of many lambs. Good luck lambing this winter!!

Dr. Kathy Ewert is a veterinarian who has been raising Polypay sheep at Notkwyta Ranch, Inc for almost 30 years. If you have a veterinary question or a topic that you would like to see addressed in this newsletter, contact Kathy at info@notkwyta.com.

Seeking Polypay Innovation Flocks

As has been noted in the last APSA newsletter, Ron Lewis, with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Chair of the Technical Committee of NSIP, along with several of his colleagues, have been successful in their efforts to obtain a grant for their research project. The title of the project is *Improving Robustness and Climatic Resilience in US Sheep Populations Through Genomics*. With that being quite a mouthful, they nicknamed the project Sheep GEMS. GEMS stands for Genetics, Environment, Management, and Society, all features of the research being planned.

The project will involve four breeds, one from each of the four major breed groups in NSIP. Those breeds are Polypay, Katahdin, Suffolk, and Rambouillet. The expectation is that out of this research will come Genomic Enhanced Estimated Breeding Values (GEBVs) for currently quantified traits and some new traits, as well. General trait areas that are expected to be researched include lamb survival, ewe longevity, udder health, parasitism, and hair shedding (Katahdin only).

To begin the research, DNA samples will need to be collected on a reference population of each breed. That is not an inexpensive endeavor, but that is where the grant will cover most of the expense. And, of course, appropriate measurements will need to be made in the participating flocks. The determination of which individual sheep to include in the reference population will be made by Ron and his team, so that they will be best suited to meet the need.

We will be looking for several flocks (Innovation Flocks) to participate, so as to pull from as broad of a base as possible in putting together the reference population. It's not a small ask, but the return for the industry should be worth it. Though the benefits of the research will be available to all flocks, because there's a need to correlate DNA with phenotypic trait data in a standardized format, Innovation Flocks will need to be NSIP enrolled flocks. Many of the traits to be measured will be ones that are routinely collected already. Others will be new. Around lambing time, will be a code for any assistance given to the lamb, and in ewes, scores for udder depth, teat placement, body condition, and if relevant, FAMACHA scores. Around weaning time, fecal egg counts and FAMACHA scores in lambs. Around breeding time, ewe weights and body condition scores. Year-around, coded causes of death and reasons for removal from the flock, and any medical interventions (particularly anthelmintic treatments in lambs). We don't yet, as of mid-January, have the detailed list of traits to be collected, but will soon. It is desired that Innovation Flocks commit to the three-year term of the grant, if possible.

Please note that, though the grant will pay for most of the cost associated with genotyping for the reference population, the cost of collecting the DNA samples will be the responsibility of the participants. The cost to purchase the Tissue Sampling Units is currently \$2.10 each. Also, producers will continue to need to pay for the fecal egg count data.

Of course, flocks submitting DNA samples will receive feedback on many genetic markers of interest, parentage confirmations, etc. If you are interested and willing to be part of this project, please let Brett Pharo, John Carlson, John Anderson, or Zach Meinders know. We will soon be lining up the flocks and getting the project kicked off.

MEINDERS STOCK FARMS

BORN TO PERFORM

Online Polypay Sale, Vol. V

Monday, April 4, 2021

hosted by **PLAuctions.live**



Sale will feature our best 12 ram lambs out of 30 born this fall!
These rams will be feed efficiency tested and carcass scanned by sale day!

Ram NSIP #	DOB	BT	RT	Sire	Wwt	Pwwt	NLB	NLW	Mwwt	Mat Index
620121202100 1182	9/15/2021	2	2	MSF 20063	2.070	4.739	0.280	0.307	1.654	117.06
620121202100 1186	9/16/2021	2	2	DK 9107	2.348	6.541	0.310	0.299	1.597	116.64
620121202100 1188	9/16/2021	2	2	DK 9107	1.364	3.912	0.253	0.304	1.634	116.56
620121202100 1200	9/18/2021	2	2	HENKE 2115G	2.390	6.030	0.174	0.247	1.781	115.51
620121202100 1212	9/19/2021	2	2	DK 9107	1.539	3.802	0.267	0.294	1.581	116.07
620121202100 1229	9/19/2021	1	1	MSF 20063	2.106	3.697	0.225	0.303	1.870	117.68
620121202100 1232	9/20/2021	3	2	DK 9107	2.108	4.887	0.324	0.324	1.706	117.75
620121202100 1241	9/21/2021	2	2	Henke 2115G	1.509	4.066	0.272	0.307	1.139	115.40
620121202100 1243	9/21/2021	2	2	MSF 20063	1.901	3.863	0.197	0.249	1.698	115.01
620121202100 2158	10/8/2021	2	2	HV 7022	2.720	5.930	0.145	0.293	1.151	116.01

Also, mark your calendar for
June 28, 2022
Born to Perform, Vol. VI!

