



N'ewesletter

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Building Better Lambs

The Lakeland Carcass Sire project at Lakeland College, Vermilion, Alberta has been completed. How can the project results benefit your operation and improve your business profitability? In order to provide the most useful information from the project results, we need your input. A short survey is available at www.ablamb.ca/news/news. Thank you for taking a few minutes to tell us what will best help you better manage your flock. Your responses are confidential and will only be used to develop better information for the industry.

Our Mission

ALP's ultimate purpose

Alberta Lamb Producers is a dynamic partner in the building of a sustainable, thriving sheep industry for all stakeholders.

ALP is a central point of contact for all industry participants. Your check-off provides an infrastructure for producers to collectively have a voice and a positive influence on the industry as a whole.



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May 7th, 2009

To all Alberta Lamb Producers

Alberta Lamb Producers has been representing producers and providing services to the Alberta sheep industry since 1972. You elect and authorise a board of producers to direct your organisation for the benefit of the industry; all members are encouraged to provide input and to serve as directors. Alberta Lamb Producers provides a united voice for all industry members to government, the Alberta Livestock & Meat Agency and other industry groups. Industry input is vital to ensure that new programs are practical, beneficial and affordable for all sectors of industry. Alberta Lamb Producers is funded by a service charge (check-off) per sheep/lamb produced in Alberta. Check-off is also paid on each pound of wool sold in Alberta.

Check-off dollars are very important to a producer group, especially to our relatively small but expanding and profitable livestock sector. Check-off maintains the infrastructure and operations of Alberta Lamb Producers and also leverages government funding programs to assist with development of the sheep industry. Over the last five years, each producer check-off dollar has leveraged an ad-



ditional three dollars of external funding. In recent years, check-off plus this outside funding have been used to undertake many valuable projects and services, such as:

- **Producer Communication and Education** on such topics as animal health, nutrition, reproduction, humane handling and wool, through newsletters, websites and other outlets
- **Membership of Canadian Sheep Federation** to enable concerns to be addressed nationally and to provide resources
- **A voice to government, Alberta Livestock & Meat Agency and other industry groups**, to ensure sheep producers are represented and are included in financial benefit programs, e.g., BSE compensation; AB Farm Recovery Program; Advance Payment Program
- **Promotion** of lamb at consumer shows, and distribution of recipes etc.
- **Research Projects**, such as Building Better Lambs, The Lakeland Carcass Sire Project, the Alberta Scrapie Surveillance and Genotyping Program, and most recently, year three of the Lamb Traceability Pilot Project
- **Many other projects of benefit to the industry and individual producers alike**

We are very disappointed that the Alberta government has chosen, without industry consultation, to mandate that check-off should be refundable for four commissions in Bill 43. You have successfully directed your organisation, Alberta Lamb Producers, to demonstrate good governance, develop a new business plan aligned with ALMA and enable the creation of many producer resources and research projects for the benefit of the whole industry. The Bill 43 changes do not make sense at a time when governments are facing severe budgetary constraints and are looking to industry to provide more funding for activities as well as implementation of mandatory programs. Industry ownership is critical to ensure the success of these programs. The introduction of Bill 43, mandating that check-off is refundable, could challenge Alberta Lamb Producers' financial stability and infrastructure. If the bill is passed, check-off will become refundable to sheep producers from September 1, 2010. Is it fair that those industry stakeholders who pay their check-off should be providing benefits for those who choose not to support their industry? If check-off revenue is reduced, the amount of both industry and external funding that is available will severely limit the progress of this expanding industry. As a democratic organization run by producers, for producers, Alberta Lamb Producers already provides every member with an opportunity to have a positive influence on the organisation.

We look forward to ensuring our producers are positioned to grow and capitalize on expanding market demands and opportunities. To accomplish that, Alberta Lamb Producers must remain a strong and viable organization. It is a central point of contact for all industry participants, and it should appropriately continue to develop as the hub that connects all stakeholders.

