



THE RHODE ISLAND SHEEP COOPERATIVE NEWSLETTER

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May 2012

Website: www.risheep.org

Telephone: (401) 578-2012

We are is hosting two upcoming events -

June 9, 2012: Workshop & Potluck luncheon*

(see page 2)

June 10, 2012: Wool Collection Day *

(see page 3)

Plan to attend and participate in both activities!

* Information for each is included in this newsletter.

Essay Contest

There is still time! The Blanket Committee will continue to receive essays until June 30, 2012. This contest is for youth 18 years of age or younger. For more details please go to our website or refer to our last newsletter. Previous blankets were named after the Villages of South Scituate, Kent, Rockland, Ashland and Richmond. What will the next one be?? The winner of the essay contest will be recognized in the 2012 blanket brochure and will win a new Kindle Fire. Essays should be mailed to the Cooperative's post office box and must be post marked by June 30, 2012

RI Sheep Cooperative Memorial Scholarship

This is a great opportunity to help 'one of our own'. The \$500 Memorial Scholarship will be awarded to a child who is a member of the Cooperative or whose family is a member of the Cooperative. Information and application form can be found on our website: www.risheep.org. The postmark deadline is June 1, 2012, however, as this is the first year of this scholarship we will accept applications postmarked up to June 15th.



RHODE ISLAND SHEEP COOPERATIVE hosts:

Spring Clinic with Potluck Luncheon

When? Saturday, June 9, 2012

Where? The Hopkins' Farm (Deb & Don Hopkins)
1125 Danielson Pike (Rte. 6), No. Scituate, RI

Program? 9:30-10:00 - Registration, Coffee & Donuts

10:00 - Fitting Workshops:

- * Slick shearing for show
 - * Cutting out meat breeds for show
 - * Fitting a wool breed-specifically curly wool breed
- Attendees will split into three groups, and rotate to attend all three classes.

12:00 - Pot Luck luncheon - we ask everyone bring a dish to share; papers goods, drinks and dessert will be provided.

1:00 Afternoon session:

- *Selection of sheep - meat and wool breeds
- *Class judging

RI Sheep Co-op booth will be set up with information for members on the blanket project, skirting fleeces, etc.

This Clinic is free and open to anyone interested in sheep and/or wool.

If you plan to stay for lunch, please bring a dish to share. Drinks and dessert will be provided

Questions - contact

Deb at (401) 647-7281 or cdcdorset@cox.net, or

Polly (401) 949-4619 or khop4811@aol.com .



WOOL COLLECTION DAY

Date: Sunday - June 10, 2012
Time: 9:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.
Location: Urban Edge Farm
35 Pippin Orchard Road, Cranston, RI

Note: Some of the following information maybe repetitive for some of you; however, we include it here once again to educate our new members who will be participating the blanket project this year.

- *Fleeces should be between 2 to 6 inches long, clean, dry, and shorn within the last year, preferably stored in plastic or paper bags – if it is a large fleece = one to a bag
- *Producers are asked to stay with their fleeces during inspection. We invite all members to assist throughout the day.
- *Sorry, no hair sheep fiber will be accepted;
- *The farmer will receive payment that day for their skirted fleece(s);
- *Treasurer will be in attendance to collect dues. Membership in the RI Sheep Cooperative is required to participate in the program (annual dues is \$10.00.

**NO FARM IS TOO SMALL –
ALL ARE WELCOME!**

For more information, contact the
RI Sheep Cooperative
at (401) 578-2012
or visit www.risheep.org

