

Chester Co. shepherds flock to 4-farm tour

COCHRANVILLE — Chester County's shepherds turned out fifty strong to breakfast on lamb sausages and pancakes at the farm of Warn and Annette Menhennett near Cochranville and to then tour the Menhennett flock and three other sheep operations.

Following the 8:30 a.m. breakfast on Saturday, April 13, the group first heard from Annette Menhennett on record keeping in a purebred flock. Sample record forms were distributed. While viewing the Menhennett's flock of 75 Shropshire brood ewes, 30 yearling ewes and 130 lambs, she explained the Menhennett system of internal parasite control which is based on frequent fecal analyses. Menhennett pointed out that one must know whether or not the sheep have Nematodes, Cestodes, liver flukes or Coccidiosis, otherwise much time and money may be wasted in treating for the wrong parasite.

Upon leaving the Menhennett farm, the group traveled in a caravan of cars to the farm of Bob Nichols near Nottingham. Nichols has a flock of 100 white-faced ewes, mostly Finn-crosses. Since he operated an evergreen nursery, one of his prime objectives has been to find sheep that will eat the grass and weeds between the trees and not browse on the branches.

Nichols lambs in May and has attempted successfully to adopt a total forage program wherein he buys very little feed. During the late fall and winter months the sheep graze on Brassicas. When he must supplement the outdoor forages he uses a fish emulsion

feed. By adding corn to the pelleted ration he can decrease the protein content so that he can use the feed for his ewes as well as his lambs. He showed the group a plastic material which can be used for gates and pen-dividers.

The third stop on the tour was at the farm of Walter and Barbara Leis just south of Oxford. Barbara Leis is a wool-crafter, specializing in woolen felt products. She displayed many attractive garments made from her homemade felt. The Leis's flock is primarily Corriedale and Corriedale crosses. Like other wool-crafters, Leis prizes the black or colored sheep in her flock.

To keep their fleeces clean, Barbara's prize colored ewes wear plastic jackets. The Leis's have converted a dairy barn into utilitarian sheep housing. Walter talked about the problem they had had with copper toxicity which was a result of high copper content in the well water. This problem was solved by installing a device that removed the minerals from the drinking water.

The final visit on the tour was to the flock of Tim Wills-Allen near Chadds Ford. Wills-Allen is an Australian and had much "down under" knowledge to impart to the group.

Wills-Allen uses a plastic greenhouse-like structure to house part of his flock of 250 Western-type ewes. It cost him \$3000 to erect the structure. Around one side of the greenhouse he has erected a "bugle sheep handling system" which is so-called because it is shaped like a bugle. This system of chutes and runways permits the



Australian Tim Willis-Allen houses part of his flock in this plastic greenhouse-like structure.

shepherd and his dog to handle many animals without additional help. The "bugle" can be used for sorting and medicating, plus many other tasks demanded on the sheep farm.

Part of Wills-Allen's tour included a demonstration of the Australian method of shearing. Wills-Allen then showed the group his wool press and his pendulum blade sharpener.

Wills-Allen lambs in early

January and many of his lambs are sold to the ethnic trade at Easter.

The Chester County Sheep and Wool Growers Association was organized in May 1984. Membership is open to any person who is interested in sheep and wool. Membership dues are \$6 per year. Information on the organization may be obtained by contacting The Chester County Cooperative Extension Service, 235 West Market

Street, West Chester, Pa. Telephone 215-696-3500.

In addition to a dinner meeting which is planned for May 9 at the Marsh Creek Inn north of Downingtown, the Chester County sheep producers plan to hold a wool festival at the Unionville Community Fair, October 10, 11, and 12. Educationally informative meetings are held throughout the year.



Bob Nichols explains his total forage program.



New ID requirements proposed for livestock

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to require that individual identification devices worn by cattle and swine remain on animals moved interstate, from point of origin to final destination.

"Current regulations require that the identification remain on the animals only for the actual interstate movement," said Bert Hawkins, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

"By requiring that these devices remain on the animals until they reach their final destination, we are increasing our ability to pinpoint the source of any disease that may be detected in the animals and take quick action to remedy other problems," he said.

The devices include eartags, backtags, brands and tattoos, which may be used to identify the herd of origin of the animals.

Movement in interstate commerce is considered to begin at the point of origin and includes any temporary stops, such as those at stockyards or dealers for feed, water, rest or sale. The final destination is usually a slaughtering establishment or a farm for breeding.

USDA is also proposing that the individual identification devices not be removed or tampered with

by any person who ships, transports or otherwise causes the cattle to be moved in interstate commerce. The devices may be removed at the time of slaughter or in specific cases authorized by USDA's deputy administrator for Veterinary Services.

Comments on the proposal are

due June 14 and may be sent to: Thomas O. Gessel, APHIS, USDA, Room 728 Federal Bldg., 6505 Belcrest Rd., Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Notice of this action is scheduled for publication in the April 15 Federal Register.

Beef promotion suffers setbacks in two states

CREAMERY — Legal action in two states, California and New York, have definite implications for future beef promotion campaigns. Early in January the Supreme Court refused to hear California beef promotion case, thus affirming the Court of Appeals decision—the assessment on out-of-state beef packers selling beef in California is unconstitutional.

California had passed the promotion assessment in 1982 and has since collected \$2.3 million. Since July 1983 the funds have been held in escrow. Now all of the fees will have to be returned to the out-of-state packers.

In a March 2 statement the New York State Attorney General's office announced it had forced the

Beef Industry Council of the National Livestock and Meat Board to discontinue television and radio commercials, print advertisements and other promotional materials the Attorney General feels are deceptive and misleading.

In addition, the Beef Industry Council has agreed to pay New York State \$25,000 in costs. The "Beef Gives Strength" commercials which began in 1983 will be discontinued. The Attorney General says strength and endurance cannot be attained simply by eating beef.

This is the fifth time in less than two years that the New York Attorney General has been responsible for significant changes in a national advertising campaign.



Barbara Leis is surrounded by her hand crafted wool products.