



# PENNSYLVANIA SHEEP & WOOL NEWS

PSWGA NEWSLETTER-December 2013

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

December 2013

### President's Message

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well. The winter weather has certainly been throwing us some curves with snow and ice, but the sheep always seem to adjust well. I am certainly looking forward to the start of lambing season in a couple months.

We will soon be headed off to the PA Farm Show and I would like to encourage each of you to find some time to help promote lamb and sheep products at the educational booth. Tammy Hemmerly is managing this event, so contact her at 570-869-2692 to sign up for a half day slot. This is a perfect opportunity to talk to some folks about the great taste of lamb and explain how easy it is to prepare for a meal. Farm Show runs a scavenger hunt for the children and you will get to talk to them about lamb and sheep production also.

I hope you can all find some time this holiday season to spend with family and friends. It is hard to slow down in this fast paced world, but we can find many blessings in enjoying some time off from the regular grind.

Melanie

**For more information and the schedule please see this site: <http://www.farmshow.state.pa.us/>**



### **2013 PA Lamb & Wool Queen & Princess**

Thank Ewe to our 2013 PA Lamb & Wool Queen, Ashley Shaw of Harrisburg, PA and our 2013 PA Lamb & Wool Princess, Catrina Bollinger of Mifflinburg, PA. Both young ladies have worked extremely hard this past year traveling about the Commonwealth to support the sheep industry as well as to educate the public about sheep. We thank Queen Ashley and Princess Catrina and their families for their dedication to our industry. Best wishes!



(L-R: Ashley Shaw, 2013 PA Lamb & Wool Queen; Stephanie Summits, 2014 PA Lamb & Wool Queen; Brianna Kabina, 2014 PA Lamb & Wool Princess; Amanda Hall, 2014 PA Lamb & Wool Princess)

### **2014 PA Lamb & Wool Queen & Princess Updates**

As the new year is rapidly approaching, so is the reign of the newly crowned 2014 PA Lamb & Wool Royalty. The PA Lamb & Wool Queen Contest evaluates contestants on a written essay, personal interview, and their public speaking skills. This year's panel of judges were pleased with the enthusiastic individuals competing in the contest.

Stephanie Summits was chosen as the 2014 PA Lamb & Wool Queen. Stephanie is the 21 year old daughter of Scott and Mary Summits, Hollsopple, PA. She is currently a Junior at West Virginia University, majoring in Wildlife and Fisheries Management. Stephanie is a member of the equestrian team and the wildlife society. She has been active in the Jenner Twp. 4-H Club where she has shown Suffolk crossbreds for 8 years. Currently Stephanie enjoys helping beginner 4-Hers with their projects as well as competing in Leadline with her handmade outfits.

Amanda Hall and Brianna Kabina were crowned as the 2014 PA Lamb & Wool Princesses. Amanda Hall is the 17 year old daughter of Dennis and Joann Hall, Wampum, PA. She currently attends Lincoln High School where she is active in Marching Band and the National Honor Society. Amanda is also a member of the Little Woolies 4-H Sheep Club. She raises Hampshire, Suffolk Crossbred, and Natural Colored sheep. Her other activities include 4-H Dairy and 4-H Goat clubs, being an Alternate Dairy Princess, member of church youth group, and helps to raise money for premature babies. She plans to attend college to become a large animal veterinarian. Amanda is the current Mercer County Lamb & Wool Queen.

Brianna Kabina is the 16 year old daughter of Angela and Donald Kabina, Friedens, PA. She attends the Somerset Area Senior High School and plans to attend Penn State Harrisburg to major in psychology. While a member of the Somerset Area FFA and Hooversville Hayseeds 4-H Club, she raises her tunis and Suffolk sheep. Brianna is active in Forensics, Reading Competitions, Musicals, Chorus, Camp Harmony Camp Counselor, Youth Mission trips, KILE, and the Somerset Lady Shepherds Leadline.

The PA Lamb & Wool Queen program is sponsored by the PA Sheep & Wool Growers Association. The PA Lamb & Wool Royal Court will be asked to attend several industry related events throughout their reign. If you are interested in having royalty attend an event, please contact Laurie Hubbard at 570-864-6027 to schedule.

