



Preserving Breed Standards since 1983

SPRING 2023 NEWSLETTER

SCHSIA PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hello and greetings to all SCHSIA members,

I hope everyone is well into their lambing season. We here at the Just Right Ranch have almost finished, only one more first timer to go. As always I wish we had more girls born, but I have learned to live with whatever the Good Lord gives us.

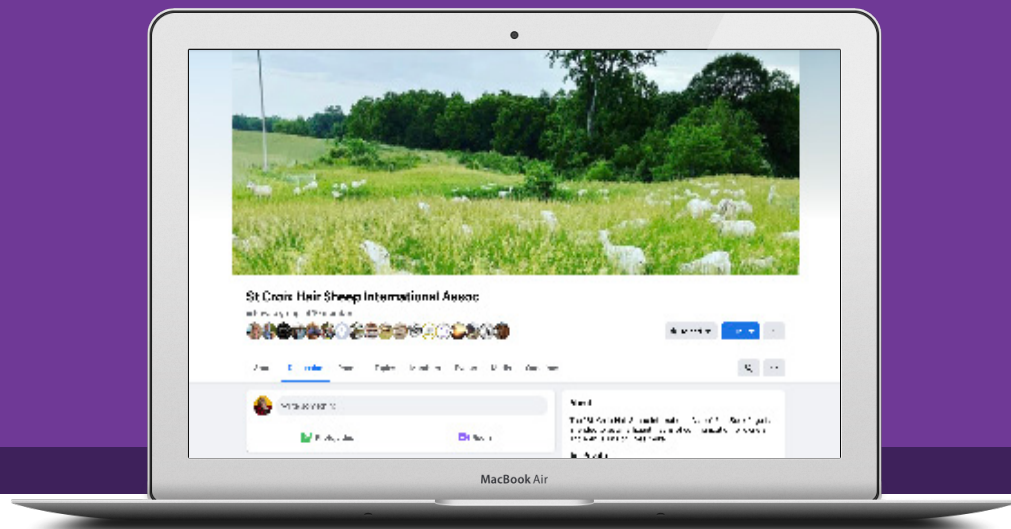
There seems a lot more chatter about USDA scrapie tags these past couple of years. I encourage you to make sure you are in compliance with your local and state regulations. You can find a world of information on the USDA website. One way to ensure that you never have this problem is Codon 171 testing. We have been breeding with only RR (resistance to scrapie) rams now for 10 plus years. By using a RR ram your offspring will be at least a QR, eventually your entire flock will be RR.

Please continue to tell the story of St. Croix and their attributes. We all want to grow and preserve the breed standard of white and polled.

I would like to suggest that when you are selling sheep that you inform any potential buyers that you may come in contact with, that there are two associations. Ours, which promotes polled and white sheep, and the other who accept color and scurs. When talking about this topic, please explain to your buyer why you chose our association.

Thank you again for being a member of our association, please feel free to reach out to any of us if you have any questions or wish to be a board member.

Rob Bass
President SCHSIA
rbass07@yahoo.com



CONNECT WITH US ON FACEBOOK!

We are excited to share that we are in our 8th year of having a Facebook/social media presence! We have been very fortunate to have 890 members who often engage in varied information about polled and white St Croix Hair Sheep. We gained over 50 members this past year and most new members come during the Spring lamb season. As long as perspective members answer the two small questions, we will approve their membership. Very few are declined. We are also fortunate to not deal with a lot of spam or other problems and we thank everyone for that. Please help us spread the word to other St Croix enthusiasts and let your farm clients know that we exist and are here to help. There are many good shepherds online who are willing to engage and answer all kinds of questions. We love it when you share pictures of your flock or other items of interest that may interest other SCHSIA site members. Let's do this together!

Fun Facts: Of our 890 members, 649 are active participants. The most common age range of the members is 35-65 years old.

Save the Dates

Annual Meeting

Tally Ho the wagons and head out West this summer for our SCHSIA Annual Meeting!

July 28/29th for our education day and in person meeting.

Make your family plans to hit Mt Hood and the Cascade Range, the Pacific Ocean beaches, the mighty Columbia River Gorge and of course the Willamette Valley! SO much to see and do before or after our 2-day get together.

We sure hope you will join us for all the fun with people who enjoy St Croix as much as you do!!

More details to follow soon!

Other Dates to Watch for...

