

## NSIP Meeting

Thursday – May 9, 2019

7 p.m. CST

Minutes submitted by Lisa Paris Weeks

Attendees: Matt Benz, Rusty Burgett, Brady Campbell, John Carlson, Lynn Fahrmeier, Cody Hiemke, Tom Hodgeman, Jim Morgan, Brenda Reau, Reid Redden, Mark Roembke, Bill Shultz, Lisa Surber, Todd Taylor, Jake Thorne, Lisa Weeks

### Agenda:

- Secretary Report
  - John Carlson moved to accept minutes as written. Bill Shultz seconded. Motion passed.
- Treasurer Report
  - Presented by Bill Shultz (report attached)
  - Financial information will begin to be reported on a quarterly basis instead of monthly.
  - At the close of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, there have been 87 membership renewals and 16 new memberships.
  - Delinquency of data fee payments continues to be a large concern and totals nearly \$9000. Rusty has implemented a policy to limit data processing through Sheep Genetics for those members who are fully paid in terms of membership and data fees.
  - Bill is continuing to monitor our income and expenses to fully understand the core business needs. The budget review process will begin in September for 2020 fiscal year.
- Executive Committee report
  - Presented by Lynn Fahrmeier
  - The appropriation of grant monies continues to be a focus of the executive committee. Lynn, Rusty, and Bill are working closely together to ensure NSIP is using the funds in a manner that promotes and fulfills our mission.
- Program Director Report
  - Presented by Rusty Burgett (report attached)
  - An insurance policy is now in place as required by ALB. The annual cost will be \$5410 and covers the board and executive committee.
  - Consignment forms and information for both 2019 NSIP Ram Sales will be distributed to the NSIP membership beginning May 10. Rusty will be working with the auction houses with the goal of transitioning sale management to them in the future.
  - A programmer is working on resolving the identified glitches in the searchable database and developing some new tools for users.
  - With the vision of developing a bi-monthly webinar series, Rusty will be researching platform options. Programs like Zoom and WebEx will be reviewed to determine the best fit for our needs. Goal is to have the first installment by mid-June.
- Technical Committee
  - Ron Lewis was not in attendance (report attached).
  - Jim Morgan provided an update on the DNA Sampling of NSIP Sires reboot. Harvey Blackburn and Carrie Wilson at the USDA NAGP Lab in Fort Collins have agreed to be the repository for

the DNA samples. Rather than using blood, the project will be transitioning to using TSU (Allflex Tissue Sampling Units) for collecting tissue samples from the ear. Jim projects that 2-3 punches will be required for each NSIP ram with prospected progeny in 2020. Jim and Ron are investigating how to keep costs down on the TSU's. If the units are ordered in bulk, the price point can be lowered. The TSU retails at \$3.50 currently.

- The costs for getting genetic information via the snip chip are approaching the commercial level. Cody Hiemke ran some chips in 2013 for a cost of \$175 each. This cost reduced to \$75 in 2018. Ron Lewis is working with the genetic companies that offer the chip to reach the goal of a \$25 price point. The reported information currently available is strictly disease focused. Quantitative traits will take longer to validate and become reportable information.
- One of the challenges ahead of us is how public should the genetic information be? The development of privacy criteria will need to be considered and perhaps put in place in the not too distant future as genetic testing becomes more prevalent and affordable.