Sale will feature January-born ram lambs
sired by MSF 20063, Henke 2115G,
and our first lambs sired by
MSF 9013 (2.1 Mwwt & 7.8 Pwwt) and
Pharo 20110R (Outcross 116 index)!

NATIONWIDE
DELIVERY
AVAILABLE!



Meinders
Stock
Farms



Buffalo Center, Iowa

meindlersstockfarms.com

Zach Meinders | 515-320-3835 | meinders2@hotmail.com
Jake Meinders | 515-320-3738 | meinders5253@hotmail.com



Check out our
new website!

L&K
Sheep Co.

**WILLOUGHBY
SALES**

May 1st

POLYPAY *Brood Ewe* ONLINE SALE

We are excited to be hosting our first ever Online Polypay Brood Ewe Sale May 1st @ www.wlivestock.com. Our genetics are working in the show, production, and commercial industry. Pictures and info will be posted on our Facebook page closer to sale time.

Also look for our Consignments at the 2022 MIDWEST STUD RAM SALE June 13th-18th



Feel free to contact us, we
LOVE talking sheep!

Kayla-419-306-2451
Luke-419-889-5324

Facebook- L&K Sheep Co.



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 Spring newsletter
would need to be sent to brettpharo@gmail.com by
April 1.

2022 Annual

Membership Meeting

The 2022 APSA Annual Membership Meeting is once again expected to be held in conjunction with the Center of the Nation NSIP Sale at the Clay County Fairgrounds in Spencer, IA. The planned date is Friday, July 29. Mark your calendars, and come meet together with your fellow Polypay producers.



Attention Polypay Producers:

Have lambs like this ever been born to your Polypay ewes??



A number of Polypay producers have reported one or more lambs being born with a presumed genetic defect. They have been called “rhino” or “dozer” lambs. The affected lamb is born with an inability to raise its head/neck beyond level with its back. It is not as vigorous as its cohorts and can show other signs such as a shorter neck, shortened ears, curvature of the spine (scoliosis), or a dip in the spine (kyphosis), contracted but not frozen (not arthrogryposis) front legs, and milk reflux out the nose but without a cleft palate. The affected lamb cannot nurse the ewe because it cannot raise its head to reach the udder. Even though it is born alive, it usually dies or has to be euthanized despite the extra effort and the special attention. One or more lambs may be affected from the same ewe. The defect can occur in single and multiple births.

This genetic defect causing this syndrome appears to be specific to the Polypay breed. Last year, I polled all of the small ruminant veterinarians on the American Association of Small Ruminant Practitioners list-serve to see if anyone else had seen a similar defect in other breeds of sheep. No one had.

Dr Holly Neaton (also a Polypay breeder) and I have been working with Dr. Brenda Murdoch, a molecular geneticist, at the University of Idaho to find the genetic mutation causing this syndrome. The research is looking positive. She has identified some genetic regions that are potentially related to this syndrome. We

are also working with Dr. Maggie Highland, a pathologist at Kansas State University who will be necropsying affected lambs to see if she can find any obvious musculoskeletal abnormalities. A few lambs have already been necropsied, x-rayed and had CT scans. So far, she has not found anything other than a mega esophagus in the lambs with milk reflux.

If you are unfortunate enough to have one or more of these lambs born this spring, we would like to work with you to get the necessary samples that need to be sent to Dr. Murdoch to advance her research. To this point, Dr. Murdoch has not charged producers for the genetic analyses that she is doing. We are working to keep this project a low/no cost to producers with affected lambs.

Dr. Highland would also like a fresh, not frozen, lamb that is showing this defect so she can do a complete necropsy. There will be no charge to you to ship the lamb overnight to Dr. Highland or to have that necropsy performed.

If you think that you have a “dozer” lamb, please take some pictures and contact me and/or Dr. Neaton. We will give you instructions on what samples to collect and will make the necessary arrangements to get the samples to Dr. Murdoch or a lamb to Dr. Highland. Dr. Neaton can be reached on her cell phone: (952) 240-2192 or by email at: hjneaton@gmail.com. I can be reached on my cell phone: (785) 207-7084 or by email at: info@notkwyta.com.

The APSA Board of Directors is supportive of our efforts to identify this genetic mutation. Once the mutation is identified, a test can be developed to identify the carriers of the mutation.