In Preparation for Wool Collection Day

Skirting your wool –the Committee is asking all producers to skirt their fleeces before bringing them to collection day. Now don't be scared --this can be a pretty easy process. The skirting area or table can be easily put together by using a piece of lattice or a piece of plywood laid on top of sawhorses or barrels. (The lattice or plywood should be clean). In a pinch, you can use a clean sheet or blue tarp on the ground. Spread your fleece out flat on your "table" with the clean side down. Look over your fleece and remove all the areas that contain hay, manure, caked mud and the like; this is usually around the neck and butt areas of the sheep. If there is a lot of hay chaff down the back or neck area that should be removed as well. Then flip the fleece over and remove any second cuts (which are the short pieces where the shearer may have gone over an area on the sheep a second time.) When your skirting is done, roll the fleece and put it in a clean plastic bag or cardboard box. Do not tie the bag or tape the box shut as the fleece needs "to breath". The discarded skirtings or tags will make great mulch for your gardens. Note: fleeces do not have to be in one complete piece to put into the blanket pool. It is better to remove the bad areas before storing to keep the rest of the fleece clean. You may place more than one fleece in a bag after skirting, just remember not to seal it up tight. On Collection Day, you will be asked to stay with your fleeces while those at the skirting tables who look them over. This is not to be critical but to comment and assist you on your skirting job. We have found this to be a very informative as well as a social time of the Collection Day. Many producers has lots of questions and those around the skirting tables can give lots of answers and pointers to help you for next year. Remember, the better the wool, the more poundage you will put into the blanket pool, and the more return you will get (in both money received and the amount of blankets you can get back).

All colors of fleeces and fleeces from all breeds of sheep are accepted; length of wool should be at least 2 inches long but no more than 6 inches in length. Sorry but no hair sheep fiber will be accepted. All fleeces should be clean, dry and shorn within the last year. Please keep color fleeces separate from white fleeces when bagging or storing.

******* A PROFIT TO THE PRODUCER *******

The Rhody Warm Blanket Project was created to help the sheep farmer in Rhode Island to earn a little extra income. Here is how it works:

When you bring wool to the Collection Day, it gets inspected and weighed. The Cooperative will pay the farmer on Collection Day, the

price of \$0.80 per pound. The farmer may then place an order for blankets or throws. The amount of blankets and sizes available to that farmer will depend on the poundage of wool he contributed. When the blankets are made and delivered to the Cooperative (in the fall), the farmer will then pay for the items. This figure is the combination of the cost of processing the wool into blankets plus a small handling fee to the Cooperative. The farmer may then sell his blankets at the price set by the Blanket Committee. Blankets and throws may not be sold less than the standard price set by the Blanket Committee. (check out the website for a list of prices)

An example: 16 pounds of wool accepted at the Collection Day, the farmer is able to order two long throws at the cost to the farmer of \$47.00 each. The farmer then sells the throws at the standard price of \$92.00 each, making a profit of \$45.00 on each throw.

All farmers' blanket orders not turned in on Collection Day must be returned no later than June 30th to be guaranteed placement on the cutting list.

If a farmer does not want to order blankets or throws, he may still bring his wool and the Cooperative will pay \$0.80 per pound for his wool. The Cooperative will accept wool from farmers who just want to get rid of their wool and not order blankets. Blankets made from this wool will be sold by the Cooperative to fund various activities hosted and supported throughout the year.

*****THINGS TO REMEMBER*****

*Call your shearer. Dates get booked-up fast!

*Dues (\$10.00) to the RI Sheep Co-op may be paid on Collection Day or prior to that date by sending your check to the RI Sheep Co-op, Attn: Treasurer, P.O. Box 88, Harmony, RI 02829. You must be a member to participate in this project.

*Blanket orders should be filled out on June 6th and turned in at the table, but must be received by June 30th, 2012 to be put on the Producers List.

*Keep sheep off feed 6 – 10 hours before shorn.

*In cool weather, keep draft down to a minimum.

*Provide plenty of light for shearer to see.

*Keep sheep close to the shearing area (pen them up for easy handling).

*Do not let shearer shear your sheep on the ground, gravel or in straw/bedding/hay as this will contaminate the wool (plywood or old rug is best to shear on).

*Broom or yard rake are also good for clean up between sheep helping to prepare a good wool clip.