For all the reasons outlined above; because of our track record and the opportunities the industry has, we are trusting that all sheep producers in Alberta will continue to invest in their industry through continued participation and membership in Alberta Lamb Producers. Contact your Alberta Lamb Producers zone director if you have questions or comments

Zone 1 – Norine Moore, 403 549 2464 wnsheep@explornet.com

Zone 2 – John Haarman, 403 381 4881 couleevietexel@caylix.com

Zone 3 – Kathy Parker, 403 443 7220 parkerstockfarm@explornet.com

Zone 4 – Irene Rutledge, 403 577 2382 prutledge@explornet.com

Zone 5 – Larry Fesyk, 780 896 3897 lfesyk@mcsnet.ca

Zone 6 – Florence Henning 780 785 3319 lamb@explornet.com

Zone 7 – Phil Kolodychuk 780 835 3319 philk@abnorth.ca

Or the office on Rite (310-0000) 403 948 8533 info@ablamb.ca Monday – Thursday

"A flock in every field and lamb on every plate"

Alberta Livestock & Meat Agency (ALMA) Update

ALP continues to represent lamb stakeholders with the Alberta Livestock & Meat Agency. It is important that your voice is heard as consideration is made regarding changes and new programs for the livestock industries. Programs need to be credible and verifiable, but they must also be practical, beneficial and affordable for all sectors.

For more information on ALMA, go to <http://alma.alberta.ca/app113/almepage>

Over the last eight years, ALP has accessed \$1.25 million of Alberta government funding through the Diversified Livestock Fund of Alberta (DLFOA) and a further \$413,000 from other funders. We have used this to provide education, resources, research and communications for the benefit of the sheep industry. The check-off you pay to ALP provides the infrastructure and staff to enable these projects to happen. On April 1, 2009, the DLFOA and Alberta Livestock Industry Development Fund (ALIDF) - a non-diversified livestock funding agency - ceased to exist and funding is now accessed through ALMA. We will keep you apprised of any changes, once information is available. DLFOA and ALIDF staff are working diligently to make the changeover as smooth as possible.

Last March, DLFOA approved three ALP projects for the sheep industry; the management of these funds has now been transferred to ALMA. They are

1. Lamb Traceability Pilot Project Year Three

Years One and Two were funded directly by the Alberta government but Year Three is a joint project between ALP and ARD funded by DLFOA/ALMA. A further 30 producers will be invited to join Year Three to assess the systems, benefits and costs of electronic traceability. (See page 5 for more details.)

2. ALP Phase Three

Communications and Implementation of Strategic Business Plan. As you know, after extensive industry consultation, we completed our strategic business plan in the fall of 2008. We have identified the seven key areas to focus our resources; Phase Three will provide some funding to make these things happen. For a copy of our business plan, go to www.ablamb.ca/documents/ASWCStrategicPlan.pdf or call your zone director or the office.

You will hear about specific plans and activities in subsequent communications. As always, call us to make suggestions or ask for more information. The first benefit we will see is new display materials to raise the profile and knowledge of, and opportunities in the sheep industry. Also, watch for your copy of the *Green Book, Farm and*

Ranch Directory. It should be available in June; there are sheep on the cover and an industry ad inside.

3. Illegal Slaughter/Distribution of Lamb Products

Distribution of uninspected meat can result in adverse food safety and adverse public relations issues, which would be devastating for the whole industry.

All meat sold for human consumption must be processed and marketed through inspected facilities. Killing and butchering an animal on your farm is only legal if the meat is to be consumed by the owner of the premises and his immediate family; it cannot be sold. Penalties will be imposed on producers who allow illegal procedures on their land, as well as on distributors who do not follow the rules. See the Meat Inspection Act and Regulations at [www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/acts6137](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/acts6137)

Given the increasing demand for lamb and the requirement for additional management programs, it is likely that this illegal activity will continue to grow. Addressing this issue now is both proactive and prudent. Making this a priority develops an avenue to obtain government involvement and participation, and contacting the people and communities involved to get them on board with initiatives is also of benefit.

