



# THE RHODE ISLAND SHEEP COOPERATIVE NEWSLETTER

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July 2010

Website: [www.risheep.org](http://www.risheep.org)

Telephone: (401) 578-2012

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## **REMEMBER THIS DATE:**

**10-10-10 AT 10:00 A.M.**

**PLANS MADE FOR**

**RI SHEEP CO-OP FALL CLINIC**

The Rhode Island Sheep Cooperative will hold its first Fall Clinic on Sunday, October 10, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. at the farm of Deb and Don Hopkins, 1125 Danielson Pike, (also known as Route 6) Scituate, Rhode Island. The programs will include fall lambing practices (yes, there will be baby lambs to see!), lambing video to view, a shearing demonstration, and skirting demonstration. There will be a Pot Luck Lunch with Board members supplying various types of cooked lamb available. Everyone is invited to attend the clinic - if you plan to stay for lunch please bring a (large) dish to share. If you want to make your favorite lamb dish to share, kindly contact Deb (647-7281 or [cdcdorset@cox.net](mailto:cdcdorset@cox.net)) to coordinate. We have had some lamb donated, looking for more. Drinks and paper goods will be supplied by the Cooperative, and dessert is donated by the Patti Family! Questions: either contact Deb (at the above contact information) or Polly at 949-4619 or [khop4811@aol.com](mailto:khop4811@aol.com).

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## **2010 WOOL COLLECTION DAY**

### **ANOTHER SUCCESS**

By Barbara Thompson, Chairperson

The humidity was high but so was the enthusiasm of the many workers, young and a little older, that came to help at this year's blanket pool. "Many hands make light work" and that it did. We finished in record time at a little after 3:00 pm, everything picked up and the barn was swept! Although South County had rain downpours, we stayed dry to the very end.

The wool that was brought in, for the most part, was in great shape, well skirted and clean. The wool skirting crews really appreciated that. We only had 7 bags total at the end of the day, but except for the last half bag, they were fully packed thanks to the younger folks. Even the smaller, lighter weight participants packed bags over 200

pounds.....something Jo Judd, of Connecticut Blanket group, had trouble believing. She had never seen a 301 pound bag of wool -- but we had one, as well as a 287 pound bag. The rest of the bags were packed over 222 pounds each. Great job kids! Our six and one-half bags of wool, weighed a total of 1657 pounds.

The free magnetic bumper stickers for paid Rhode Island Sheep Co-operative members were a great hit, as well as the metal Sheep Co-operative 'barn' signs. And I hear more members are calling to order the barn signs. There are still a few magnetic bumper stickers left, and plenty of adhesive bumper stickers!

The wool was delivered to the University of Connecticut on Tuesday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, where it was reweighed (to check on the 301 pound bag) ☺ and I am happy to report all the weights all checked out. The next order of business is to select the type of blanket we want to make. There was not enough colored wool to keep separate this year to make the minimum scouring weight so all the wool went together. This will be interesting challenge for the Committee. Strickland Wheelock has met with the Committee given some options for pattern and color for the Committee to ponder. When the washed wool arrives in Massachusetts in late summer, the Committee will meet again to decide what to do. Announcement of patter will be made after that time.

If you are interested in purchasing this edition of the blanket, give me a call (949-0264 or email ([mthompson5@cox.net](mailto:mthompson5@cox.net)) to be added to the list. It will be a first-come-first-serve basis. Remember we will have limited number of blankets this year as the poundage of wool was low. We still have many, many lap throws (in two patterns), long throws (in one pattern), and queen and king blankets (in one pattern). Check the website for availability or to order.

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### **American Sheep Industry News**

**Farm Bill Feedback:** The House Agriculture Committee has begun holding hearings to review U.S. agriculture policy in advance of the 2012 Farm Bill, and they want to hear from you. The committee is asking people to share their thoughts about the future of farm policy. To offer your input, go to <http://agriculture.house.gov/inside/feedbackform.html> and complete the form. Comments received by July 28 will be considered part of the Farm Bill field hearing record.

