

American Sheep Producers look for market expansion

DENVER, Colo. - There was no doubt left that the American sheep industry has many opportunities to grow and expand its numbers over the next few years if they can meet the challenge of high labor costs and predators.

This was the keynote of the 26th Annual Meeting of the American Sheep Producers Council this past week at the Cosmopolitan Hotel in Denver.

Particular emphasis was given to the tremendous opportunities in the food-service field for domestic lamb by speakers on the program including Brian Harron, Executive Vice President of the National Restaurant Association, as well as Zoe Coulson of the Good Housekeeping Institute in New York.

Re-elected as officers of the Council, which is a nation wide promotion organization headquartered in Denver, were E. William Hess, president, of Barbourville, Virginia; Chris Joufflas, vice president, of Grand Junction, Colorado; and Bill Pfluger, secretary-treasurer, of San Angelo, Texas. Joufflas is also president of the Colorado Wool Growers Association and chairman of the board of the Agriculture Council of America.

Named as Wool Advisory

Committee Chairman was Paul Getz of Columbus, Ohio, and named to head up the Lamb Advisory Committee is P. J. Cook of Belle Fourche, South Dakota. The two other members of the Council's Executive Committee are Roscoe Rich of Burley, Idaho, president of the National Wool Growers Association, and Norman Palm of Elk Mountain, Wyoming, who is president of the National Lamb Feeders' Association.

The annual meeting of 104 delegates and directors saw new opportunities in an expanded foodservice program by the Council which will encourage more use of lamb in the dine-out industry.

Harron said the National Restaurant Association estimates that the fast food sector now comprises about one-third of the commercial food market and that by 1990 the dine out or meals eaten away from home trend will account for almost 50 per cent of the average food consumption.

He said because there are more working women in the labor force, there is a greater trend toward dining out, and leading the growth in this area is the fast food or quick meal type of restaurant.

He encouraged American

sheepmen to increase their production and take advantage of this market, which is not being filled by domestic production.

Other speakers on the program added their emphasis to the fact that the sheep industry must grow, having fallen to its lowest point in numbers since the Civil War.

A Blueprint for Expansion program anticipates there will be a turnaround in sheep numbers in 1980 and the start of a gradual growth over the next eight years.

Hess said the industry has taken the initiative to develop some long range plans, as well as the current enthusiasm within the industry as reflected in higher prices and greater demand for breeding stock.

Dick Biglin, executive director of the Council, said that the promotion program for lamb and wool is going to expand in anticipation of the growth of the sheep industry.

He cited the severe competition from imports from New Zealand and Australia, but the domestic producer must realize he must provide more product to satisfy the demand if he is going to be competitive. There are numerous opportunities for growth in the sheep industry, for a greater use of lamb and wool, but the

industry must realize that it is in a desperate fight for survival in a highly competitive market.

Coulson of the Good Housekeeping Institute said there are great changes taking place in our life styles through the country, and that the promotion of lamb and wool, and the industry itself, should be very aware of these changes.

She cited the change in the attitude of parents toward their children and the fact that parents are much more inclined now to live their own lives after the children leave home.

She said there is a great deal more interest in people doing things for themselves, including cooking and sewing and home maintenance. There is a tremendous growth in the security aspect of buildings and homes. There is becoming a predominance of one and two member households, and there are a large number of senior citizens who will make up an increasing proportion of our population.

The delegate body gave a vote of appreciation and confidence to the American members of the Lamb Promotion Coordination Committee, who are Howard Derrick of Eldorado, Texas; Jamie Kothman of Menard,

Texas; and Bill Siddoway of St. Anthony, Idaho.

The LPCC is a joint committee of the U.S., Australia and New Zealand to discuss conditions in the various countries and outline problems within the various sheep industries in those countries. LPCC also conducts an educational program through ASPC to which all three countries contribute funds.

The outlook for wool is extremely good, as cited by Felix J. Colangelo, president of The Wool Bureau in New York. The Wool Bureau is part of the International Wool Secretariat and is supported by foreign wool growers in five countries, including the major wool producing countries of Australia and New Zealand.

The Wool Bureau, Colangelo pointed out, promotes wool in this country without reference to country or origin, nor do they favor one type of wool over another. This accrues to the benefit of the domestic wool growers in the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, South America and Uruguay combine to account for about 50 per cent of the world wool production and supply about 80 per cent of the raw wool in the international trade. The U.S.

produces only about 100 million pounds a year.

Colangelo said the IWS operates branch offices in 26 countries, with technical and market development offices in several other countries, including one in the U.S. The IWS has about 14,000 woolmark licenses in these 46 countries.

He said there is a great opportunity for increased consumption of wool in this country and that the natural fibers have a unique opportunity in the face of increased emphasis on conservation of energy. He said wool sweaters, wool blankets and wool garments in general have been in much greater demand during the past two years.

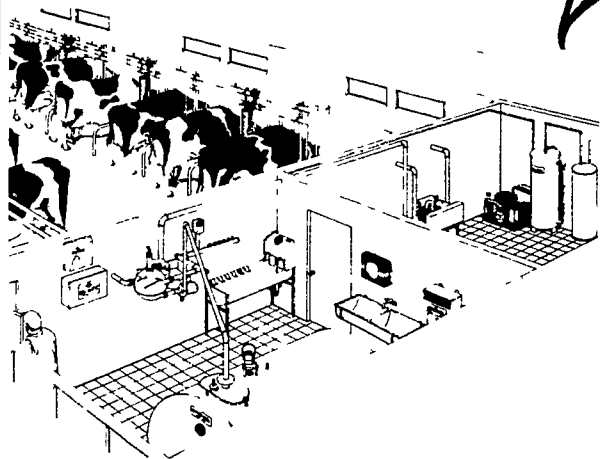
Our motto, he said, is "Don't touch that thermostat - just put on a wool sweater."

Winners of the Silver Ram Awards, which are presented annually, one for production and the other for research or extension, went to Robert Blackford, Wheatland, California, for production; and to Ken Faulkner of Laramie, Wyoming, an extension livestock specialist who retired last year from his position with the University of Wyoming.

Blackford is an outstanding sheep producer who was last year named Man of the Year in Livestock in California and is a former president of the American Sheep Producers Council.

The two advisory committees of the Council were named, and include for the Lamb Advisory Committee P. J. Cook of Belle Fourche, South Dakota; William H. Balden, Danville, Kentucky; Bill Schneemann, Big Lake, Texas; Tim Indart, Clovis, California; and Pete P. Clathis, Grand Junction, Colorado. The Wool Advisory Committee members are Paul A. Getz, Columbus, Ohio; Edgar Olson, Fosston, Minnesota; Martin Wardlaw, Del Rio, Texas; William R. Taliaferro, Rock Springs, Wyoming; and Sam N. Chournos, Tremonton, Utah.

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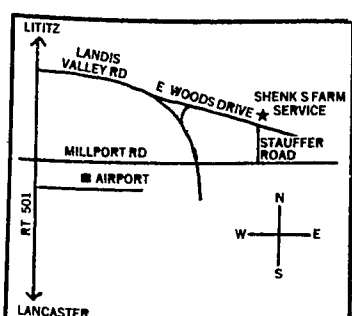
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