

# N.Y. Sheep And Goat Tellauction Sales A Qualified Success

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ITHACA, N.Y. — The Northeast Sheep and Goat Marketing Program had several objectives in mind when the arrangement for the graded Easter Tellauctions

were made with Empire Livestock Sales. Naturally, acceptable prices for producers were an important factor and to achieve these, we sought to increase volume at the sales and to attract additional buyers through the use of the telephone. Reorganization of the sale system was also necessary to accommodate the

potential remote buyers and to speed up the sale process.

Empire Livestock Sales management was entirely supportive of our suggestions. Preparation for the sales included background work to review credit for potential buyers and training of each sale barn's office staff in the use of the computer program that would be necessary for the graded sale.

Finally, in the days leading up to the sale, pens sufficient to hold the expected volume of small animals had to be constructed at the three participating sale barns. This in itself was no small task as these barns are currently organized for handling cattle and calves. Holes had to be plugged and the individual pens organized for a smooth flow of animals from the scale and grading area to the pens.

The sale process itself went well overall. The Chatham sale which was held Friday, April 6, was independent of the other two sales being held on Saturday, April 7. Considerable labor was brought in to handle what turned out to be a smaller than expected sale of roughly 250 sheep and goats. A very adequate pool of buyers appeared at the sale, but no buyers participated on the tel-

phone. Prices received by producers were excellent and the sale process went very smoothly.

Dryden and Gouverneur sales were held on Saturday, April 7. The process was more strained at these locations. Dryden received a greater than expected volume including a large complement of cull sheep. Additionally, a complication between the pen numbering system and the computer program created some headaches for the office staff. Gouverneur also faced some learning curve problems and, as in Dryden, the start of the sale was slightly delayed.

Once again, buyer support at the sale barns proved adequate to obtain competitive prices for producers. No outside buyers participated on the telephone. However, the telephone link between Dryden and Gouverneur was actively utilized and contributed greatly to the Gouverneur price levels. Volume for these sales was approximately 800 at Dryden and 350 for Gouverneur.

The sale process at all three barns moved quickly. The graded portions of the sale took about 30 minutes in Chatham and Gouverneur. In both cases, the auction was run using summary sheets in a location away from

were graded and buyers on the phone relied on the graders' judgment and description to make their offers.

At the Dryden sale, because of the inaccessibility of some pens and the large number of animals, it was decided to conduct the auction at the pens themselves. This procedure worked well with the exception that the large gallery of onlookers were not in a good position to witness the transactions.

General comparisons of prices with other local sales (all ungraded) reveal a slight advantage for the graded sales. Also, comparison with the general price reports issued by New Holland Sales Stables seems to indicate that the graded auctions performed at least as well.

In post sale evaluations, all sale barn managers expressed satisfaction with the process and an intention to continue to offer similar sale procedures in the future. Buyers liked the procedure because it moved the sale along quickly. Other individual suggestions were passed along to the sale barn managers.

The Northeast Sheep and Goat Marketing Program will expand its efforts to identify slaughterhouses in the region which are handling sheep and goats and to post this information on the internet. Although the Easter sales went well, it was apparent that our lists and calls were not sufficient to significantly expand the buyer base. The expanded lists will be available for producers and sale managers to utilize to improve their marketing results. These will be available at the new program Website [www.sheepgoatmarketing.org](http://www.sheepgoatmarketing.org).

the livestock.

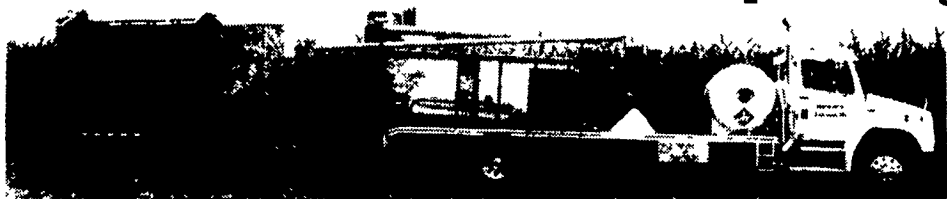
The animals were not moved into the sales arena, as is the procedure in most auctions, but remained in their respective pens. Buyers who were present could view the pens before the sale.

All lambs and kids



Grader Dave Albert confirming a grading decision at N.Y. Sheep and Goat Sale.

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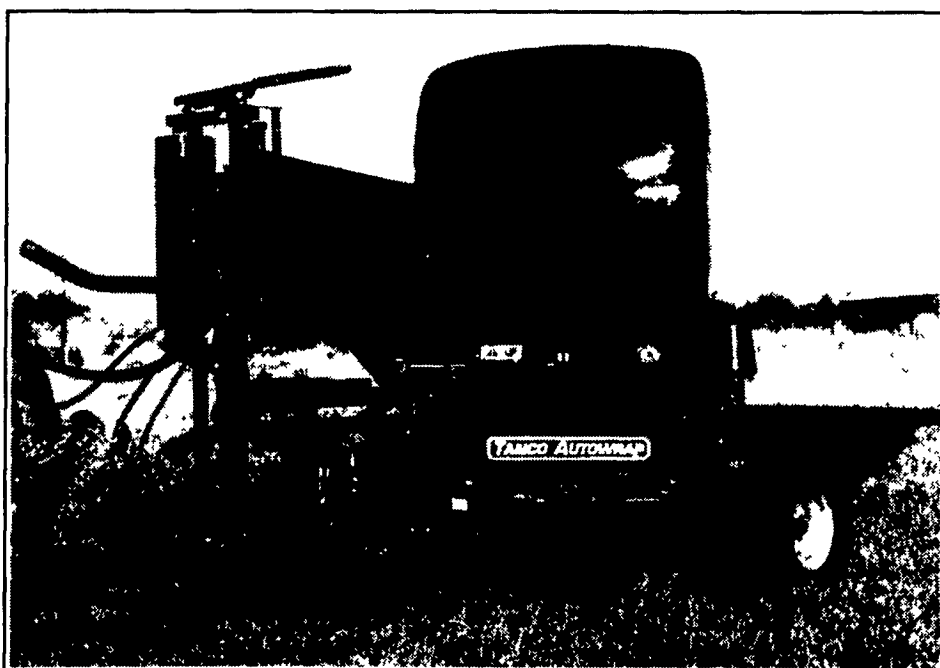
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