50th Annual Sheep and Goat Field Day and 2023 Texas Sheep and Goat Expo
San Angelo TX
Friday and Saturday, August 18-19, 2023

43rd Annual Ozark Fall Farmfest
Springfield MO
October. 7, 8, & 9, 2022

CURRENT SCHSIA BOARD MEMEBERS

PRESIDENT: Rob Bass, Just Right Ranch, Palestine, TX

VICE PRESIDENT: Travis Ellis, Ellis Sheep Company, Maysville, MO

TREASURER: Lydia Rodriguez, D & L RANCH, Stuart, OK

SECRETARY: Jesse Rainey, The Rainey Farm, Seymour, MO

WESTERN DIRECTOR: Laurel Field, Three Sisters Livestock, Canby, OR

SOUTH CENTRAL DIRECTOR: Keith Stephens, Anexso Farm, Linden, TX

NORTH CENTRAL DIRECTOR: Maggie Alcorn, Alcorn Farms, Simpsonville, KY

EASTERN DIRECTOR: Barbara Salisbury, Dominion Farm, Quicksburg, VA

AT LARGE DIRECTOR/PAST PRESIDENT: Kaleb Kahl, Kahl Farm, Bunker Hill, IL

Please reach out to the director in your area for questions, concerns and ideas!

On Your Mark, Get Set, Rotate

Travis Ellis - Ellis Sheep Company

Spring is finally here. The birds are chirping, trees are starting to blossom, and the pastures are starting to turn green with fresh new grass. I'm sure that everybody can scream for joy in those three things.

Spring means two things for me at my farm, new life with lambing and our rotational grazing program taking on with full steam ahead. I practice regenerative agriculture at my farm. To me, regenerative agriculture means to raise my sheep in a way that mimics nature, helps build soil, and broadens the plant diversity. Rotational grazing is just a small piece in regenerative agriculture, but it's what I want to talk about and tell you how I do it in this newsletter.

When Lewis and Clark went on their expedition to explore the west, they documented herds of grazing ruminant animals grazing in the prairies. There were several thousands of animals in these herds. All of these animals would migrate with the seasons and move with predator pressures. Wolves, coyotes, and bears would cause these animals to move through the prairies. The herds of ruminant animals would be "Rotational" grazed by the predators and the amount of forage available. What was left behind these herds was their manure, urine, and trampled grass. All of these things help build carbon, which in turn builds soil.



We have 11 permanent paddocks set up on our 30 acres at our home property. These permanent paddocks are fenced with electric woven wire fences. The paddocks will range from 2 acres to 5 acres. The permanent fence is 36 inches tall and has 7 horizontal wires. Once all of the ewes have lambed and the lambs are going strong, we start grazing with full force. Our hope is that the grass is close to 6 inches tall when we start rotational grazing. Parasites live under the 6 inch point, so we try to stay away from having the sheep eat below that mark as much as possible. We will put all of the ewes and lambs in one big flock and give them enough grass (area) for 24 hours. Sometimes that's a whole paddock, sometimes we will break that 2 acre paddock in half and have 2, 1 acre paddocks. We will use plastic step-in posts and a poly braid electric wire fence to divide the permanent paddocks. We can keep our sheep in with two wires, if the poly braid is kept hot.

We will put all of the ewes and lambs in one big flock and give them enough grass (area) for 24 hours. Sometimes that's a whole paddock, sometimes we will break that 2 acre paddock in half and have 2, 1 acre paddocks. We will use plastic step-in posts and a poly braid electric wire fence to divide the permanent paddocks. We can keep our sheep in with two wires, if the poly braid is kept hot. When I say enough grass for 24 hours, then it means enough grass that the sheep will eat a third, trample a third, and leave a third. So, the size of the paddock will depend on the available forage. We like to move our sheep every day, but no two farms are the same. Another way of thinking of the forage is, take half and leave half. AWe will put all of the ewes and lambs in one big flock and give them enough grass (area) for 24 hours. Sometimes that's a whole paddock, sometimes we will break that 2 acre paddock in half and have 2, 1 acre paddocks. We will use plastic step-in posts and a poly braid electric wire fence to divide the permanent paddocks.



We can keep our sheep in with two wires, if the poly braid is kept hot. t the minimum, don't take the grass down over half. The most we let our sheep stay in one paddock is 4 days. After 4 days, the sheep will go back and graze on new regrowth. Once we move the sheep off a paddock we let that paddock "re-cover". Recovering means that we will let that grass grow and not put pressure on it for 30 to 45 days during the growing season.



Our rule at our farm is that the forage isn't ready to be grazed, until it has a point on it again. To us that means it has gone through its recovery process and is ready for work again. We live in the fescue belt, fescue is a cool season grass. During late July and into August it gets extremely hot here in Northwest Missouri. The fescue will stop growing and almost go dormant. We will slow down our rotations and give bigger paddocks. Doing this will give longer recovery periods for our other paddocks.

The sheep love to be moved to new, fresh, green grass. When they see or hear our Polar-is Ranger, they know they are getting moved. It is like fighting through kids in a candy shop to get the gate opened up fast enough so they can get to the new grass. Once the sheep get used to us moving them everyday, they will follow us anywhere. It's truly a great experience.



This is the way that we do it on our farm. Everybody has their own context. Not every farm is the same. I encourage everyone to use rotational grazing in a way that is practical on your farm.

