

Sheep And Goat Farmers Should Plan For Easter 2002

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ITHACA, N.Y. — Producing Easter hot house lambs and kids is a major part of the sheep and goat industry in the Northeast. Changing dates for this holiday and the division between Orthodox and Western observances can make for planning difficulties when determining when to breed.

Coming off a year when the dates for both Easter celebrations were the same (April 15), we now face the other extreme. Next year's Easter dates are March 31 for the Western observance and May 5 for the Orthodox observance.

The early date for the Western observance will require earlier breeding than last year with lambs dropping in mid January requiring ram introduction by mid August. Also tolerance for heavy lambs (50 pounds plus) at the earlier Easter sales is likely to be less resulting in poorer

prices for those marketed at that time.

Orthodox Easter, on the other hand, is relatively late and while their preference for slightly heavier lambs allows for more growing time, the five week spread is so great as to require a separate breeding group to meet the needs for this holiday.

Lambs for this holiday will probably not have to be on the ground before mid February allowing for a September breeding period.

This discussion also provides an opportunity to review what these ethnic customers are looking for in their celebration feast.

Hot house lambs should be milk fed. This is usually reflected in a smooth lay of the wool coat along with a shine. This is called bloom.

Lambs with inadequate milk will have a rougher dull coat along with an expanded stomach area.

When skinned, milk fed lambs will show whiter fat de-

posits. Prime lambs and kids will be smooth over the top and the backbone and well covered and smooth when the hand is pressed down on the back.

Not all breeds can consistently produce top quality hot house lambs. Large framed lambs tend to not develop thick muscle rapidly enough for this program although they frequently appear in these special Easter sales. These along with more poorly nourished lambs fall into lower quality categories and usually trade at a discount.

Top quality lambs have been in short supply. A review of three graded Easter lamb and goat sales in New York (2001) provided the following distribution: Lambs: blue — 26 percent; red — 54 percent; and green — 20 percent. Kids: blue — 47 percent; red — 50 percent; and green 3 percent.

Clearly, there is a great deal of improvement to be made in providing the quality that we should be offering into the market. The blue mark in this

Lancaster Farming Antiques Center

See pages B21-B29

grading equates to prime and the red to choice while green should be relegated to a feeder category. Blue prices exceeded red by 20 to 30 cents per pound for both lambs and kids.

What does it take to produce a quality hot house lamb? It will take a ewe milking heavily, lambs with easy access to a bountiful creep and an uncrowded pen. All of these prescriptions are given in relative terms so that if you are producing lower quality lambs, you

need to improve in one or more of these areas.

[The Northeast Sheep and Goat Marketing Program was established to improve marketing opportunities for producers in the Northeast. It is funded under a USDA grant obtained by Cornell University resulting from the "201" action initiated by the American Sheep Industry Association (ASI). The program Website is www.sheepgoatmarketing.org or you may contact us at (607) 255-2850 or rjm55@cornell.edu.]

Research Agency Sequences Genome Of Pathogen

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently announced that researchers now have important new information about the genetic makeup of Listeria, a bacterium that is known to cause serious food-borne illness. This new information will help in the research of ways to reduce the incidence of food contamination and illness from this bacterium.

The project is a collaboration between USDA's Agricultural Research Service and The Institute for Genomic Research (TIGR) in Rockville, Maryland. Similar to efforts to understand the structure of the human genome, the researchers began examining the complete genetic makeup of a Listeria monocytogenes serotype 4b strain in January. The researchers have now finished the initial phase, in which individual fragments of the genome have been examined. The next step is to assemble these fragments into a complete genomic map of the bacterium.

A serotype 4b strain of List-

eria monocytogenes was selected for the project because most foodborne listeriosis outbreaks, and 50 percent of sporadic cases, are caused by strains of this serotype.

Sequencing the Listeria genome will help researchers better understand how this bacterium persists in animals, in and on foods processing plants, and affects people.

USDA continues to make efforts to prevent contamination by Listeria, and other harmful pathogens, in ready-to-eat meat and poultry products. Recently, USDA proposed food safety measures applicable to all ready-to-eat and all partially heat-treated meat and poultry products, as well as environmental testing requirements intended to reduce the incidence of Listeria monocytogenes in processed meat and poultry products. The comment period has been extended until July 18.

Listeria is widespread in the environment and is associated with some ready-to-eat food products such as hot dogs, lunch meats, smoked fish, and certain types of soft cheeses.

Public Auction Register

Closing Date Monday 5:00 P.M.

of each week's publication

Internet Sale Register will be updated

every Sat. at 2:23 P.M.

ATTENTION Auctioneers

All sales register info needs complete address, street, town, county & state.

JUNE

SAT JUNE 30 - 9:30 AM Antiques Household Equipment Tools Located at Readburn Rd between Hancock & Walton, NY From MYS Rte 17 take Fishes Eddy Exit 89 turn east off exit ramp go 1.5 miles from E bound exit 1 mile from westbound exit to Readburn Rd 5.3 miles to auction Owner George Watson Lambrecht Auctioneer

SAT JUNE 30 - 11AM Construction & support equipment auction West Colesville NY At 31 Santaria Springs Rd Mel Manasse Auctions

JULY

WED JULY 4 - 9 AM Tractors Farm Equipment 1 Horse Sleigh & Tools Located at 205 Ridge Rd Shoemakersville PA From 1 78 Take Rt 61 S Approx 4 miles Left onto Ridge Rd From Reading Take Rt 61 N Right onto Ridge Rd James C Lovins Jr AU 003799 L

FRI JULY 6 6:30PM Annuals

perennials, herbs, shrubs, roses Meadow Gardens Rt 23 and Rt 176, Morgantown, Pa By Meadow Gardens Tracey L Jones AU-3607-L

SAT JULY 7 - 9 AM Farm Machinery Located - Lebanon Valley Livestock Mkt, 1 mile East of Frederickburg PA For info Dave 717-866-5783

SAT JULY 7 - 9:30AM Annual Summer Western Maryland Contractors Auction, at the Cochran Auction Complex, Md Rt 66 Boonsboro Wash Co Md James G Cochran

ANTIQUES

SAT JULY 7 9AM Antiques collectibles furniture & household in Juniata Co 9 miles S of Port Royal along Pleasant View Rd F Lee Bryner Sr Owner Bryan D Imes auct AU 001656-L

FRI JULY 7 12 Noon Antiques collectibles and household 330 W Main Ave Myerstown Pa By Estate of Carl I Firestone Heidelberg Auct Service AU 002771-L AU-003293-L

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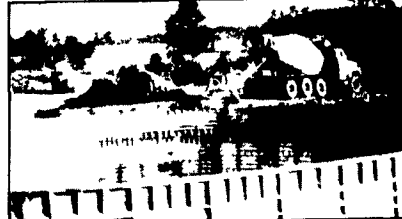
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