

## Meat Goat Judging School In Maryland May 31

McHENRY, Md. — The Alternative Agriculture Center at Garrett Community College (GCC) will host a Meat Goat Judging School May 31 at the Garrett County Fairgrounds from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The judging school will be a hands-on, practical approach to selection of meat goats. Meat goat producers will gain valuable knowledge for selecting breeding stock and market animals.

Meat goats are one of the fastest growing livestock species at fairs and festivals. Many fair officials are forced to use dairy goat or other livestock judges for meat goat shows because trained meat goat judges are not available. This is an excellent opportunity for extension agents, dairy goat judges, and other livestock judges to learn more about judging.

Dr. Alan Fires and Susan Schoenian will conduct the school. Fires has been involved in raising and showing meat goats for more than 20 years. He is an official judge with the IBGA, a member of the Herd Improvement Committee, and a member of the Official Judges and Shows Committee of the IBGA.

Fires and his family have a herd of purebred boer goats and are in the commercial and pureblood buck production business on his ranch in Kermit, Texas.

Susan Schoenian is an area extension agent for sheep and goats with the University of Maryland. She has experience in raising meat goats and hair sheep and has been involved with the Lower Shore Goat Producers Association. Schoenian has also traveled to many Caribbean countries in her extension roles. For the past two years, she served as the judge for the National Sheep and Goat Show in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. In her new role, Schoenian is stationed at the Western Maryland Research and Education Center in Keedysville, Md.

The judging school will include classes on judging market wethers, commercial does and doelings, and boer bucks. The cost of the school will be \$20, MPWV members and family members \$15, and youth under 18, \$10. The fee will include lunch and materials.

For more information or to register, call Willie Lantz at (301) 387-3331.

### Meat Goat Conference

The judging school will be conducted in conjunction with the fifth annual Meat Goat Conference, also sponsored by the Alternative Agriculture Center at Garrett Community College (GCC).

The fifth annual Meat Goat Conference will begin at 3 p.m. at GCC. The conference will feature speakers on meat goat topics such as health, production performance, scrapie, and meat goat research projects in feeding goats. The cost for the conference will be \$10.

The conference will be followed by first annual meeting of the MPWV Chapter of the Mid West Meat Goat Producers Association, which will feature a banquet dinner with goat meat. The cost of the meal is \$15.

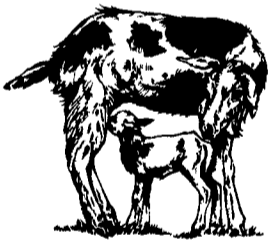
### Boer Goat Show

Saturday, June 1, the MPWV Chapter of the Mid West Meat Goat Producers Association will host the third annual Mt. Top Boer Goat Show and Sale to begin at noon at the Garrett County Fairgrounds.

Classes will include fullblood and purebred boer does and bucks, percentage boer does, and meat goat classes (bucks, wethers, or does).

At 6:30 p.m., a Boer Goat Production sale will be conducted by the MPWV chapter. The sale will feature approximately 50 animals. Animals will be consigned by MPWV members only and will feature the best members have to offer. Members will be selling percentage does and fullblood/purebred does and bucks.

For more information on the show and sale, call Willie Lantz at (301) 387-3331 or log on to [www.gcc.cc.md.us/agriculture/](http://www.gcc.cc.md.us/agriculture/).



## Producer Petition Requests U.S. Justice Dept. To Investigate Irregularities In Livestock Markets

AMES, Iowa — A new petition requesting the Department of Justice to investigate irregularities in livestock markets began circulating among producers Saturday, May 11, at the Livestock Price Crisis Meeting in Omaha, Neb.

"After the packer ownership ban was dropped from Farm Bill legislation, we've heard countless producers report that they want the issue addressed," said National Farmers Organization (NFO) President Paul Olson. "This grassroots producer petition requests the United States Department of Justice to focus its attention on market movement over the past several weeks that has been highly irregular."