### **A Note from Stephanie**

Hello my name is Stephanie Summits. I reside on a small farm in Somerset County and am currently a wildlife and fisheries management major at West Virginia University. As the start of the 2014 PA Farm show approaches, I am anxious to begin my reign as your 2014 PA Lamb and Wool Queen. I was so excited back in October to win this title. One of my interview questions was : "Why, at my age, did I want to do this?" I feel it is my way to stay involved with a project I loved so much.

Through my 4-H years, I looked forward to each spring when it was time to pick out my lambs and raise them for the fair. Each year I learned more and improved my lambs. After college, I hope to start my own flock of lambs. I look forward to traveling around the state in 2014, meeting and learning from the many people involved in the lamb and wool industry.

### **PSWGA Sheep Symposium Report**

Are you a marketer or a seller? Don VanNostrom addressed participants at the sheep symposium with this question. He then described how he has changed his operation from one that just sold lambs to one that markets lambs to retail grocery outlets in the Ohio area. He shared some great tips on the importance of producing a consistent product that is available all year as well as how he manages both of those aspects in his lamb business. Don also discussed the dollars and cents of marketing so that you can set prices that will be profitable not only for your farm, but also for the retailer. Don's presentation emphasized marketing as the way to improve total income from a sheep operation. Don says that it makes no sense to utilize top genetics, spend hours in the barn saving lambs, provide the best nutrition possible to make the lambs grow to their potential and then take them to a sale barn and HOPE that they get a good price. Under Don's system, the market price is known before the production of lambs even begins.

Two other speakers rounded out the event. Melanie Barkley discussed what cuts come from lamb and how to determine the value of your lamb cuts, while John Berry covered the various regulations and guidelines for marketing lambs and lamb cuts in Pennsylvania. Everyone who completed an evaluation of the event stated that they learned something new that they can take back to their own operation.

### **Charleston Trivia and Convention Information**

The ASI Convention will be held in Charleston, SC this year January 22-25. The 2014 Annual American Sheep Industry Association will once again bring together many sectors of the sheep industry. Joining ASI in Charleston in January are: National Lamb Feeders Association, National Sheep Industry Improvement Center, American Lamb Board, Western Range Association, Food and Fiber Risk Managers, National Livestock Producers Association, Sheep and Goat Fund Committee, American Goat Federation, ASI Women, Make-It-With-Wool National Contestants.

Here is some trivia about Charleston: African slaves in the low country created a language and culture they called Gullah. The word may have come from the Gola or Gora Tribes in Angola. The language was made official in 1939 and is creole-based with English as its main base. Boone Hall Plantation is the only plantation in the S.C. Low-country to present a live presentation of this unique culture. Participants attending the Boone Plantation tour on Saturday morning, Jan. 25, 2014, will have the opportunity to be entertained and educated by the Gullah performance.

Young Entrepreneur Sessions. For the third consecutive year, a program has been developed for producers between the ages of 25 and 40 year old. The committee has designed a diverse agenda that is sure to be of interest.

To encourage participation at the ASI convention in Charleston, young entrepreneurs can receive a \$200 discount off the registration fee. The discount will be applied on a first-come, first-served basis and will be limited to the first 25 registrants.

The Young Sheep Entrepreneurs Committee will be meeting on Thursday afternoon, Jan. 23, and Saturday morning, Jan. 28. Registration forms are available at [www.sheepusa.org](http://www.sheepusa.org). Those interested in the discount should contact the ASI office for more information.

Dining While in Charleston. This January 2014, the American Lamb Board is working with Oak Steakhouse, The Macintosh, The Cocktail Club and Indaco from the Indigo Restaurant Group to assure that "ewenique" American Lamb dishes are on the menus of its Charleston restaurants.

"Charleston is known for pork and seafood but we wanted to help these restaurants go on the lamb," said Megan Wortman, executive director of the American Lamb Board. "Chef Bacon, Chef Perez and Chef Schenzel from the Indigo Restaurant Group will feature domestic lamb in innovative ways - from appetizers to pastas to mouth-watering lamb chops."

A flier further describing the participating restaurants is available at [www.sheepusa.org/Annual\\_Convention](http://www.sheepusa.org/Annual_Convention). A brochure for registration can be found at [http://www.sheepusa.org/2014\\_Convention\\_Brochure](http://www.sheepusa.org/2014_Convention_Brochure). Or, contact ASI at 303.771.3500, ext. 0 for a copy of the brochure.

