

Eastern sheep breeders gather

WESTMINSTER, Md. — The Eastern Sheep Production Workshop drew a crowd of almost 300 sheep enthusiasts recently to Westminster, Md. The Workshop, sponsored by the Maryland Sheep Breeders' Association, was held at

the Carroll County Agricultural Center. The early morning program consisted of a demonstration in the practical aspects of sheep management.

Dr. Emory Leffel from the University of Maryland and Rick

Lund, a professional shepherd from Great Britain, demonstrated with lambs various methods of castrating and docking. Other sheep management practices, such as injections and hoof trimming, were shown to the large

crowd in the sheep barn.

Dr. George Ahlschwede, National Coordinator of Blueprint for Expansion, led off the afternoon session of speakers. He issued a challenge to the sheep producers to take advantage of the opportunities in sheep production. Advanced technologies exist in the sheep industry to make raising sheep a profitable enterprise and he charged the sheep producers of today with the responsibility to make use of these technologies in their own flocks.

He stressed the need of the purebred breeders to produce the seed stock for the commercial producers and to keep that seed stock pure so that the distinctive traits of breeds will be preserved.

The second speaker on the program was Dr. Doug Hogue of Cornell University who spoke on sheep production programs for the northeast. Dr. Hogue described 3 possible systems: an early lambing system, a late lambing system, and two accelerated lambing systems, which have been implemented at Cornell. He stressed that each producer has to assess markets and available inputs to decide which system fits individual needs best and then

select ewes which are capable of the maximum level of production.

Dr. Emory Leffel took the floor again in the afternoon to demonstrate the realities of the economics of raising sheep. He pointed out the two aspects that affect sheep economics the most: reproductive performance of the ewe and the rate and efficiency of gain of the lamb. Dr. Leffel gave several examples to show how the break-even point in sheep production is affected by these two variables.

Fred Staf of Henry W. Staf Packing Plant gave a slide presentation showing lambs on the hoof and rail to illustrate the ideal lamb for the packer. He pointed out the biggest area of change needed in Maryland lamb marketing is the establishment of a system of sorting lambs by size and quality grade.

With the smell of lamb grilling in the background, Bill Blake, the director of merchandising for the American Lamb Council, expertly demonstrated how you can cut a leg of lamb to get 7 different meals. His tasty tidbits of grilled lamb were sampled by the participants bringing an appropriate close to the all day workshop.

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Pleasant Knolls sells top Hereford

FREDERICK, Md. — At the recent Maryland Polled Hereford Sale at the Frederick Fairgrounds, a cow/calf pair, consigned by Pleasant Knoll Farms, Frederick, Md., sold for \$2,500.

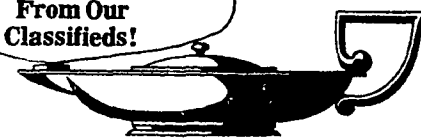
Monkton, Md. breeder Suzanne Schmidt purchased the white-face pair. Schmidt's own consignment, a bred heifer, sold to Walnut Hill Farms of Smithsburg, Md., for

\$2,000. The total average for the females was \$767.

Following the female sale, steers entered the auction block and averaged \$347 per head. The top steer, an April calf, sold for \$675 to Junior member Tim Moser from Boonsboro, Md. The April calf was consigned by R & T Acres of Gaithersburg, Md.

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