Olson said that members he spoke with are determined that they must take control of their destiny, and that this petition is just one of the tools they can use to accomplish that goal.

The petition will be circulated in hard copy to farmers and ranchers nationally through numerous ag groups, and is avail-

able on the Web at [www.nfo.org/Petition/Petition.asp](http://www.nfo.org/Petition/Petition.asp). The petition signature deadline is June 14.

The livestock producer fairness petition requests the Justice Department to investigate:

- How the ownership or control of livestock by packers is affecting normal supply and demand factors in the futures markets.

- Whether supply is being manipulated to force massive swings in the market.

- If there were commodity trading funds taking short positions in the futures market in quantities higher than usual. If so, did they represent large agribusiness interests and is there a conflict of interest or collusion involved?

- Were there any traders in the futures market since March 1 who don't normally trade livestock futures.

Producers believe that since March 1, unexplained forces have driven live cattle and live hog fu-

tures prices lower. While packers immediately followed this movement with lower cash prices, boxed meat prices remained relatively stable. Therefore, consumers did not benefit from those lower prices.

The organization points out that those movements coincided with the expiration and subsequent renewal offers of supply contracts that producers first entered into following the 1998 crash in the hog market, and a market overreaction to foot and mouth testing in Kansas. The Senate passage of the Ban on Packer Ownership of livestock also occurred during the period in question.

"Producers can visit the NFO Website and sign the petition electronically by pointing their browser to [www.nfo.org](http://www.nfo.org) and clicking on the petition button in the tan box," said Olson. Farmers can also print out a hard copy of the petition to circulate and mail to the NFO home office at 528 Billy Sunday Rd., Ames, Iowa 50010.

## Red Angus Completes Reproduction Predictions

DENTON, Texas — The Red Angus Association of America (RAAA) is proud to announce the release of the industry's first Reproduction Traits Sire Evaluation.

The sire evaluation includes genetic predictions for the four economically relevant reproduction traits — Calving Ease Direct, Heifer Pregnancy, Calving Ease Total Maternal, and Stayability EPDs. Calving Ease Direct predicts the ability of a calf to be born unassisted while Heifer Pregnancy predicts the probability of a sire's daughters conceiving to calve as a two year-old.

Calving Ease Total Maternal predicts the probability of a sire's daughters to calve unassisted, and Stayability predicts the probability that a sire's daughters will stay in the herd until they are six years of age.

"The goal of the RAAA is to comprehensively describe the three general areas of reproduction, growth and carcass utilizing as few EPDs as possible. In terms

of profitability, reproduction is the most important group of traits in cow/calf production; so objectively describing reproduction has been one of the RAAA's highest priorities," said Dr. Bob Hough, RAAA Executive Secretary.

"The formulation of these reproductive EPDs is the result of ten years of groundbreaking research by Colorado State University (CSU), sustained RAAA Board leadership, and dedicated Red Angus breeders building the

necessary database" said Hough.

The 2002 RAAA Reproductive Traits Sire Evaluation includes EPDs for 527 sires, and is available by contacting the Red Angus Association of America National Office at 940-387-3502, or mailto: [info@redangus1.org](mailto:info@redangus1.org) info@redangus1.org



## Grange Congratulates President

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Kermit W. Richardson, president of the National Grange, sent a letter of appreciation to President Bush, congratulating him for signing the 2002 Farm Bill.

The bill is considered a compromise — but necessary — piece of legislation that will direct federal farm programs for the next six years. It is budgeted to spend more than \$173 billion on farm programs, conservation, rural development, and energy security

programs.

The National Grange regards the new Farm Bill as an important part, but not exclusive answer, for achieving our national goal of revitalizing rural America and returning U.S. family farmers to prosperity.

"The Grange looks forward to working closely with Congress and the administration to ensure other critical legislation gets passed," said Grange Legislative Director Leroy Watson.

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**CASE IH**

David Brown

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