Thank you for your help with this project. Dr. Kathy Ewert (fellow Polypay producer)

NSIIC Grant

The APSA grant submitted to the National Sheep Industry Improvement Center (NSIIC) was not funded, reports John Carlson who wrote the grant on behalf of APSA. The reason for not funding the grant is that the NSIIC said they would like to see a grant submitted with multiple breeds included and encouraged the APSA to resubmit next year with other breeds included.



Director Nominations

In this newsletter is a nomination form for the APSA Board of Directors. Consider whether you might be willing to serve and help guide the future of the American Polypay Sheep Association, or if you know someone that you feel would serve well. We need your input.

Candidates need to be nominated by three members and the form returned by March 31 along with a short resume to Mark Meurer, 1669 Midway Rd., Ashton, IL 61006. meurer66@gmail.com

2022 APSA Online only Fall Born Sale.

March 15, 2022

Terms and Conditions

Dear American Polypay Sheep Association members,

On behalf of the American Polypay Sheep Association, you are invited to consign to our first ever Polypay Fall Born Ewe Lamb and Ram Online Sale. This year's sale will be managed by Willoughby Livestock. The sale will be held on March 15th 2022 on [wlivestock.com](#).

1. All entry registrations must be received by Mark Van Roekel, 3891 390th Street, Orange City, Iowa 51041, with registration fee by March 7,2022. Willoughby will inform consignors on how to submit pictures and other pertinent information.
2. In addition to your 7% commission, there is a \$5 per head nonrefundable fee with a maximum of \$50 per consignor to accompany registration
3. All entries are to be fall born, August 15 to November 15, in years 2020 or 2021
4. A pen of ewes or ewe lambs will be 3 head or more
5. No limit on number of ewes or ewe lambs or pens per consignor
6. 1 ram consigned per consignor unless there are ewes or ewe lambs also consigned, then 1 more ram may be consigned making a maximum of 2 rams per consignor
7. All sheep must have interstate health papers and required to have testing done for B Ovis, scrapie resistance and free of foot rot and scald
8. Breeding soundness to be settled between buyer and seller. Breeding soundness exam suggested for mature rams prior to sale
9. Transportation to be arranged between buyer and seller
10. Ewe price minimum is set at \$350 and ram price at \$500.

Please consider being a part of this sale and being a part of one of the most progressive breeds in the industry!

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the APSA Sale committee Members Mark Van Roekle 712/540-8710 or Bryce Freking 605/310-0733!

2022 Polypay Breeders Directory

This membership directory includes members whose dues are paid up as of 1/1/22

COLORADO

**Billy & Helen Hardman
Uncompahgre Polyps**
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**Shawna Taylor-Shapiro
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Holly Neaton

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APSA Director Nomination Form

We, the undersigned members of the American Polypay Sheep Association,

nominate _____
to serve as a Director on the Board of Directors of the American Polypay Sheep Association.

Name _____

Address_____

Name _____

Address_____

Name _____

Address_____

Three separate voting active memberships must sign this form for it to be accepted as official.

I, _____, desire to, and will, serve to the best of my ability on the Board of Directors of the American Polypay Sheep Association, for a three-year term if elected. Attached is my resume (not to exceed 200 words), which may be mailed to all APSA members so that they may judge as to my qualifications to serve on the Board of Directors of the APSA.

I certify that I am a breeder of purebred Polypay sheep registered with the American Polypay Sheep Association, and I pledge myself to support and obey the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of this association, and the Breeder's Guidelines as contained therein, and to advance the production objectives of the Polypay breed.

Nominee's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Return completed nomination form and accompanying resume by March 31, 2022 to:

Mark Meurer, APSA President
1669 Midway Rd.
Ashton, IL 61006
meurer66@gmail.com

2022 APSA Online only Fall Born Sale.

March 15, 2022

Consignment form.

All animals must meet the breed requirements as stated in the American Polypay Sheep Association Bylaw's as well as be from multiple birth. All consignments must be accompanied by a APSA Registration Paper for each animal.

Farm Name: _____

Breeder Name: _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Ram _____

Age Category:

Yearling Ram _____ Ram Lamb _____

Registration Number _____ Farm ID _____

Scrapie ID _____

Birth Date _____ Birth Type/ Raised _____

A second ram shall only be allowed if accompanied by a pen of ewes.

Ram _____

Age Category:

Yearling Ram _____ Ram Lamb _____

Registration Number _____ Farm ID _____

Scrapie ID _____ Birth Date _____ Birth Type/ Raised _____

Ewes: Number of head in Pen _____

Age Category:Yearling ewes _____ Ewe Lambs _____

Ewes: Number of head in Pen _____

Age Category:Yearling ewes _____ Ewe Lambs _____