## Notes from ASI Newsletter



Do you Direct Market your Lamb? The American Lamb Industry is attempting to take a closer look at the direct marketing of lamb across the United States. In an effort to better understand the current trends and assess the needs of this type of marketing, we ask those engaged in direct sales of lamb to complete the following survey. By combining the survey results, interviews and other research; we hope to formulate materials to assist you in your direct marketing pursuits.

Please go to [http://www.sheepusa.org/Sheep\\_Industry\\_News\\_Detail/newsID/5964](http://www.sheepusa.org/Sheep_Industry_News_Detail/newsID/5964) to complete the survey before January 6, 2014.

Please help us spread the word by forwarding this information to fellow shepherds. If you would prefer; we would be happy to send you a hard copy of the survey. Please call 717-485-0532 to request a hard copy. Also, provide us with your contact information upon completion of the survey and be entered to win one of three prizes!

Thank you for taking the time to share your experiences and needs for the betterment of the Industry.

## Availability of Value-Added Producer Grants announced

Friday, December 06, 2013 5:00 PM



WASHINGTON — The availability of nearly \$10.5 million in U.S. Department of Agriculture grants to help agricultural producers enter into value-added activities designed to give them a competitive business edge was announced by Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack. “U.S. agriculture is connected to one in 12 American jobs, and value-added products from homegrown sources are one important way that agriculture generates economic growth,” Vilsack said. “Supporting producers and businesses to create value-added products strengthens rural economies, helps fuel innovation and strengthens

marketing opportunities for producers — especially at the local and regional level.”

The funding is being made available through the Value-Added Producer Grant program. Grants are available to help agricultural producers create new products, expand marketing opportunities, support further processing of existing products or goods or to develop specialty and niche products. They may be used for working capital and planning activities. The maximum working capital grant is \$200,000, and the maximum planning grant is \$75,000.

Eligible applicants include independent producers, farmer and rancher cooperatives and agricultural producer groups. Funding priority is given to socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers or ranchers and to small- to medium-size family farms or farmer/ rancher cooperatives.

The Value-Added Producer Grant program is one of many USDA programs that support the development of strong local and regional food systems as part of the Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food initiative. Launched in 2009, the initiative strengthens ties between agricultural producers and their local communities, helping meet growing consumer demand and creating opportunities for small business development. Initiatives like this create new income opportunities for farmers, generate wealth that will stay in rural communities, and increase access to healthy, local foods in underserved communities. All of these actions boost local economies.

Since 2009, the Obama administration has provided agricultural producers with almost \$80 million in Value-Added Producer Grant assistance that has supported more than 600 value-added projects. The project is supplying emerging markets with locally grown produce to enhance production, marketing and distribution infrastructure among women and minority landowners in persistently poor rural communities. Additional examples of how VAPGs assist local and regional food producers are available on the USDA Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food Compass, which is searchable by ZIP code and key word.

Grant applications are due by Feb. 24. More information about how to apply is available by contacting any USDA Rural Development state office.

### **Instrument Grading**

The American Lamb Board and the National Sheep Industry Improvement Center co-funded a study to finalize the instrument grading standards and to evaluate the benefits and effectiveness of the system. Dennis Stiffer, Mountain States Rosen CEO, says, "The last of the cut out data was captured the week of November 19. The study was a collaborative effort between USDA, E+V Imaging, JBS lamb, CSU and Mountain States Rosen on behalf of the industry as a whole. The use of instrument grading provides for the opportunity to reduce variability in the subjective application of yield grades to lamb carcasses, improving the predictability of the saleable cuts and the ability to establish value-based returns on quality lambs. In addition, the system provides an objective sort of like carcasses into lots that should improve plant throughput efficiencies, assist in more consistent and uniform products in the box and greater marketability of lamb to create demand."

Data will be summarized, validated and standardized by the USDA for future use in assigning USDA Quality and Yield Grades. After the USDA trial, Colorado State University's Center for Meat Safety & Quality will conduct an economic evaluation to analyze the benefits and effectiveness of the system and determine the potential return on investment (ROI) to the American Lamb industry.

### **Make It With Wool**

Please keep in mind the National Competition will be held at the Charleston, SC Convention.

Give support to our PA winners!

Thanks goes to Jodell for overseeing the program.



## Pennsylvania Make It With Wool Competition 2013

Mothers and Daughters took top honors at the 2013 Pennsylvania Make It With Wool Competition that was held in Somerset, PA, on October 19, 2013. The Junior & Senior winners will travel in January to Charleston, SC to compete in the 2014 National Make It With Wool Competition.