New Funding Announced

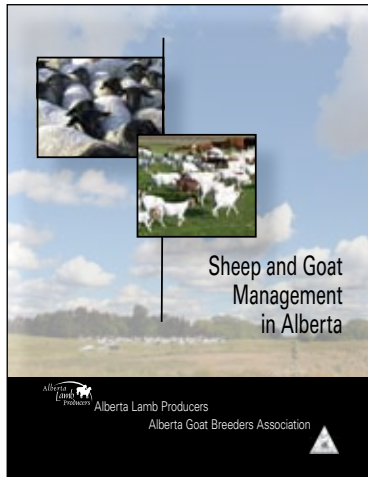
- from Alberta Livestock & Meat Agency and Growing Forward

Information is now becoming available on these two new sources of funding. Your check-off dollars will enable access to this funding and management of approved projects. We are investigating how we can best make use of this money to support the needs of the industry. Call your directors if you have some suggestions – projects must benefit the whole industry, not build you a new barn or pay for Alberta Lamb Producers administration!

Growing Forward will have some dollars available for producers to implement an **On-Farm Food Safety Program** and also for **Traceability**. Watch for more information.



Sheep and Goat Management in Alberta (SGMA)



SGMA is a new management resource. Two of three comprehensive modules on health, nutrition and reproduction of sheep and goats are now available on our website at http://www.ablamb.ca/producer_mgmt/sheep_goat_mgmt.html

Go to the Producer Management Resources page and click on the appropriate download button. In order to conserve resources, we encourage producers to use the online resource although there will be limited, printed copies and CDs available. More resource modules are to follow; your feedback and suggestions for topics are welcome and help us to provide you with the information you need.

Note: Free high-speed internet is available at all Alberta libraries if you want to take a look at SGMA. You can print off any pages or sections you need by selecting the appropriate pages in the print management dialogue box.

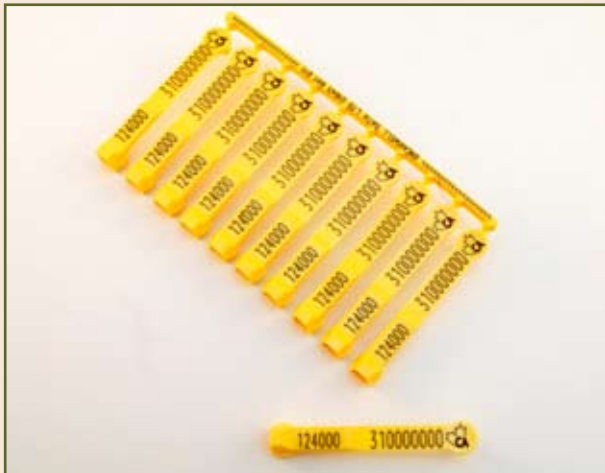
These modules are also available for purchase on CD and in print on a cost recovery basis.

CD: \$10 plus GST, shipping and handling (\$5)

Printed copy in binder: \$49 plus GST, shipping and handling (\$12 Western Canada). **Please note:** printed copies are in black and white.

To place an order: e-mail: info@ablamb.ca or call (310-0000) 403-948-8533

SGMA is a collaborative project between the Alberta Lamb Producers and the Alberta Goat Breeders Association; the initial modules were funded by the Diversified Livestock Fund of Alberta.



New CSIP Tag Now Available



Shearwell SET RFID tags have been approved as Canadian Sheep Identification Program tags and are now available for purchase from Canadian Co-operative Woolgrowers, phone 1-800-567-3693. These yellow tags have an electronic ID chip but also have a visual read number. The cost is currently \$2 per tag plus shipping. CCWG will collect your \$1.50 ALP check-off when you purchase CSIP tags.

The other approved CSIP tags are still valid, so you can continue to select the tag that works best for your operation.