**Reminder:** Entries to the 2010 ASI Photo Contest must be postmarked by Aug. 20. The contest is open to all who wish to enter. The only rule is that your photograph must include sheep. Cash prizes will be awarded. Complete rules for the contest are available at [www.sheepusa.org](http://www.sheepusa.org) .

**NE Gray Wolf Distinct Population Not Warranted** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) announced a 90-day finding on a petition to list a Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of the gray wolf in five northeastern states as endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973. The agency found that the petition does not present substantial scientific or commercial information indicating that listing a DPS of the gray wolf in Massachusetts, New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine may be warranted. Therefore, it will not initiate a further status review in response to this petition. This finding was in response to a petition received on Feb. 4, 2009, requesting that a northeastern gray wolf DPS be listed. However, any wolf found in the Northeast is still classified as endangered under the lower 48 United States listing and the protection of the act would apply.

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### **Its Not To Early To Think About Fall Breeding !**

Here are some things that you should do prior to breeding your ewes:

- \*Check over your ewe flock for bad or lumpy udders and bad mouths; cull those animals that are not sound.
- \*Replace the cull ewes with your quality yearling ewes.
- \*Evaluate and choose your best ewe lambs for next year's replacement ewes – keep those ewe lambs on growing ration.
- \*Evaluate your stud ram(s) – use your production records as a guide for what your ram produces; also be sure your rams are vigorous, healthy and in good breeding condition (not too fat and not too thin); thin rams should be “flushed” (fed more grain) prior to going in with the ewes. A ram to ewe ratio of 1:25 for ram lambs and 1:35 or more for mature rams is generally recommended. Exercise a controlled breeding season, and recommendation is removal of ram after 60+ days.
- \*Flush your ewes – 1 lb grain per day two to five weeks prior to going in with the ram (usually seventeen days); if your ewes are over-conditioned the effect of flushing will be lessened.
- \* Check and trim feet of ewes and breeding ram.
- \* Two weeks prior to breeding deworm your sheep.
- \*Keep rams out of sight and sound of your ewe flock until first day of breeding; avoid fence line contact. Breeding performance will be improved as a result of the “ram effect”.
- \* Provide a mineral supplement specifically formulated for sheep on a free-choice basis throughout the breeding period.
- \*Vaccinate your ewes for abortion diseases per label instructions if this is part of your routine management.
- \*Identify all ewes (and rams) and put in replacements tags; you may also use paint brands on the ewes backs for easy identification when bred.

\*Look over your ram marking harness and/or brisket paint to be sure you have adequate supply on hand. A suggested color sequence is: orange, red, green or blue, then black, with colors being changed every 17 days. Remember a large number of ewes being re-marked may indicate a ram or ewe fertility problem. By recording breeding dates on the ewes after they're marked, will ease management for lambing season.

\*When practical, provide your flock access to a cool barn, shed, or woods during the hot days and, of course, be sure your sheep have plenty of fresh clean water daily during these hot summer months.

*References used for this article: NDSU "Sheep Pocket Guide" and Virginia Cooperative Extension "Sheep Management Schedule".*

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The following Budget for 2010 approved by the Board of Directors.

**Expenses:**

Directory	\$ 600
Big E 4-H awards	\$ 100
4-H –Foster Old home Days	\$ 200
Foster Old Home Days sheep judge	\$ 125
Newsletters copies	\$ 300
Newsletter Editor fee	\$ 300
Postage	\$ 150
Washington County sheep show – Supreme awards	\$ 50
Hall rentals	\$ 200
Speakers	\$ 200
Miscellaneous	\$ 150
Website	\$ 400
Telephone	\$ 600
Wool processing	\$18,000
Wool payments to growers	\$ 1,200
Wool Collection Day Expenses	\$ 700
Blanket related Postage & P O Box	\$ 200
Sales Tax	\$ 1,500
Promotion/advertising/copying	\$ 2,000
Blanket related miscellaneous	\$ 200

**Income:**

Dividends	\$ 120
Fundraisers at (2) dinners	\$ 250
Ag Council	\$ 200
Membership dues	\$ 450
Blanket sales	\$32,800