In Lewis and Clark's journal they made comments about the grasses being grown in the prairies. They could take the tops of the grass and tie a knot around their saddle horn while on their horse. I don't know about you, but I would love to have grass that is lush and productive. Using regenerative agriculture will help us make old, broken ground productive again.

Random Facebook Photos



Welcome Our New Members of 2023

Competition Farms - Carrie Marlowe - Chatham, VA
Doug Mosley - Moss Bluff, LA
Shepherd Inn Farm - Michael Trevelline - Wellsville, OH
Yaldi Farm - Joel & Marissa Kendhammer - Cashton, WI
Denise Purdy - Sublimity, OR
Tim Swart II - Enid, OK
Angelina & Josie Aleman - Alachua, FL
Mary Ann Pridgen - Claxton, GA
Spring Mountain Farm - Joseph "Scott" Welch - Warrensville, NC
E.W.D Katahdins & St. Croix - Ernest W. Deforest - Bay City, TX
JR Cattle & Sheep - Juan Ramirez - Cado Mills, TX

Website Updates

The St. Croix Hair Sheep International Association is currently doing an upgrade to the website. We are needing new/updated pictures to use on the website, Facebook, and promotion items. Smart phone pictures will work for several pictures. We are especially looking for the professional camera photos to use. So if you have a good digital camera, we are needing some pictures that have a resolution at 300 dpi or above. We are asking our members to email any pictures that they want to share to Vice President, Travis Ellis, at ellissheepcompany@gmail.com. These pictures will only be used for the promotion of St. Croix Hair Sheep in the St. Croix Hair Sheep International Association.

GET TO KNOW YOUR BOARD MEMBERS



Secretary

Jesse Rainey, The Rainey Farm, Seymour, MO

Hi! I'm Jesse Rainey, my family and I bought our Farm in Seymour Missouri in 2013. Shortly after we moved to the farm I went to get fencing materials from Powerflex Fence, not only did I leave with fencing but also an amazing job which I've had for 9 years.

When John and I bought our farm he went into it thinking we would just have a herd of Beef Cattle.

He didn't realize my crazy obsession with animals until it was too late.

We started with small herd of cattle, then I thought I needed chickens. Do you know a dozen chickens will quickly turn into 300. After that it was rabbits, well who would have known rabbits are way to cute to butcher so that was a terrible idea. We then got into hogs. That was fun, until feed was high and prices were low.

Now you're probably wondering how did I got involved with the Sheep?

I had to finally realized cattle are going to be the least maintenance thing for us while we both hold full time jobs. So off we go to pick up more cows and what happens, the Rancher has a crate of lambs that had been pulled off Ewes to be bottle fed.

I looked at John and he just shook his head and that's right we came home with a dozen bottle lambs.

I have never had Sheep, knew nothing about Sheep. We raised them all, and I felt like a confident Shepherd. So after a year I felt we were ready to take on more and that's when I reached out to Travis Ellis who I had met through Powerflex and bought my first registered St. Croix flock. This Spring I am expecting my first babies from them.

When we are not tied down to the farm Our favorite pastime is camping and riding horses. We spend several weekends throughout the year trail riding in neighboring states.

I absolutely love our Sheep!! I am looking forward to the new adventures as I step into the role of Secretary in this amazing group. I hope to be able to continue to learn more about this fascinating breed and share my knowledge and stories with others to keep the breed growing.

I have also agreed to take on the Newsletter. I have some new ideas that I would like to run with. I am wanting to encourage activity from our members. I would like to hopefully get four out every year.



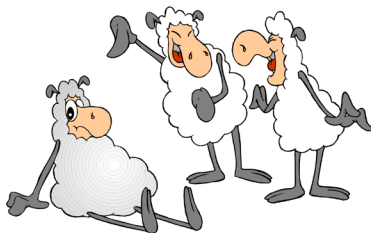
Newsletter Updates

I am sure everyone has noticed a few new changes to the Newsletter. My goal is to publish a seasonal Newsletter to keep all Members informed on upcoming events, or just to share a little about each other.

One new addition I think will be very fun is the Featured Flock, where Members can email me a little history about their Farms and pictures to go with it. This is a chance to just show off your Farm and what you do. (St. Croix encouraged but not limited to) I am open to all ideas just email therainey-farm06@gmail.com and let me hear what you want and I will try to work as many in as possible.

This Group is only possible because of our Members so let's share those ideas and stories that have to help you become the Shepherd's you are to encourage the New Shepherds.

Why was the sheep arrested on the freeway?



Because she did a ewe-turn!