- New Business

- The NSIP Certification Program is being resurrected with the help of Michelle Canfield on updating the NSIP website. Additional promotion and education will be forthcoming. Tom Hodgeman proposed that each category be reviewed by the respective breed groups involved to review and refine the criteria. Once that is complete, forward any changes to Rusty. The education portion of this goal would make great webinar material as suggested by Brenda Reau. Rusty will coordinate all efforts and is currently checking each category to see how many animals are qualifying against each category.
- John Carlson brought to the board a concern from the Polypay Breed Group concerning the lack of policy to limit the number of ram consignments per breeder at the Center of the Nation Sale. Throughout the history of this sale, there has always been an informal agreement among the consignors to limit the number of rams per breeder. This informal agreement was challenged at the 2018 sale. The consensus from the consignors polled was to propose the establishment of policy for Polypays to limit the number of rams consigned to two, and three if ewes are consigned. Matt Benz inquired if buyers from this sale were polled also and the answer was negative. Brenda Reau raised concern that any policy should be applied to all and not a specific breed. Cody Hiemke raised concern if a limiting policy was established it might negatively impact breeds with smaller consignment numbers. Board members from both sides brought valid concerns to the discussion. Discussion ended with a motion from Matt Benz to not establish policy that would limit the number of consignments per breeder. Brenda Reau seconded the motion. The motion was passed.
- There has been a request to add the registration information to the NSIP Searchable Database. Rusty will contact Sheep Genetics for a cost estimate and also discuss this request with the programmer who is currently working on the database. The field exists in Pedigree Master so if it is populated, the question is whether we can access it from the EBV data Sheep Genetics sends back to Rusty. If there is a cost to implementing this request, there may be funds available from the breed groups. Rusty will report findings at the next meeting.
- Brenda Reau sent the board a copy of the flyer for the educational programs the Suffolk Breeders are hosting at the Center of the Nation Sale July 26-27 this summer. The Friday program will be focused on how seedstock producers can utilize quantitative genetics. The Saturday program will be focused on commercial producers and sire selection. (Flyer attached)

- Next meeting will be July 11 at 7 p.m. CST.
- Meeting adjourned.

## **NSIP 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter financials and treasures report**

**NSIP board members:**

Attached are the financials for NSIP's 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter P&L, YTD P&L figures and our mid-year balance sheet. We are moving towards publishing our data on a quarterly basis instead of monthly. Having a fiscal year (Oct 1<sup>st</sup> through Sept 31<sup>st</sup>) differing from our membership year (Jan 1<sup>st</sup> through Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>) makes analyzing our business a little more difficult. We are currently making adjustments in record keeping to let us better recognize membership year revenue and expenses.

Our main revenue source (outside of grants) is membership dues. End of 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter saw 87 membership renewals for a little over \$20,000 or about \$230 per renewal. We also have 16 new membership sign ups but of course that 1<sup>st</sup> year membership fee is waived. We are receiving grants from three industry partners this year totaling \$130,000. Those funds continue to furnish adequate income to allow Rusty to provide considerable outreach to the industry. Those grants are all single year grants with no guarantees for 2020. Revenue from sales are undetermined as Rusty continues to look at our best options.

Delinquency of payments for data fees continue to be a drag on our bottom line with those account receivables totally close to \$9,000. Rusty has moved forward with a policy to limit data processing through Australia for those members who have not paid current year membership dues or are delinquent in paying their data fees.

Please feel free to contact either Rusty or myself if you have any questions concerning NSIP finances.

**Bill**

NSIP Program Director's Report  
May 2019

It's that time of year again to start working on the NSIP Ram Sales. Working with both the auctioneer crews, this year I will still be handling the sale management and explaining the process to the auctioneers with hopes they will take on more responsibilities in following years. They have voiced their willingness to do so however, they were hesitant to take on the extra burden all at once. After our discussion tonight, I will be sending out the call for consignments for both sales. Everything else is coming together very well for the sales and advertisements will start going out this month in various newsletters and magazines.

I've also been working with the searchable database developers on fixing a few glitches and developing some new tools. We've run into an issue with getting the range data files updated which needs fixed ASAP and we are also working to refine the "status" query. We are also looking into what our needs are for security of that database. I've also been working with Michelle Canfield on updating content on the NSIP website including a section on the certification program we developed last year. We did not promote that program very well last year so I'd like to re-launch the certifications this ram sale season.

Upcoming, I have travel plans to attend the NCERA-214 meeting in Fort Collins, an education event with the Indiana sheep and goat breeders, the 2 rams sales, the Lamb Summit being hosted by ALB and Premier 1 and the Wisconsin Sheep and Wool Festival followed by the western ram sales.

I've been working with all the new members trying to encourage participation and data submission. I've reached out to everyone who has enrolled in the past 8 months and I am working my way backwards to anyone who has enrolled but never submitted data. Thanks to everyone who has helped me in contacting members. I think developing a webinar series would be extremely beneficial in being able to mentor these new flocks as it would allow us to be able to reach out to multiple people at one time and archive presentations for future reference. A Zoom account for NSIP would cost \$150/year, which would allow us unlimited digital meetings of up to 100 participants. Hosting those meetings in a webinar format would be an additional cost as would hosting over 100 participants. I have looked into using Facebook Live for these events, however, I think having them interactive will be more effective. I propose we have a bi-monthly webinar series and they could have various formats. We could have traditional lecture-type webinars, informal Q&A sessions, digital farm tours/producer highlights etc. I think having a mix of industry professionals and producers as presenters will be well received by the members.

