

# W. Pa. Wool Growers name top fleeces

BY BARBARA RADER  
Staff Correspondent

HARLANSBURG — Attendance records were broken at the Lawrence-Beaver-Butler County Cooperative Sheep and Wool Growers' mid-winter meeting on Feb. 1, with 145 members turning out for a full day of activities.

Held at the Liberty Grange in Harlansburg, the meeting featured a lamb dinner, results of the annual wool contest, youth wool judging and the crowning of the Tri-County Lamb and Wool Queen.

Janet Shick, 19, the daughter of Joe and Letitia Shick, New Castle, was crowned the 1986 queen by outgoing queen Rachel Hixenbaugh.

Two age divisions and two classes of wool fleeces provided numerous opportunities for young exhibitors to win ribbons and trophies. For the third time, 10-year-old Bridget Whiting captured top honors in the junior division for ages up to 14. Other winners in the junior division included: Robbie Baron, Annie Shuler, Andrea Musser, Kelly Chaffee, Frances Shick, Wendy Hixenbaugh, Wayne Hixenbaugh, Dan Musser, Jessica



Top three junior fleece winners were (left) Robbie Baron, second; Bridget Whiting, first; Annie Shuler, third.

Whiting, Maggie Whiting and Drew Pearce.

Becky Shick topped the senior division for ages 15 to 19. Other senior winners were Rachel Hixenbaugh, Bonnie Pearce, Julie Maxwell, Carl Shuler, Beth Spence, Stacey Pearce and John Shuler.

Bob Dunn of Chicora won the open wool show with his low-

quarter fleece. He also won the half-blood class.

Class winners in the three-eighth blood class were: Bob Burry, Lloyd McCracken, Rick Dunn, Linda Mosley and Wally Spence. Linda Mosley, along with Rick Dunn, were the winners in the low-quarter class. The wool show was conducted by county agents Curt Hughes and Lee Miller.

Election of association directors also highlighted the day's events. Seven directors were chosen by members to serve a one-year term: Don Musser, New Middletown, Ohio; Robert Burry, Ellwood City; Robert Dunn, Chicora; William Fullerton, Enon Valley; Gerald Thoma, Kensington, Ohio; Keith McConnell, Volant, and Dave Whiting, Edinburg. Officers will be chosen at a later date at a meeting of the directors.

The late Bob Peoples was honored with a moment of silence. Peoples served as director of the association for 50 years, and was the last of the surviving directors of the 69-year-old cooperative.

Concluding the day's events was a sheep shearing demonstration by director Dave Whiting.



Senior fleece competition winners at the Western Pa. Wool Growers meeting were (left) Rachel Hixenbaugh, second; Becky Shick, first; Bonnie Pearce, third.

## 'Colonel' kicks off Lebanon benefit

LEBANON—The Hull's Hill CR's Friendly Market rt. 72 north of the Turnpike entrance was the site of the Lebanon Area Fairgrounds Baby Beef Benefit Raffle kick-off. Carlos and Georgiana Leffler of Richland, owners of Leffler's Petroleum, Inc., and CR's Friendly Markets hosted the event on Saturday morning.

Also on hand was a delegation of Lebanon County 4-H and FFA youth, and Lebanon County's 1986 Farm Show "baby beef" middle weight champion, "Colonel".

"Colonel", a favorite in the 1986 Farm Show steer arena, was sold by owner Leigh Hitz, an 11-year-old 4-H'er from Annville, at the Farm Show's Youth Livestock Auction. "Colonel" was purchased there by Leffler Petroleum, Inc., and CR's Friendly Markets and donated to the Lebanon Area Exposition Corporation to benefit the fairgrounds and facilities.

Dennis Grumbine, Myerstown, chairman of the Exposition Corporation Finance Committee, states that raffling the steer off in the form of "freezer ready beef" was chosen as the best alternative to merchandise the steer.

County 4-H and FFA members are offering an opportunity to win one of 20 prizes in the Baby Beef Benefit Raffle. The prizes range



Leigh Hitz brought her fancy Farm Show steer named Colonel to Lebanon's C.R.'s Friendly Market last Saturday to initiate a fundraiser for the Lebanon Fairgrounds. From left are market manager Larry Frataroli, Bob Blecker of Carlos R. Leffler, Inc., and Lebanon Valley Exposition Corporation chairman Harry Bachman.

from a complete hindquarter of beef, to steaks, roasts and ground beef. All prizes are cut, wrapped and frozen, and ready for the freezer. The 4-H and FFA'ers will be offering a book of six tickets for a donation of \$5 or \$1 per ticket.

"We're looking forward to a good raffle," said county extension agent, Ken Winebark. "We have over \$1,000 working for us already.