Rachel Siegel of Lebanon was the winner in the Senior division with her outfit that she made for her brother's upcoming wedding. She used a burnout wool that she embellished to create a wrap. Her black wool elastane jacket and skirt featured couture construction techniques and waist detail. A unique wool/metallic blend with mechanical stretch was Rachel's finishing item for a glitzy fitted top with woven front detail. Her mother Linda Siegel took top honors in the Adult division. Her black and gray ensemble, with raglan-sleeved cashmere, mink, and wool coat, lined blazer, and tailored slacks.



Donahoe of Bedford made a fully lined Claire Shaeffer Couture jacket and Vogue slacks outfit for her daughter Kristie Corle and took first place in the Made for Others category. Joan Klein of Darlington took second place with a plaid cape and black slacks outfit she made for her mother 96 year old Emilie Wells.

Sisters placed 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Junior division. Sombre Carleton of Darlington was first with her double breasted, black pea-coat and above the knee, blue plaid, a-lined skirt. Arianna also had a double-breast, black coat with a vivid purple skirt.

Runner up in the Senior division was Madison Ochoco of Doylestown with her elegant, creamy, formalwear coat & cream colored, mid-knee dress. Sharon Donahoe would take 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the adult division with her three piece ensemble of Barn coat, Palmer/Pletsh jacket, and Vogue fully lined pants.

In our final Preteen division, Jordan Schaefer of Beaver Fall was delighted to hear her name called for first place with her sky-blue jumper. Elizabeth Bruner of Blairsville was 2<sup>nd</sup> place with her 2-piece heather and gray tweed wool suit.

A tradition for over 60 years, the Pennsylvania Make It With Wool Competition was held at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Somerset, Pennsylvania. Twenty-four contestants participated in this year's state competition. The contest encourages creativity and teaches life skills to those who participate.

The nationwide competition was started to encourage the use of wool fibers in making handmade garments. The purpose is to focus attention on the beauty and versatility of wool. It can be used for sewing, knitting, and crocheting from casual to formal attire. Wool regulates the body's temperature, absorbs moisture, and is resistant to flames.

In Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Sheep and Wool Growers Association, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, American Sheep Industry Women, and American Sheep Industry Association sponsor the contest. The generosity of numerous other businesses and individuals also contribute to the success of the competition every year by providing gifts for contestants and prizes for winners of the contest.

Contestants may participate in the contest by constructing a garment made of at least 60% wool, either by sewing, crocheting, knitting, or weaving. There are five divisions in which to compete: Pre-Teen (ages 12 and under); Junior (ages 13-16); Senior (ages 17-24); Adult (ages 25 and older); and Made for Others (any age), where the garment is made for someone other than the person who did the constructing.

Other contestants from around the state of PA were as follows:

Preteens: Rebecca Schaefer & Maggie Townsend - Beaver County, Sydney Ochoco – Bucks County

Juniors: Rediet Schaefer, & Emily Young-Beaver County

Seniors: Gabrielle & Stephanie Augustine-Carbon County, Kelsey McKenna-Mercer County, Gabrielle Ochoco-Bucks County

Adults: Kathy Augustine-Carbon County, Vernyce Danneils-Philadelphia County, Joan Klein-Beaver County

Made for Others: Gabrielle & Stephanie Augustine-Carbon County

State winners in the junior and senior divisions are eligible to go on to the national competition, which will be held in Charleston, SC, in January 2014. The adult winner will submit a video, picture, and their garment to be judged. If chosen as the top state winner, she will also travel to the national competition in Charleston, SC.

Jodell Antram and Virginia Rhoads are the directors of the state event. Bert Antram, Susie Bastian, Peggy Black, Marie Kieffer, Kathy Twigg, and Bertie Zembower served as judges for the competition. MC for the fashion show was Virginia Rhoads.

Inquiries about the contest can be made to Jodell Antram, 762 Antram Road, Somerset, PA 15501 or e-mail [daveandjodell@comcast.net](mailto:daveandjodell@comcast.net).

**Upcoming Events And Important Dates: Please see also events listed on the website calendar.**

<http://www.pasheep.com/events.htm>

**January 4-11, 2014:** PA Farm Show, Harrisburg Farm Show Complex

**January 22-25, 2014:** ASI Convention, Charleston, SC

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