Counting Sheep ... Count the Many Ways

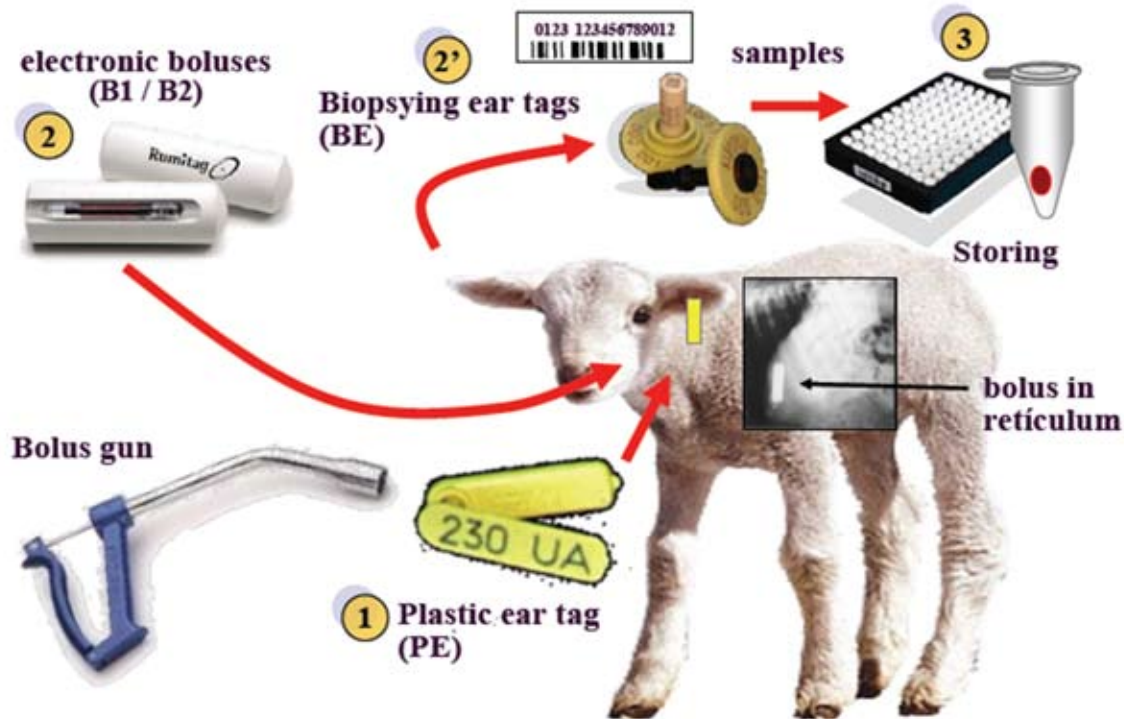
Alberta Lamb Traceability Pilot Project – Yr 3

Susan Hosford, Project Manager

Just being able to count sheep isn't enough. The Canadian sheep industry may have to take the next step, according to speakers at the OIE Animal Identification and Traceability conference, held in March in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Of importance for Canadian producers is the keynote speaker's assertion, that "animal identification and traceability are essential tools for controlling animal diseases but that effective control can only be achieved through the participation of all. Failure on the part of one country places all others in danger." Other relevant comments include, "It has become even more necessary that stakeholders throughout the value/food chain are aware, and if appropriate participating, in the developing and implementing of animal identification and traceability systems." Or yet another, "retaining and/or obtaining market share, domestically and/or internationally is going to depend on working systems of animal identification and tracking."

To read more about the conference link to:

<http://www.oie.int/eng/traceability-2009/documents.html>



In this diagram, from one of the presentations at the OIE conference, you can see some of the technologies global sheep industry is using to identify and track lambs.

Canadian producers, who have identified their sheep other than by name, have used everything from ear notches, to tattoos, to the electronic rumen boluses, to DNA sampling tags used by purebred breeders for scrapie testing. But mainly Canadian producers use ear tags. And as you've read before, ear tags are just one part of an electronic management system.

Lamb Traceability Pilot Project Update

Over the past year, several farms have been taking part in the Alberta lamb Traceability Pilot project.

- Twelve farms are using the full system - RF ID tags , hand-held tag readers, management software and electronic scales.
- All breeding animals have RF ID ear tags and their information is entered into the farms' computers.



- Most of the co-operating farms have completed lambing.
- Weaning and weighing lambs will be the next stage of data collection.

Electronic record-keeping takes the place of notebooks and barn sheets. Management software takes information from the hand-held recorder and generates reports that producers can use to analyze their flock's performance. A lambing report, for example, shows the ewes that have lambed, number of lambs born, birth weights and survival rates. A weaning report can show weaning weights per lamb, per ewe or per sire of the lambs. Lamb growth reports track average daily weight gain and days of age to slaughter, and can be sorted to compare the lambs of different breeds, different sires or different feeding.

