

Sheep Industry Supports Future Funding Concepts

DENVER, CO — "Sheep producers have to think about performance, from the day we choose a ram until the day that lamb goes to market," said Bill Schneemann, president of the American Sheep Industry Association. "And there is no difference when we talk about our national association. ASI has got to perform or the sheep industry will not be able to meet the challenges of the next decade and the next century."

Schneemann said producers across the country have challenged ASI to perform to the benefit of the U.S. sheep industry. "I am confident ASI can meet that challenge," he said. "Sheep industry leaders took on the most critical of issues -- using foresight and vision to plot a road for the industry in the future."

"Nobody ever said the road would be smooth. But we're going forward, addressing problems in our industry head-on," he said.

Schneemann talked about the ASI board's move to pursue legislation for a lamb checkoff. "Many producers have heard about the proposed lamb checkoff," he said. "I hope they know what conviction it took for the board to approve a plan to seek enabling legislation for a checkoff. We are talking about giving producers a choice in future years and about securing funding for the promotion and marketing of products."

The ASI president says the move to seek checkoff legislation does not mean there will be a checkoff this year or next. "The timing of a checkoff would be up to the sheep producers across the country," he said. "At this time, there is no specific time table for the implementation of a lamb checkoff. But this legislation, proposed at a time when the political climate favors self-help programs, will allow us that alternative if and when we need it."

ASI is working to appropriately

place the legislation for introduction sometime this year or next, depending on the political climate in Washington, he said.

Most debated have been the procedures behind the potential checkoff, Schneemann said. Board members discussed the establishment of the checkoff system aimed at creating an efficient method of collection that would best benefit the industry. The option of a multi-point checkoff or a one-point checkoff was studied, with the final decision falling in favor of a multi-point checkoff -- 35 cents at every point of sale of any sheep.

"Our primary aim is to spread the cost of promotion over all segments of the industry, rather than allowing one segment to pay the total price," Schneemann said.

Implementation of the checkoff is already a point of discussion in many state associations as they begin holding annual meetings. "Most are realizing the ultimate benefit of such a checkoff to the state association," Schneemann said. "This idea is building a lot of momentum."

In its action supporting the checkoff, the board strongly opposed the inclusion of imports in the checkoff program, feeling their inclusion would compromise the marketing programs of Fresh American Lamb. Schneemann said their decision "reflects the depth of conviction to promoting the quality of American lamb."

Above all else, the board expressed its support for the continuation of the National Wool Act, Schneemann stressed. "If at any time, the effort to obtain legislation for a lamb checkoff appears to endanger the Wool Act, it will be dropped. ASI is strongly behind the renewal of this important legislation and is calling for its renewal in its present form."

Here is a summary of the points to be included in the checkoff

legislation:

- Checkoff rate of 35 cents/sheep/sale and slaughter. Changes to the rate could only be made through subsequent producer referendum;

- States with qualified organizations would receive half of the assessment on all live sheep collections; half of live sheep collections and all processor collections to go to the national association;

- ASI would be the national certified organization with ASI Lamb Council the general operating body; the council would be made up of six producers/feeders appointed by the ASI Executive Committee, three feeders appointed by the USDA Secretary, three processors appointed by the USDA Secretary, one chairman appointed by the ASI President; the council would make program recommendations to be approved by the ASI Board;

- Programs conducted by allied

organizations such as, but not limited to, SID, NSIP, NLFA and the National Live Stock & Meat Board, would be supported through a proposal process;

- States with existing checkoff programs at time of passage would be grandfathered at their checkoff rate or up to 25 cents;

- States may choose to collect the assessment or have the national collect;

- ASI, by request of the majority of state member associations and a two-thirds vote of the board,

could request the Secretary of Agriculture start the program. Implementation would be through a majority of eligible producers, feeders and processors.

"Producers need to support this important legislation because it gives us an important choice about the future of the lamb and wool industry," Schneemann said. "Ultimately, each of you will be asked to make that choice in a referendum at some point in the future. Now, we need to give ourselves that opportunity."