16 REASONS TO CHOOSE ST. CROIX HAIR SHEEP

1. Highest Parasite Resistance
2. No shearing
3. High Lambing Percentages
4. Good Mothers
5. Early Puberty
6. Lamb at 12 Months
7. High Lamb Survivability
8. Good Flocking Instincts
9. Good Milking Ability
10. Hoof Rot Resistant
11. Fly Strike Resistant
12. Non-Selective Grazers
13. Both Sexes Polled
14. Good Temperament
15. Heat and Cold Tolerant
16. Fine Grained Low Fat Meat

FEATURED FLOCK by Gary and Maggie Alcorn

Nestled in the middle of horse country of Simpsonville, KY you will find the farm of Gary and Maggie Alcorn and their flock of sheep. Welcome to Alcorn Farms! We have been here since April 2021 and love it! We escaped the craziness of Louisville and moved out to 27 acres where we can have peace and quiet, and our sheep on our property! When we lived in Louisville, our sheep were on a small farm 8 minutes from our house.

We started in the sheep industry in 2019. We bought our starter set of 4 ewes, 1 ram, and 1 wether from Gary and Joyce Kiebler. Gary and Joyce continue to mentor us and are our “go to” people when we have the unexpected happen! What a great resource! Currently we have approximately 30 ewes, 3 rams, 1 wether and 39 lambs that were born in March of this year. This year we lambed 21 ram lambs and 18 ewe lambs.

Our farm is still a work in progress. We have built a large barn with a lambing shed with 13 jugs, a general area, and an area saved for our inventory of hay, straw, and grain. At one time in March, all 13 jugs were active! We bring our ewes in about 1 week prior to lambing in order for them to settle in. We were pretty good this year judging which ewe needed a jug. A few times we came over to the shed and had a surprise of a ewe who had lambed in the general area or out in the field overnight. We keep the ewe and her lambs in the jug for 2-4 days post delivery for bonding. Then we do something a little unique. We use 2 rolls of electric fence that we purchased from Premier 1 and establish a large “play pen”. It is in the play pen that we observe how the mom and babies do together and with other new lambs and moms. This year it was invaluable to us as we had a year 2021 ewe deliver triplets and once they went out to the playpen, she left them. She didn't watch over them or nurse them. Fail! Back to the jug for a few days to bond more with all her babies! When we tried her again a few days later, she was perfect! She laid with them, nursed them, and watched over them as she should.

Gary and I use alfalfa hay purchased from a neighbor in the first few weeks of life for these little lambs and ewes. After a few weeks, they progress back to the hay that we raise which is orchard grass mixed with a little clover. They love it. We offer the alfalfa as well until we have exhausted our inventory. We have 2 large hay fields on our property, and we also mow about 35 acres of hay for two of our neighbors. It allows us plenty of hay for our animals and we sell the extra hay to other farmers in the fall and winter. Like most people, we keep baking soda and minerals available to all our flock all year.



Our sheep are guarded by two Anatolian Shepherds: Dolly and Loretta. We bought Dolly already named and her puppy we named Loretta as we bought her on Loretta Lynn's 90 th birthday. What a pair! We have learned so very much about Livestock Guard Dogs "LGD"s. A lot of what we learned was from the SCHSIA Annual Meeting at the Sheep & Goat Expo in Texas last year! It was perfect timing for us as we were new to using LGDs. If you are going to use LGDs, we highly recommend raising the LGD puppy in the barn with your sheep!



To keep track of which lamb belongs to which ewe, we use dog collars of different colors and brass tags that we put on the lamb at birth. We have a "Lambing sheet" for each ewe and on that sheet, we document which color of collar and the brass tag number. At 4-6 weeks, we administer CD&T to each lamb, remove their collar and give them their ear tag. That too is documented on the lambing sheet and an extensive Excel workbook that Maggie keeps. Lambs stay with their moms in the pasture for roughly 90 days. Around this 90 day mark, we start to notice moms weaning the lambs on their own. So, we gather them all up, we check over each lamb and separate the ram lambs, ewe lambs, and ewes for at least 4 weeks into 3 separate pastures. Each pasture has a heated waterer with city water, a shed for protection from weather, and sheep braying for their mamas, their babies, and/or their siblings!

If you are ever in the area, call us and stop in! We are pleased with what we've accomplished in 2 years, but our wish list is long. We also love to hear how you raise your sheep. So, call and come by. We'd love to meet you and share stories.



If you would like to be like to be metioned in the Featured Flock please send your Story to theraineyfarm06@gmail.com I would love to share your storoy with the members. -Jesse Rainey



Mike Wilson



Kim Rogers Ferrand



Kahl Farm



Maggie Alcorn



Three Sisters Livestock

POST YOUR PICTURES ON FACEBOOK FOR A CHANCE TO BE FEATURED IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER!



<https://www.stcroixhairsheep.org/>



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/SCHSIA/>



Preserving Breed Standards since 1983

secretary@stcroixhairsheep.org

8835 S. Lone Elder Rd
Canby, Oregon 97013