Unfortunately the local farm supply store does not have any of these EID systems on the shelf yet. There are few complete systems available, so this project has gathered the best components obtainable, to make a working system that will ultimately be available for general use in the industry.

Lamb Traceability Pilot Project Year 3, 2009

Funding was approved under the new ALMA program for contracts for technical and IT support, and for project coordination. This funding was successful through the assistance of Alberta Lamb Producers.

Funding is still to be approved for equipment matching grants. When approval is received, the Alberta pilot will again be looking for a small number of flock owners interested in participating in this year's pilot. Several co-operators dropped out last year due to their heavy farm and off farm workload. They were replaced by producers on a waiting list. Producers on the waiting list will be contacted.

If you are interested in joining a great project team working on an exciting project, consider the following selection criteria. To qualify you must:

- Have a flock of 100 or more ewes.
- Sell a majority of lambs to Sunterra Meats. As many lambs as possible need to be tracked from farm to plant to test systems.
- Have a computer and internet access and be able to use both for information collection and exchange.
- Be willing to keep project records, to report experiences both good and bad, and to share information with the project team.
- Be willing to share knowledge, experiences and be open to hosting tours and demonstrations on your farm.
- Be willing to learn, to test new ideas, to set up new technology and adapt facilities on your farm.
- Be available to attend meetings, training sessions or seminars (four to six) over the course of the year.

Interested? As soon as possible, please contact:

Tony Stolz at 403-637-2152 or email at tony@stolzwilliams.com

Potential co-operators will be contacted for interviews by July 1, 2009.

Moving or Selling Some Sheep?



Remember to use an official **Alberta Manifest** (same as for cattle), available from auction markets and some Alberta Agriculture hub offices. Remember to include your **Premises ID** on this form.

You don't have your Premises ID yet? To access a form, go on-line at [www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/trace12354](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/trace12354) or call the Ag Info Centre at 310 FARM (3276)

The Premises Identification Program is being established in order to track the location of animals in case of an animal disease occurrence, a public health related emergency, or an emergency such as a natural disaster affecting animals and people.



Drug Label Information Is For Your Safety

Please read all labels **carefully and in full** before using any veterinary products.

Free access to label information is available from the

Compendium of Veterinary Products at

<http://csf.naccvp.com>

(There is a link from www.ablamb.ca)

“Many parasiticides are pesticides not drugs. Instead of a DIN (drug identification number), these products have a PCP (pest control product) number. **It is illegal to use a PCP product in an extra-label manner, even by veterinary prescription.**”

*Trisha Dowling, DVM, MS, DACVIM & DACVCP
gFARAD Western Centre, WCVM*

Ectiban® 25 Fly-Killer

The full “Ectiban 25 Fly Killer” label provides a number of precautions and warnings that are important to your operation. You must follow these instructions.

ECTIBAN® 25 FLY-KILLER GROUP 3 INSECTICIDE
PYRETHROID INSECTICIDE/EMULSIFIABLE CONCENTRATE
 KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN
READ LABEL BEFORE USING
GUARANTEE: Permethrin 240 g per litre
 REGISTRATION NO. 15701 PEST CONTROL PRODUCTS ACT
DIRECTIONS FOR USE
SPRAY APPLICATION

Insects	Rate	Application
Sheep Sheep Ked	Mix 200 mL with 50 L water in a sprayer.	Spray until entire animal is thoroughly covered. Do not exceed a maximum of 150 mL of spray solution per animal. One application per year. Treat in fall or winter before lambing and shearing. Do not treat sick animals. Do not contaminate feed or watering areas. Do not apply to lambs or sheep within 90 days of slaughter.

Compendium of Veterinary Products

Please note: This information supersedes the Ectiban information printed in the *Guide to Parasites in Sheep, 2006*.

Extra Label Drug Use

ELDU is the use of an animal health product such as an antibiotic, in a manner other than what is specified on the label. It includes using a product for a different species, weight or age of animal, and for diseases or other conditions not listed on the label: administering a product at a different dosage, route, frequency, duration or timing of treatment or failing to observe the stated withdrawal period. (Canadian Sheep & Lamb Food Safe Farm Practices)

A prescription from a veterinarian is always required.