Pork Prose

(Continued from Page C2)

finally resorted to hiding them, just so SOMEONE knew where they were).

Second, try to identify the machinery and equipment on which it will pay to invest routine maintenance. For example, some motors are so valuable that you need to do everything you can to keep them running. Others are less expensive or less important. You might be further ahead to simply replace these when they fail rather than spend time and money trying to maintain them.

Finally, if you have more than one person at the operation, identify one person that is good at, and interested in maintenance.

Summary

All pork producers need extra time. One way to get it is to be more efficient at every task you do. Three rules that have worked for me:

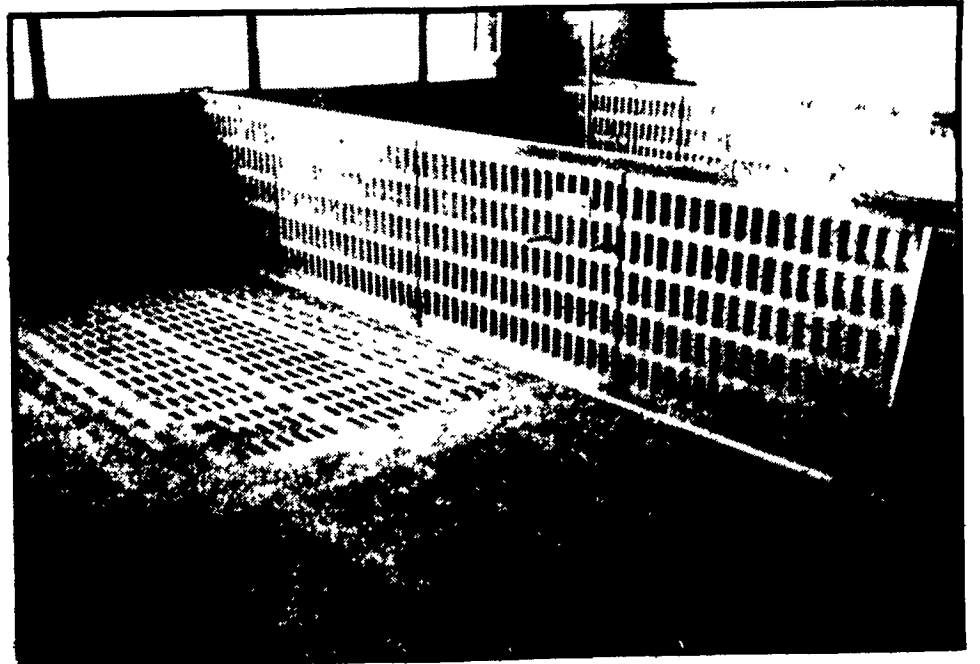
1. Have a system. Establish a daily and weekly routine. You'll have to bend on this from time to time. But there is little question that this is an efficient way of completing the every-day chores.

2. Finish one job before you tackle another. This helps eliminate some of the "down-time" between jobs.

3. Don't create work for yourself. Don't do things that aren't necessary. Look for easier and quicker ways of accomplishing each task.



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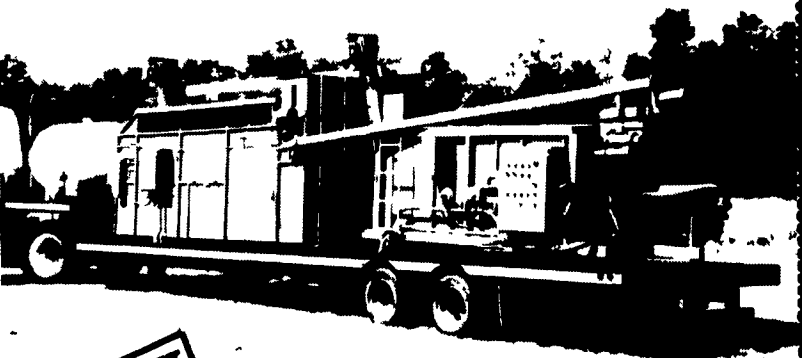
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