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### Aries 4-H Club Still Collecting Dino's Sales Slips

The Aries 4-H Club is still collecting sales slips from Dinosaurs' Park 'N Shop (located at 1020 Putnam Pike, Chepachet, RI) with all funds raised going towards the 4-H sheep show at the Foster Old Home Days in July. There were 17 4-H youths showing their sheep last year and anticipate well over 20 this year. You may donate your Dino's sales slips by dropping them off at Snowhurst Farm (grain store) in Chepachet, or by mailing them to Christine Sederback, 199 Chestnut Hill Rd, Chepachet, RI 02814. Thank you for your support. If you would like to donate an award or money towards an award for the 4-H Sheep Show at Foster Old Home Days, send it to Christine Sederback (see above).

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### STILL NEED YOUR SHEEP SHEARED? OR WANT TO BOOK FOR FALL SHEARING?

These young adults are part of active families of the Rhode Island Sheep Cooperative, call one of them today.

**Brittany Sederback**, of Chepachet – a State FFA officer, URI college student & former 4-Her, (401)678-6915, email: agiwanuku@yahoo.com

**Colin Siegmund** of North Grovnersdale, CT – 4-H member & high school student - (860) 315-7684, email: woolyone@charter.net .

**Taylor Meek** of Chepachet - former FFA & 4-H member, college student - (401) 626-6599, email: durrh30@yahoo.com .

### SHEARER FOR LARGE FLOCKS:

This gentleman is a Rhode Island Sheep Cooperative member, teaches shearing at U. Conn and Cornell University shearing schools, and can offer advice on how to keep sheep clean and skirting fleeces.

**Bill Cournoyer:** Tel# (860) 887-3793 email: bill.cournoyer@gmail.com (email is best way to reach him).

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### EASTERN STATES EXPOSITION HOSTS NATIONAL SHEEP SHOWS IN SEPTEMBER !

The Big E, as it is known locally, runs from September 17 to October 3, 2010, and is home to 22 Wool and Meat Sheep Shows. This year the fair is hosting the National Cheviot Show, National Regional Border Leicester Show, National Eastern Regional Hampshire Show, Northeast Tunis Show, and District One Regional Romney Show in its state-of-the-art livestock facility. For more information go to [www.thebig.com](http://www.thebig.com) and click on 'Agriculture'.

## SHEEP SHOW AT SOUTHERN RI 4-H FAIR

*By Polly Hopkins*

Recently I attended the Southern Rhode Island 4-H sheep show, in the pretense of getting my daughter off the farm while her bridesmaids and maid-of-honor decorated my parents' house for a surprise bridal shower (but that is another story). We arrived at the fairgrounds a little after 3:00 p.m. when the show was supposed to start, but the goat show that started at 8:00 a.m. or so was still going on! We walked thru the barn and saw lots of 4-Hers putting the finishing touches on their sheep. I was impressed by the fact that most of these kids had shown goats all day, as well as rabbits and some even had chickens entered. For those of you who don't know, rabbit showmanship is like a public speaking event, they have to talk their way thru the class. Each child takes a turn at the table with their rabbit. I am not sure what a "chicken showmanship" does, but would imagine it is close to the same. Back to the sheep show... Rachel Gately, a URI graduate who has gone on to college in Texas (and home visiting for the summer) served as Judge for the sheep show and did a fine job. Most of the 4-Hers showing sheep had no more than 2 or 3 years showing under their belts. My daughter and I were very impressed with the presentation of the animals as a whole. There were some rough cut animals that needed to be washed and carded more, but the Southdowns were beautifully slicked sheared, Romneys were trimmed well and clean, the Border Leicesters and Lincolns were well prepared, even the Baby Southdowns and Shetlands were presented well, although the later were not too well trained. (I know I am missing some more breeds, and for that I apologize.) Rachel had her work cut out for her, as there were good sheep and good showman competing for the prizes. The breeds were split into Meat Breeds and Wool Breeds making it easier to judge. My daughter and I came up with the idea that 4-H start a 'Novelty Breed' show for those breeds such as Baby Dolls and Shetlands (that really can't compete with Lincoln and Border Leicesters). When all said and done, we enjoyed watching the kids put on a good show. I was truly amazed after that long hot day, when the show was finally done there were no temper tantrums or tears – everyone line up with smiles and giggles for a delicious pot luck supper! Congrats to the 4-H Leaders!!

