



SCHSIA NEWES

JULY 2017

ANNUAL MEETING

This is coming out a little earlier than I planned but I have been told to get the information out about the annual meeting. It will be held 18-19 August in Nashville, Indiana. We are fortunate to have Dr, Godfrey from St. Croix, US Virgin Islands. We are going to get our St. Croix information right from the horse's mouth, so to speak. Or put another way, since it was too expensive for the mountain to visit Mohammed he is visiting us. A limited number of rooms are being reserved for SCHSIA members at the Brown County Inn at a discounted rate but you need to mention the promo code to get the discount. If have trouble getting up and down stairs, actually getting up is the hard part to get down all you need to do is lean forward and let go, you need to get a room on the first floor since there is not elevator.

On Friday the education schedule is:

9:30-11:10 Dr. Larry Mrozinski – Live evaluation of breeding stock and common faults

12:30-2:30 Dr. Godfrey – Parasites and late weaning

Plus a bunch of other stuff. For a complete list of everything you need to know go to the SCHSIA website.

THE PREZ SAYZ

I hope everybody had a good spring lambing with lots of ewe lambs. I also encourage everybody to tell their St.Croix story to anyone who will listen.

POLLED AND WHITE

Polled and white is the breed standard and most of the time that is what you will get. And if there were only one gene for color and one gene for polled then you would get that every time.

Unfortunately, that is not the case. Through rigid selection over the last 20 years the incidence of anything else is becoming more and more rare. But horns and color do still occasionally occur: and are immediately culled by all responsible breeders. We know that the color genes are in there because we allow a spot the size of a quarter and in the past year we have discussed freckles.

If you have ever seen pictures of the sheep on the island you have noticed that they are not all pure white. Utah State University, when they made their original selection, arbitrarily chose pure white, what was then called the Virgin Island White. For the most part, all of our sheep are descended from those sheep brought in by USU so those color genes are still in there someplace.

White is the dominant gene so will always cover up the recessive color gene. However, if you happen to get two recessive genes then something unwanted is apt to show up. Actually, if there were only one gene involved you would get some color 25% of the time but since multiple genes are involved the color happens rarely and as we cull those out it become fewer and fewer. I have talked about color but the same thing applies to polled. In the past twenty years I have had purebred St. Croix that had black legs and a black mask and a set of horns that made almost a full curl before he went to market. All out of white polled parents

So if some kind of weird looking sheep shows up don't get all hyper and start blaming the person that sold you the parents. All the breeders I know in this organization are responsible and proud of their animals and will not sell you a sheep that will reflect badly on them. Stuff happens in the world of genetics.

THE EDITOR

Since I am taking over the newsletter I thought it might be well to tell you a little about myself. I have been involved with livestock for 65 years. My dad and I got our first sheep in 1953 and they were a mixed bunch of wool ewes. Over the course of the next almost 50 years we had a variety of breeds but they were pretty well mixed up by the end since we kept changing rams. My wife and I got into the St. Croix in 1997 when we were having a hard time finding anybody to shear a small flock and we couldn't give the wool away. About five years ago we also got some Katahdin. We are located at the foot of the coast range in Oregon on 28 acres of unimproved native pasture and we get a lot of rain in the winter and none in the summer and lamb out about 30 ewes every year. I have degrees in livestock from Oregon State University and Texas A&M. In addition to sheep I have also raised cattle, hogs, rabbits, and broilers. I spent my summers growing up on my uncle's farm where I was involved with field crops and

dairy cows. And I am old enough to remember my grandad having a barn full of draft horses and using belt driven equipment.

I hope to make this an interesting and informative newsletter. I would like to include a short profile on a different breeder each issue and will be sending out questionnaires. I would appreciate pictures and stories from any of you that have some of interest. If any of you have questions I will try and answer them too. Some of you have had your first sheep for only a short time and some have had them for many years so some things that I may put in will be new to all and some will be of interest only to the new breeders. If there is anything you don't like about what I put in feel free to tell me and if there is something you want to see tell me that too.

As I go along the newsletter will slowly change till I get where I like it and am comfortable with it.

EATING

Have you ever sat and watched your sheep eat? When they chew their cuds some are right chewers and some are left chewers. By that I mean that some always move their jaws from right to left and some from left to right. When they eat hay, they still tend to be right or left chewers but will switch if they need to get that last little bit of hay in that's hanging out the other side.

