Impact of Sheep and Wool Growers in Agriculture

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What’s New With Sheep?
What’s New With Sheep

• Overview of PA Sheep Production
• Genetic Selection Tools
• Wool Processing
• The New Mowers and Weed Eaters
• Ethnic Markets
• Challenges
PA Sheep Production

- 3590 Sheep operations
- $9.5 million in sales
- 64,072 sheep sold
- 58,459 breeding ewes
- 96,648 total inventory
- Ranked 17th nationally in sales
- Ranked 5th nationally in number of operations and 15th in inventory
County Rankings for Sheep Inventory

- 1\textsuperscript{st} Washington
- 2\textsuperscript{nd} Lancaster
- 3\textsuperscript{rd} York
- 4\textsuperscript{th} Bedford
- 5\textsuperscript{th} Greene
Genetic Selection Tools

• What you see is what you get
  o Maybe
  o Maybe not
Genetic Selection Tools

• National Sheep Improvement Program
• LambPlan
• Estimated Breeding Values
  o Genetic linkages for performance
Estimated Breeding Values

- Growth
- Milk production
- Lambing percentage
- Lamb survival
- Wool quality
- Muscling
- Fatness
Impact of Genetic Selection Tools?

- Faster growing lambs
- More lambs born
- Higher quality wool
- Higher quality meat
- Efficiency and profitability
Wool Processing

• Superwash
  o Machine washable
  o Chargeurs in Jamestown, SC

• Military garments

• Fine wools
  o Merino
Wool Products

Which sweater would be less itchy?

Which fabric contains more wool?
The New Mowers and Weed Eaters

• Targeted grazing
• Hard to mow areas
• Weed control
Ethnic Markets

- Lamb size matched to holiday
- Roast like a turkey
- Intact animals
- No blemishes
Challenges

• Predators
• Internal parasites
• Foot problems
• Smaller industry
Predators

How many sheep and lambs are killed each year in the United States?

250,000
Predators

What predator causes the largest losses?

Coyotes

52%
Internal Parasites

What is the biggest issue with internal parasites?

Resistant Parasites
Internal Parasites

• Anemia
• FAMACHA
• Pasture Management
  o Rotations
  o 3 inch forage
Foot Problems

- Footrot
- Foot scald
- Zactran
Smaller Industry

• Infrastructure
  o Equipment and supplies
  o Veterinary care
  o Medications
Efforts to Increase Sheep Numbers

• Let’s Grow Campaign

• Production Efficiencies
  o 12 Best Practices
  o Penn State Sheep Home Study Course
  o Shepherds Symposium
  o Other Field Days and Workshops
Support American Lamb

• Ask for American Lamb at restaurants
• Buy lamb from local producer
• Wear wool