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CHECK OUT THE NEW ENGLAND SALE CATALOG online  
go to [www.nesheep.org](http://www.nesheep.org)

Sale Sheep Show on Friday July 16<sup>th</sup>; Purebred Sheep Auction on  
Saturday July 17<sup>th</sup> - followed by the Used Equipment Auction

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## THINGS HAPPENING...

**Eastern RI Country Fair** will be held on **July 17 & 18, 2010** on Glen Road, Portsmouth, RI - [www.uri.edu/4h](http://www.uri.edu/4h) .

**North East Youth Sheep Show** will be held from **July 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010** (Thursday thru Sunday) at Eastern States Exposition Fairgrounds in West Springfield, Massachusetts - [www.nesheep.org](http://www.nesheep.org) .

**New England Sheep Sale** will be held on **July 16 & 17, 2010** (Friday & Saturday) at Eastern States Exposition Fairgrounds in West Springfield, Massachusetts - [www.nesheep.org](http://www.nesheep.org) .

**Foster Old Home Days** will be held on **July 23, 24 & 25, 2010** on the fairgrounds behind the Town Hall in Foster, RI - [www.uri.edu/4h](http://www.uri.edu/4h) .

**Washington County Fair** will be held from **August 11 to 15, 2010** at the fairgrounds located on Route 112, Richmond, RI – 4-H sheep show Wednesday, open sheep show Thursday; [www.washingtoncountyfair-ri.com](http://www.washingtoncountyfair-ri.com)

**Fall Clinic** will be held on **October 10, 2010** at D&D Hopkins Farm, Route 6 in Scituate, RI (see details on 1<sup>st</sup> page of this newsletter.) Everyone will be invited to attend.

**New York Sheep & Wool Festival** will be held on October 16 & 17, 2010 at the Dutchess County Fairgrounds, Rhinebeck, New York

**RI Sheep Co-op's Fall Meeting: October 23, 2010** @ South Foster Fire Station, Rt. 94, Foster, Rhode Island. Doors open at 5:00 p.m., serving of pot luck dinner to start at 6:00 p.m.

**DON'T FORGET...** the first...**Fiber Festival of New England** to be held at the Big E Fairgrounds in West Springfield, on **November 6 & 7, 2010**. Many of your friends will be there buying their fiber for winter projects .... don't miss out!

### WANTED:

Members with ENTHUSIASM and ideas are WANTED to serve on various committees - such as the Blanket Project, Marketing, educational events, youth activities, and more. Have a new idea? The Board welcomes new ideas and volunteers. Contact a Board Member today, call the R.I. Sheep Co-op "hot line" at (401) 578-2012, or contact our President, Polly Hopkins at [Khop4811@aol.com](mailto:Khop4811@aol.com) with ideas, comments, or suggestions.



The Rhody Warm Blanket committee is looking for a Chairperson. If interested, contact RI Sheep Co-op President, Polly Hopkins 949-4619, or Retiring Blanket Chair, Barbara Thompson 949-0264 to discuss position. Organizational skills, some computer knowledge, some telephone duties required. Volunteer preferred but some compensation may be available.

### **Officers and Directors for 2010-2011:**

President:	Polly Hopkins
Vice President:	Ambrose Garvey
Recording Secretary:	Maryann Moulton
Corresponding Secretary:	Tony Patti
Treasurer:	Deb Hopkins
Assistant Treasurer:	Irene Nebiker
Directors:	Barbara Donnelly, Heather Place, and Artie Siegmund
Youth Coordinator:	Christine Sederback
Blanket Chair:	Barbara Thompson
Ag Council Reps.:	Irene Nebiker, Fred Andrews, and Christine Sederback (Alternate)
Ex Officio:	Robin Meek

Website: [www.risheep.org](http://www.risheep.org)