

Quality wool demands better marketing, packaging

DENVER, Colo. — As the American Sheep Producers Council launches a national "Wool Action" program to upgrade the packaging and marketing opportunities for the U.S. wool clip and pelts, it is important that every producer—large and small—knows the basic facts, potential problems and opportunities involved in this important program.

The U.S. produces a top-quality wool clip with some of the world's best fine and medium wools with tremendous potential in a wide variety of end-uses including apparel, upholstery and industrial products. American pelts are preferred by tanners, and manufacturers because of their size. Despite these advantages, U.S. wool prices are significantly below comparable grades of Australian wools. American pelts are selling well below European

pelts. Why?

Although U.S. breeding programs have improved wool production and uniformity, the preparation of the clip has not kept pace. While tanners would pay a premium for quality pelts, too many of the domestic pelts are contaminated by cockle and other defects.

There are many basic management practices that could significantly improve the quality of the wool clip and the pelts, and improve producer profit opportunities.

"When harvesting our wool, we should all make an effort to educate ourselves on quality techniques," says Bob Blackford, former ASPC president and a sizable producer from Wheatland. "We need to talk with our buyers about problems with the wool

fleece, and listen to what they have to use paper twine cut to required lengths, while discouraging the use of ball twine or cut lengths. If available, use paper lined bags. If branding is necessary, use only scourable branding fluids.

At shearing time, all weeds, hay and other vegetable matter must be removed from holding and shearing pens. Sprinkle pens and corrals to keep the dust down, and shear only when the wool is dry. Black sheep and black faced sheep must be separated and sheared last, with the fleeces packed separately. Shear rams separately and identify when packing.

The shearing floor must be kept clean and dry. The shearing floor should be swept at regular intervals, with tags, dung, stained pieces, etc., kept in a separate bag. Fleeces must be kept free of all

straw, manure and other foreign matter. Avoid second cuts. Remember, it is much better to leave extra length with next year's growth than to make second cuts. Shear sheep with 12-month, 6-month or lamb's wool separately and identify bags accordingly.

When rolling and tying, remove tags, manure and stained pieces from the fleece. Fold in the sides of

the fleece and roll it from the hips to the shoulders with the flesh side of the fleece to the outside. This will expose the most attractive portion of the fleece. Remember to tie only with paper fleece ties of proper length. The importance of packing the wool fleece is often overlooked. Always use new bags. Used bags may be torn or contain contaminants.

Carlisle Springs 4-H names officers

CARLISLE — The Carlisle Springs 4-H Club met at the St. Matthias Lutheran Church in Carlisle Springs, recently, to elect the following officers:

— President, Jenne Gutshall; vice president, Andrea Gutshall; secretary, Teri Wise; assistant secretary, Angie Sweger;

treasurer, Cindy Frey; news reporter, Teresa Gutshall; social chairmen, Amy Burkholder and Lynn Sheriff; county council representatives, Luann Frey, and Cindy Frey.

The next meeting will be held at the St. Matthias Church, March 8 at 7 p.m.



Saturday, March 5
Lancaster Society 1 to entertain Society 27

Tuesday, March 8
Lancaster Society 12 meets to discuss crafts for a Christmas in October program

Wednesday, March 9
Lancaster Society 14 meets at the home of Elma Barge for a recipe swap

Thursday, March 10
Lancaster Society 21 meets to hear the dairy princess

Lancaster Society 21 meets for a program by the dairy princess
Lancaster Society 33 meets for a pizza party with their husbands

Saturday, March 12
Lancaster Society 7 meets at the Leacock Presbyterian Church in Paradise

Lancaster Society 6 meets to entertain Society 13 at the Farm and Home Center

Lancaster Society 3 meets at the Philadelphia Flower Show
Lancaster Society 25 meets for a safety program by a policewoman

Lancaster Society 13 meets to entertain Society 6 at the Farm and Home Center

Lancaster Society 2 meets for a program, "Photographic Memories," by Dorothy Russo

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