Thanks for everyone's help moving things forward. I think these are exciting challenges to have as we grow our membership and the program.

**NSIP Technical Advisory Committee Report**  
May 2019

### **U.S. Sheep Industry Genomics Survey**

With further input from the NSIP Executive Board and Genomics Sub-committee, a final version of a U.S. Sheep Industry Genomics Survey has been prepared (Appendix). Its intent is to seek broad industry interest in genomic technologies and the opportunities they provide to improve sheep productivity and profitability. As the next step, working with the American Lamb Board, a digital (online) version of the survey will be prepared and circulated industry-wide.

### **Genetics-centric sheep conference**

An initiative has begun within the ASI Genetic Stakeholders Committee, with input from the NSIP Technical Advisory Committee, to plan a biennial genetics-centric sheep conference. The structure of the conference is being modelled after the UK Sheep Breeders Round Table (<https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk/sbrt/>), typically a three day event starting midday on day one and ending midday on day three. The design of the conference would allow plenty of time for open discussion around invited talks from industry, academia and government (e.g., USDA).

The content of an inaugural conference is still preliminary. However, one proposal is that it focus on genomic technologies in the U.S. sheep industry. As the possible content of day two, three sessions proposed are:

- i) *Where have we been?* A review of what genomics technologies are in play and what they have offered to our livestock industries globally. The discussion would include a robust consideration of both successes and blemishes. Specific topics could be:
  - a) Genomic/molecular tools, their development and application; and,
  - b) Uses of genomics in making selection decisions, considering what has been learned in its use in other species and what they are currently doing.
- ii) *Where are we at now?* A discussion of the work completed in the U.S. sheep industry, and its potential impact/importance. As one example, this session might include a talk about the Leading Edge/Mickel Brothers project.
- iii) *Where do we need to go?* This would be a critical look at how as an industry we should position ourselves to take advantage of genomic technologies. As specific topics, this could include:
  - a) Re-evaluating both traditional and novel traits that will be key to profitability and sustainability in sheep enterprises, and how genomics can help us in evaluating them; and,
  - b) Developing strategies for collecting and collating performance and genotype information on such traits at an industry-wide level.

A small industry-based Committee is being formed, with Tom Boyer as Chair, to lead the planning with organizational support from ASI.

Ron Lewis  
May 8, 2019



# A NEW DIRECTION IN SHEEP BREEDING

Clay County Fairgrounds, Spencer, Iowa  
Held in conjunction with the NSIP Center of the Nation Sale

JULY 26-27, 2019

A **SUFFOLK U** PROGRAM

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## SEEDSTOCK BREEDERS Friday, July 26th, 2pm

Friday sessions will educate seedstock breeders on quantitative genetics. Participants will gain an understanding of the needs of the commercial industry and the role terminal sires can play. Registration begins at 1:30 pm.

### Utilizing Quantitative Genetics

**Learn about breeding values and what they mean for your flock in easy to understand terms. You don't need to be a numbers cruncher to use EBV's!**

*Dr. Dan Morrical, Production Advisor, Premier 1 Supplies, Retired Sheep Specialist, Iowa State University*

### National Sheep Improvement Program Searchable Data Base Demonstration

**Take a test drive of the free, online tool that can be used by anyone.**

*Rusty Burgett, Director, NSIP*

### Breeding Terminal Sires to Serve the Needs of the Commercial Industry?

**Learn what commercial producers are looking for in selecting rams for their operations.**

*Dr. Dan Morrical*

**Break - Sponsored by Reau Suffolks**

### Breed Improvement Progress – Lessons Learned Across the Sheep Industry

**Examples of real progress that has been made through breeds enrolled in the National Sheep Improvement Program to improve performance and production.**

*Dr. Ron Lewis, Professor, Animal Breeding and Genomics, University of Nebraska*

### Highlights from the Leading Edge Project

**Hear about the on the ground research taking place on the Mickel Brothers Sheep Ranch in Utah that followed 1400 lambs from birth to processing at Superior Farms**

*Dr. Ron Lewis*

**Lamb Dinner - Sponsored by USSA, Dry Sandy Sheep Co., Superior Farms, Center of the Nation Suffolk Consignors**

Attendees will join Center of the Nation Sale consignors for dinner.