Improving our Exposition facilities can do nothing but strengthen our community and youth programs."

"Colonel" and Lebanon County 4-H and FFA members will be

making appearances at the following CR's Friendly Markets from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on the following Saturdays: February 15,

Mushroom Hill CR's near the Hershey Medical Center; February 22, Avon CR's, Rt. 422 East of Lebanon; March 1,

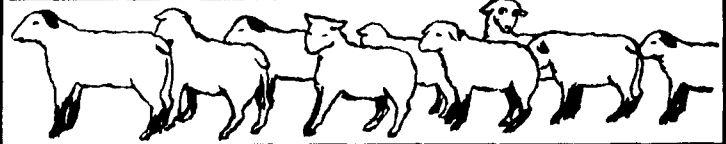
Campbelltown CR's, Rt. 322 West of Campbelltown; March 8, Schaefferstown CR's, junction Rt. 501 and 897.



# Flock Forum

by  
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## The Business of Raising Sheep

Recent developments in farm policy and the regional emphasis on expanding the sheep industry has some farmers interested in sheep production as an alternative enterprise.

Choosing sheep or not can best be decided by, first, looking at some of the pros and cons of sheep production and, second, evaluating available land resources and facilities for developing a profitable enterprise.

Many Pennsylvania farmers could profit, in my opinion, by including sheep in their existing farm enterprise. Sheep produce meat as well as fiber, and today the demand for these products far exceeds the supply.

Sheep can utilize practically all types of forage. There are many acres of farmland throughout the state, principally the western third and the northern half of the state, that could efficiently accommodate a pasture/forage-based sheep enterprise. This abundant grazing base is one key to profitable sheep production. In addition, the successful producer must have a genuine interest in the business, as well as management skill and labor to care for the sheep.

Following are some advantages of sheep production:

- Sheep are a low-investment enterprise.
- Sheep production does not require elaborate facilities and equipment.
- Sheep consume roughage as their primary feed.
- Sheep provide two sources of income: wool and meat.
- Sheep do well where soil and water conservation practices are germane to the farm plan.
- Sheep can be managed profitably on small acreages of 30 acres or less.
- Sheep provide a quick return on an investment.
- Sheep production systems can be altered to accommodate a defined local market.

On the other hand, there are

some disadvantages to raising sheep.

• In general, sheep require more management and attention than cattle.

• Sheep require good perimeter fencing. This investment is necessary before sheep can be raised.

• Sheep are subject to predation. Dogs, coyotes, foxes and bears can put you out of business.

• A prerequisite for a successful sheep health program focuses on a rigid preventive health program.

• Sheep do not fare well on poorly drained pastures.

The sheep handling facility and related equipment are among the potential sheepman's best investments. Portable panels permit the construction of temporary corrals which are economical and serviceable for small farm flocks of 35 to 50 head. The facility should be designed so that sheep work naturally, whether you are sorting, marking, treating, weighing, shearing or loading them.

The loading chute should be the primary focus in planning an overall sheep handling facility. After you have selected the loading chute site, the corral and other equipment can be built around it. For ease in working sheep through chutes, they should face north and uphill, when possible. Sheep do not drive well toward the sun.

Another important item of equipment found on a good sheep operation is a well-trained dog. It can be difficult to operate a 100 to 200-ewe flock without canine help. A well-trained dog will prove to be more valuable than several persons.

Training sheep dogs is a highly skilled profession. Fortunately, Pennsylvania and the Eastern United States continue to be recognized nationally for having competent professionals capable of producing and training working sheepdogs. At present, the Border collie seems to be the most popular. However, many breeds are used in the sheep business.

## Sheep Producers Calendar

- Jan. 1, to Feb. 28 — Nomination period for Ram Lamb Performance Test program.
- Apr. 15 — Receive ram lambs at Penn State Test Station.
- May 5 — Pa. Sheep and Wool Growers Assoc. annual meeting, Southridge Motor Inn, State College, 1:30 p.m.
- May 5 — PSWGA banquet, Tussey Mountain Inn, Route 322, Boalsburg, 5:30 p.m. For tickets call 814-863-3668.
- May 6 — PSWGA Wool Sale, Assembly Room, Nittany Lion Inn, State College, 9 a.m.
- July 8 to 10 — PSWGA Lamb and Wool Crafts Festival, Ag Arena, Penn State.
- July 11, 12 — PSWGA Keystone Stud Ram and Ewe Sale, Ag Arena, Penn State.
- Aug. 2 — Performance Tested Ram Lamb Sale, Meat Animal Evaluation Center, Penn State.
- Oct. 2 to 6 — Keystone International Livestock Expo, Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg.