Albendazole (Valbezen)

Note: you will need a prescription from your veterinarian for this ELDU (Extra Label Drug Use).

7.5 mg/kg bwt for control of gastrointestinal worms;

0.3 mL per 10 lb. body weight (4.5 kg) of 113.6 mg per mL albendazole suspension

We have many instances of **differing** withdrawal times and MRLs (Minimum Residue Limit) between the US and Canada. If albendazole were detected in US lambs slaughtered in Canada, they would be condemned (given the seven day withdrawal period required by the US and the 27 day period required in Canada).

Albendazole is approved for use in sheep in the US at 7.5 mg/kg with a seven day withdrawal time. At one time, it was approved at the same dose with the same withdrawal for sheep in Canada. **Due to the small market, the manufacturer has never changed the Valbazen label to reflect this.** And unfortunately, the Veterinary Drugs Directorate never established an MRL for albendazole in sheep liver. At the approved label dose, albendazole is efficacious against *Fasciola* and *Fascioloides*, so there is no reason to increase the dose to 12 mg/kg. The US FARAD has previously recommended a 27 day withdrawal interval when sheep were administered doses of 10-12 mg/kg. Currently the Canadian MRL for albendazole is 0.2 ppm in cattle liver. Given this information and the fact that the residues in sheep tissues deplete faster than cattle, following the withdrawal interval recommended for cattle should be adequate (27 days). **Also, albendazole should not be administered during the first 30 days of gestation to sheep, as it is teratogenic (may cause birth defects).** This warning would have appeared on the Canadian labelling.

Therefore, the Canadian gFARAD recommends a withdrawal interval of 27 days, which should be sufficient

Continued on next page



Albendazole (Valbezen) continued

so that detectable residues are not found. Because the Canadian gFARAD withdrawal recommendation is not an official withdrawal time and is based on data that has not been reviewed nor approved by the Veterinary Drugs Directorate or the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, responsibility for residue violations rests with the attending veterinarian."

Trisha Dowling, DVM, MS, DACVIM & DACVCP
gFARAD Western Centre, WCVL

The OFFS program in Alberta is off to a great start

530 people are already trained

Do you have questions?

Do you need to sign up?

Call Lorraine on 1-888-684-7739

or e-mail lorraine@cansheep.ca

The Advance Payment Program

The Advance Payments Program (APP), which is available again this year, is a federal financial loan guarantee program that gives producers easier access to credit through cash advances. This means improved cash flow throughout the year and better opportunities for marketing their agricultural products. The new APP loan period begins on April 1, 2009 and the loans mature 18 months later (September 30, 2010).

ALP has arranged for you to access dollars from this program through the Manitoba Livestock Association (www.manitobalivestock.com), which already has the service and financial program set up.

For more information, please contact Jo-anne Kinaschuk, Program Manager

Manitoba Livestock Cash Advance Program

Toll free: 1-866-869-4008 Email: mb.livestockprg@mts.net

Address: # 212-530 Century St. Winnipeg, MB R3H OY4

For more information regarding APP, visit

<http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1178036035451&lang=eng>

Major sheep events in Alberta this year Check out www.ablamb.ca/news/event for a full list of events.

Alberta Sheep Symposium

October 23-25, 2009

Executive Royal Inn, Leduc

Keynote Speakers:

Dr. Temple Grandin,

Dr Chris Clarke and Dr. Dan Morrenchal

For more info: Alberta Sheep Breeders Association

Phone 1 866 96 SHEEP or email

office@albertasheep.ca

For special-rate hotel reservations call 1-888-388-

3932

Plan Now to Attend!



All Canada Sheep Classic

July 9-13, 2009

Presenting a world class exhibition and celebration of superior genetics and breeding stock.

Proudly hosting Canada's largest purebred sheep show and sale in 2009 - presented by the Alberta Sheep Breeders' Association and the Canadian Sheep Breeders' Association in conjunction with the Calgary Stampede.

Purebred entries are already closed and market lamb entries close on May 28th.

For full details, go to www.stampedeagriculture.com/events/360-all-canada-sheep-classic

Alberta Sheep Breeders Association Phone 1 866 96 SHEEP or email office@albertasheep.ca