The Guiding Sheep

The Quarterly Newsletter
Of the North Carolina Sheep Producers Association

Issue 2 2020

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From the President

Welcome to the second edition of **The Guiding Sheep**, the quarterly newsletter by the North Carolina Sheep Producers Association. I hope this edition finds all of you healthy and moving into summer with hay fields lush and ready to cut after all of the rain. For me, the day to day routine that comprises the farming lifestyle has helped me keep the panic and uncertainty of the Covid-19 pandemic at a distance. Even though the bulk of our periphery lives has slowed down and some of it even shut down, there have still been animals to care for, crops to be planted, crops to be harvested, wind and rain storms to be dealt with as best as we may and the sun has risen and set every day. Please don't think that I am making light of the huge disruptions and changes that have occurred this year. To see all of the livestock spring shows shut down, the fiber festivals cancelled and many of our processors shut down as well as the overall impact this pandemic has had on the social life that many know has definitely given me a new understanding of the term "take nothing for granted". As a friend told me a couple of days ago…"it has been a year".

–Susan

Meet the Board

Alisia Moore is the Secretary of the NCSPA. She has been a 4-H volunteer leader in Franklin County for approximately 20 years and serves as a board member on the Carolina FiberFest, the Artisan Fiber Mill Network and the Youth Conservationist Program.
Alisia, along with her husband Albert, started raising sheep on Discovery Farm in Youngsville, NC in 2006 in order to provide their son, Joey, and other 4-H friends with project/show animals. The family has produced numerous Grand Champions of sheep. They are currently raising sheep for wool. Alesia and her family own Shepherd's Gate Fiber Mill and Especially for Ewe Fiber Arts Studio, where they process fibers (wool, alpaca, llama, mohair, etc) into yarns and other products for individual farms as well as offering classes related to fiber and farming.

Upcoming Events

NCSPA Shearing Class
On hold until permission is given for gatherings of more than 10 people. The tentative location will be at Windy Wool Windings of Vale NC in either late September, October. Keep watching the website for more information.

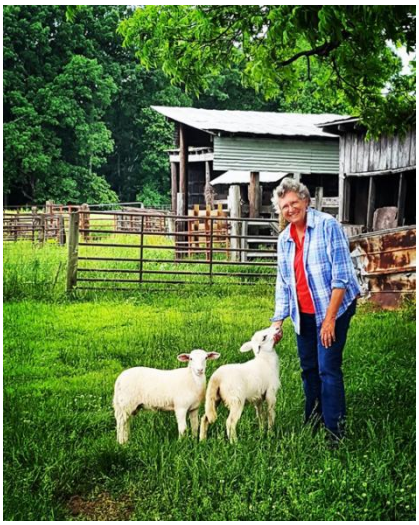
NCSPA Webinars
NCSPA will be creating and hosting four training webinars this fall. The subjects will be: 1. Preparing ewes and rams for breeding
2. Livestock Guardians
3. Marketing: Meat, Fiber, Farm
4. How to purchase and prepare fleeces for value added products
Times and dates will be posted on the website as well as Facebook announcements and emails.

2021 Annual NCSPA Meeting
Saturday, January 16, 2021
Guilford County Extension Office
Registration information to be added soon

Amy Kidd is currently the Chairperson of the Education Committee. She graduated from North Carolina State University in 1997 with a Bachelor's Degree in Animal Science and in 1999 with a Masters Degree in Agricultural and Extension Education. Amy has been teaching high school agriculture since 1997 and is currently teaching at Providence Grove High School, primarily in Animal Science. She is also an Adjunct instructor for the University of Mount Olive program at Providence Grove. In 2013, one of her students asked to add sheep to the school farm. The school added Katadins and that opened the door for an interest in fiber sheep while attending the N C State Fair with her students. In 2016, her family decided to start raising Gotland sheep at her home farm. She is married to her husband, Bruce, for the past seventeen years and has two daughters who help on the farm.

Helene Dooley, her husband and young son own Skybrooke Farm located near Mocksville NC. The family currently owns Romney sheep, along with alpacas and a llama. Helene spins the wool from her fiber animals and creates roving which she sells in the farm store. The farm also participates in Agritourism by offering several activities on the farm to the public throughout the year. Per Helene "My dream has been to have a fiber flock and show sheep. I enjoy hanging out with the wooly sheep."

Karen Jones McAdams and her husband Howard run McAdams Farm in Efland in Orange County. Karen has a small flock of 25 Katahdin ewes and markets all the meat in retail cuts at their farm store and at Carrboro Farmer's Market. In addition to sheep, the farm grows about 2 acres of pick your own strawberries, 10 acres of vegetables, cut flowers and fruit. The farm also runs 70 mama beef cows. Karen retired from the Cooperative Extension Service as a livestock/crops agent and is involved in many church and agricultural groups in her community.



What's Happening?

NCSPA Shearing Class: Postponed until September/October depending on the Covid -19 regulations at that time. This is a class for beginning shearers or anyone wanting to polish their skills. The Instructor is Stuart Matthews with John Brasfield assisting. The total cost is $130 for non-members of NCSPA participants or $100 for NCSPA members. Lunch will be provided. This first class is limited to the first five to sign up and pay a 50% deposit by two weeks

For General Information or Membership:
NC Sheep Producers
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NCSheepProducer@gmail.com
Website:www.ncsheep.com

Member Benefits:

- Mentoring shepherds;

- Discounts on educational workshops;

- Assistance locating area wool/fiber shearers;

- Representation on the American Sheep Industry Board;

- American Sheep Industry Monthly Magazine Subscription;

- Networking opportunities with industry peers;

- And more!

Join us! Visit www.ncsheep.com /membership

before the advertized class date. Sign up forms are available at https://forms.gle/5gvpqmbir4hqwbuua. Mail the 50% deposit to Charles Young, SCSPA Treasurer 14145 NC Hwy 194 N Lansing NC 28643 **Lister Fusion Shears are being provided by Wahl Clipper at no cost**. More details are available on the NCSPA website.

Wool Pool

At this time, it is our understanding that there will **not** be a wool pool held in North Carolina this year. Reports are that with the Covid-19 pandemic, the world wool supply has had very little movement and the warehouses are not taking very much wool at this time.

Make It With Wool

Jean Thomas, Chairperson of the North Carolina Make it With Wool Competition has been working diligently to get information out on this competition in spite of the Covid-19 restrictions. She has contacted the fiber support group, Local Cloth in Asheville to begin working on a collaborative effort with them to get the fiber farmers, fiber artists and designers interested in the competition. Local Cloth is an organization located in the Asheville area. Their membership is compiled mainly of fiber farmers, weavers, spinners and fiber designers who are closely linked to the Asheville area of tourism.

The Make it With Wool Competition is open to everyone from pre-teen (12 yrs or younger) to adults (age 25 or older). If you are interested in learning more about the Make it With Wool program, you may contact Jean Thomas at ejthom41@bellsouth.net.

American Sheep Industry Update

The ASI has been hard at work making sure the sheep producers of the United States get a portion of the Covid-19 Recovery monies. Per ASI President, Benny Cox, "$125 million was approved for at the farm gate payment and $350 million industry wide payments. The ASI team was also successful in getting the USDA to accept bids on an already approved $17 million lamb purchases which will put both lamb loins and shanks into the government food banks to help clear some of the lamb meat back log and feed those in need."

I am hoping you all got copies of the means and ways to apply for those funding opportunities. Letters, notices and applications were sent out via NCSPA, Cooperative Extension and social media posts.

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