**RHODE ISLAND SHEEP COOPERATIVE
Officers and Directors for 2012-2013:**

President:	Irene Nebiker
Vice President:	Artie Siegmund
Recording Secretary:	Tony Patti
Corresponding Secretary:	Jennie Lee
Treasurer:	Deb Hopkins
Assistant Treasurer:	Irene Nebiker
Directors:	Christine Sederback Barbara Donnelly Roberta Browning
Blanket Co-Chairs:	Robin Meek & Polly Hopkins
Ag Council Reps.:	Irene Nebiker and Christine Sederback
Ex Officio:	Polly Hopkins

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

Would you like to demonstrate spinning, knitting, needle felting, etc. at the Sheep Cooperative's wool shed at the Foster Old Home Days? OR Would you like to sit and talk to the public about the blanket project and/or lamb recipes and who has lamb (meat) available for sale??? Contact Polly for more information: 401-949-4619 or khop4811@aol.com (please put "RISC volunteer" in subject line).

Local Shearers:

Brittany Sederback (small flocks) (also farm sits):
tel: 401-678-6915, email: aqiwanuku@gmail.com

Colin Siegmund (small flocks): tel: 860-315-7684,
email: woolyone@charter.net

Aaron Loux (large and small flocks): tel: 413-230-8607,
email: aaronshearing@gmail.com.

R.I. Sheep Cooperative news....

Have you given us your email address? Email blasts are sent out periodically - as is needed. Keep up to date with the latest on-going agriculture events and information that is being circulated by URI, 4-H, RIRLA, Farm Bureau and such other organizations. Be sure to include your email on the membership forms so you don't miss out.

Check out our website: www.risheep.org - for calendar of events, information on sheep, Rhody Warm Blankets, various contacts, and the Rhode Island Sheep Cooperative in general. There are ongoing changes being made, so check it out !!!

Look at local farmers markets for lamb for sale. A handful of our members now have meat available to purchase. It was reported by our representatives at the RI Wool & Fiber Festival recently in May, that the most asked question was "*Where can I buy Lamb?*". Lots of recipes were handed out as well. This is great news! Lamb is becoming more popular in our state!

Paying your membership this year to the RI Sheep Cooperative will also make you a member of the American Sheep Industry (ASI). Names will be forwarded after the Collection Day and you will be receiving their quarterly newsletter starting in the fall. You may check out their website at: www.sheepusa.org.

For recipes and more information on lamb, check out the website for the American Lamb Board at: www.americanlamb.com



Barbara Thompson of Seldom Seen Farm recently won both Champion & Reserve Champion Ewe awards at the National Border Leicester Sale in Wooster, Ohio. The Champion Ewe was also top selling ewe of the sale, breaking records in the Border Leicester breed. Congratulations!

*Recipe Courtesy
of the American Lamb Board*



GRILLED LAMBURGERS WITH LEMON-ROSEMARY AIOLI

Servings: 4

Lemon-Rosemary Aioli

1/4 cup light mayonnaise
2 teaspoons minced garlic
3/4 teaspoons finely chopped fresh rosemary
1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice

Lamburgers

1 small eggplant, cut crosswise into 4 slices, each about 1/2-inch thick
1-1/4 teaspoon salt, divided
1-1/2 pounds ground American lamb
1 tablespoon minced garlic
1/8 teaspoon pepper
4 Roma tomatoes, cut lengthwise in half, seeded
2 tablespoons olive oil
4 hamburger buns, split

Combine aioli ingredients in a small bowl and mix well; refrigerate until ready to use.

Place eggplant slices in a single layer on a baking sheet; sprinkle both sides of slices liberally with 1 teaspoon of the salt and set aside.

Combine lamb, garlic, pepper and the remaining salt in a medium bowl, mixing lightly but thoroughly. Lightly shape lamb mixture into 4 patties, each about 1/2-inch thick.

Rinse eggplant slices and pat dry. Brush both sides of eggplant slices and tomato slices with olive oil.

Grill eggplant and tomato, covered, over medium indirect heat 14 to 16 minutes. Place lamb patties over medium direct heat; grill, covered, 7 to 9 minutes to medium (160° F) doneness, turning occasionally. Remove vegetables and burgers from grill. Place hamburger buns on the grill and toast 1 to 2 minutes.

Spread 2 teaspoons aioli on bottom of each bun; top each with a burger. Place one eggplant slice and two tomato halves on each burger; top with additional 1 teaspoon aioli and top of bun.

