

# Wolves, wool imports, diseases worry sheep producers

PORTLAND, Ore. — Wolves, sheep health and South American imports were three items of major concern here at the recently completed annual meeting of the National Wool Growers Association in Portland, Oregon.

Modifications of a plan to turn wolves loose on specified areas of the western mountains were requested by the sheep producers after discussion on the plan with Bart O'Gara of the University of Montana at Missoula. The sheep growers will ask the Department of Interior to remove the wolf from the endangered species list before

the restocking plan is fully implemented.

John Faulkner of Gooding, Idaho, who serves as chairman of the NWGA Environment Committee, explained that a wolf-strag outside of his protected area couldn't be controlled. "If they went on a sheep-killing rampage, you couldn't touch them," Faulkner pointed out, "because they are classified as endangered. On the other hand, if they were declassified (removed from the endangered list), we could control those that prey on sheep," Faulkner said.

South American wool imports also received intense consideration by delegates to the 117th meeting of the Wool Growers Association. The sheep producers asked their leadership to investigate possible duties or other tariff action against wool from South America that has flooded the U.S. market this past year. Low prices and low demand for domestically produced medium grade wools were attributed by the growers to a substantial increase in imports.

The National Association will also request accelerated funding for sheep disease research, par-

ticularly in blue tongue and foot rot. Bud Turner of Texas, who chairs the association's Animal Health Committee, reported that economic losses to the industry from untreatable infections are

extensive. He noted that vaccine for other medical treatments are near in blue tongue and progress has been made in foot rot. "We need to push to get these completed," Turner said.

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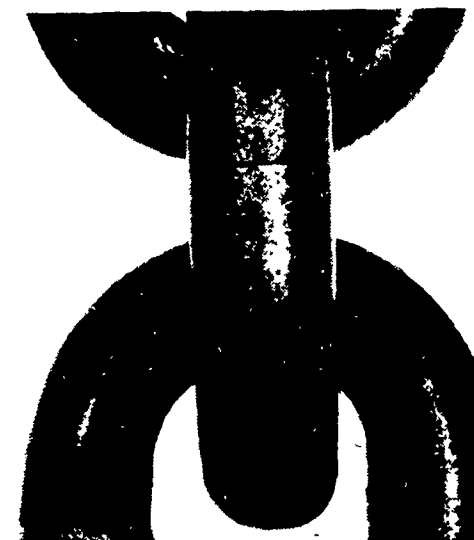
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