### Hands-on Live Ram Evaluation

**What can we learn from visual appraisal and what can we learn from EBV's.**

*Dr. Dan Morrical & NSIP Suffolk breeders*

### WHAT IS NSIP?

The National Sheep Improvement Program provides predictable, economically important genetic evaluation information. Using a process similar to that used by nearly all other livestock species to aid in genetic selection, NSIP develops Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) which sheep producers can use to select animals for important traits, including productivity, quality and flock health.

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# COMMERCIAL PRODUCERS

Saturday, July 27th, 9:30am

Saturday morning session is targeted at commercial producers who want to add profitability to their operations. Registration begins on Saturday at 9 am with continental breakfast sponsored by Premier 1 Supplies.

## Sire Selection for Commercial Flocks – Crossbreeding and Using Estimated Breeding Values (EBV's)

Learn how to select terminal sires and use the numbers to move your operation in the right direction to achieve your goals.

Dr. Dan Morrical

## Commercial Producer Panel Discussion- Shawn Capouch, Mark Hoogendoorn & Mark Van Roekel

Hear first-hand from commercial producers how they use rams with EBV's in their operations.

Shawn Capouch, Blair, Wisconsin

Mark Hoogendoorn, Lester, Iowa

Mark Van Roekel, Orange City, Iowa

# PROGRAM SPEAKERS



Dr. Dan Morrical serves as the Production Advisor with Premier 1 Supplies and provides guidance to sheep producers on management and production issues. Dr. Morrical retired in 2017 after a 33-year career with Iowa State University as the sheep specialist where he was responsible for educational programs in all areas of sheep production include nutrition, genetics, marketing and management.

Dr. Ron Lewis is a Professor of Animal Breeding and Genomics at University of Nebraska – Lincoln. Dr. Lewis serves as the Technical Advisor to the National Sheep Improvement Program (NSIP), the primary provider of genetic evaluation services in wool, maternal and hair sheep breeds in the U.S.



Shawn Capouch of Blair, Wisconsin has a 250 ewe commercial flock with operations in Wisconsin and Missouri lambing in May and June. The lambs are raised on grass and sold as feeders weighing 85-90 pounds in September. The flock utilizes Dorset and Suffolk genetics to create a high quality, growthy, crossbred feeder lamb.

Mark Hoogendoorn is a full-time shearer, runs a flock of 200 Polypay ewes in Lester, Iowa and is currently transitioning the flock to accelerated lambing. Over the past 10 years, he has utilized NSIP data to increase productivity across his flock with both maternal and terminal sire selection.



Mark Van Roekel of Orange City, Iowa has an operation of 500 ewes including commercial and registered Polypays and Dorsets. He is a member of Pipestone Lamb and Wool and markets lambs on a grade and yield basis. He has used NSIP rams and EBV's when selecting both maternal and terminal sires since 2009 to increase value in his operation.

## Unable to Attend?

Will be broadcast live online!

For more info:  
[www.suffolks.org](http://www.suffolks.org)



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## JOIN US!

### REGISTRATION

Preregistration is recommended by July 17th. Please contact the United Suffolk Sheep Association by phone (641.684.5291) or email ([info@suffolks.org](mailto:info@suffolks.org)).

### COST

This Suffolk U program is free.

### LOCATION

Programs will be held in the air conditioned 4-H Auditorium at the Clay County Fairgrounds in Spencer, Iowa.

### WIN SALE CREDIT!

At the conclusion of each day a name will be drawn for a \$100 certificate which can be used towards the purchase of any ram in the 2019 Center of the Nation Sale. Must attend the program and complete the program evaluation to be entered in the drawing.

### MORE INFO

Visit the United Suffolk Sheep Association website for a more detailed schedule - [www.suffolks.org](http://www.suffolks.org).