

# American Black Welsh Mountain Sheep Association

July 16, 2008



## *Care around the Calendar* *From Steve Sands*

When I became a proud Black Welsh Mountain Sheep owner back in 2003, my knowledge of the breed was minimal. I thank Tom Wyman, who is known to all of us, for interesting me in the breed and for selling me my initial flock and for being a huge source of knowledge. However, I did seek information from other sources as well, one being a well-respected veterinarian from Parkton, MD. He inspected my sheep operation and sup-

plied me with a yearly health program which I feel all readers will find beneficial.

January and February: Evaluate condition of the pasture and the body condition of the ewes. Their body condition scores should be 3. See body condition chart. Supplement pasture with good quality grass hay if body condition drops below a 3. Ensure adequate intake of minerals and salt (a good mixture is

60% trace mineral loose salt to 40% loose dicalcium phosphate) fed free choice. Make sure there is plenty of clean ample supply of water available.

March: Begin supplemental feeding of a 10 to 12% crude protein pelleted grain mixture. Feed 1/3 to 1 lb/head/day of this concentrate. Adjust amount of concentrate according to body scores. Keep

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## *Reporting Requirements—from Association Secretary Oogie McGuire*

The Association has 2 reports that each member with registered sheep should return. The reason for the two reports is to keep track of the effective breeding population of Black Welsh in North America and track all lambs born and where the sheep are. Our goal is to minimize the paperwork required while still providing all the necessary data for population studies, maintaining the flock book of registered sheep and that will also cover all current federal requirements under the mandatory scrapie program.

The aggregate data of number of lambs born, number registered, number slaughtered,

breeding ewes and rams and so on are reported to ALBC yearly as an indicator of the breed status. These data are necessary for accurate counting of the breed and for maintaining its status as a rare breed listed with the American Livestock Breed Conservancy (ALBC).

Our bylaws Article IX Section 3 require that all sheep must be individually identified with at least one human readable form of ID. If you are using a tattoo let me know and that will go in the farm tag section. You may also use microchips as ID but if you do you are still required to have some form of human readable ID on the animal. We

strongly urge all breeders to double tag their sheep because tags do get lost and ripped out but our requirement is only for at least one form of human readable ID on all purebred sheep.

Our two reports are the yearly census and the lambing report. I will discuss each one individually.

### Yearly Census

Each year I send out a list of all the sheep that I believe are owned by you whether registered or birth notified. I ask that you verify the information on the sheep and tell me

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

The Board appointed Jerry Jones as Vice President. He then automatically moved up to President. They also appointed Kendra Jones Mabon to the board as a member to fulfill Jerry's remaining term as Board member.

The Association is still in search of a VP.

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whether the sheep is still there or not.

For sheep that are still on your farm just document any changes in tags for sheep that have lost theirs and had new ones replaced. If you wish to have a replacement registration certificate that shows the new tag numbers the cost is \$2.00.

If the sheep has died I need the full date (day, month, year) that the sheep died and if you know it, the cause of death.

If a sheep has been butchered for meat then I need to know the exact date it was butchered or sold for meat.

If the sheep has been sold it is a federal requirement that they all have a federal tamperproof scrapie tag. Before I can process the transfer I must have the exact date (day, month and year) in which the sheep was sold, the color of the federal tag, which ear it is in, the individual animal ID number and your federal flock ID number. I also need the full name and address of the buyer. This data is required by the federal government for all sheep and goat owners as part of the mandatory scrapie program. If you fill it out properly you can just keep a copy of the form and that is sufficient for the federal program.

Nearly all census forms are missing some information, either the tag data are not correct or the dates are missing or I don't have addresses for all buyers.

I try to send out census reports in December and they need to be back to me by the end of

January.

### Lamb Report

This can be downloaded from the Association web site as an Excel Spreadsheet. I can also provide hard copies if you do not have access to the internet to download one. I can accept the forms either as paper copies or as attached spreadsheets via e-mail to me at [info@blackwelsh.org](mailto:info@blackwelsh.org).

The lamb report documents every lamb born in the flock in a given year whether it is to be registered or not and even the born dead animals. You may send the report at any time once you are finished lambing for the year.

You do not have to decide whether to register lambs when you send in the report. Any lambs you are unsure of I will document as "Birth Notified" and you can choose to register them later. They will be listed in your annual census and is the usual place people document ram lambs that go to slaughter in the fall. Obviously they never need to be registered but we still need to know about them for the population studies. Sheep sold direct to slaughter and under 18 months do not need Federal scrapie tags but our registry still requires ID on those

animals.

The following data are required on every lamb:

Sire name and registration number

Dam name and registration number

Date of birth Must be complete including day, month and year.

Type of birth (twin, single or triplet)

Sex

Ear tag or tattoo or microchip numbers

Tags must include which ear the tag is in, the color of the tag and the individual animal number. If you are using official federal free tags as the ID I put that data in the federal tag section of the registration. If you double tag I need the data for both the federal tag and your personal farm tag. If you only use a farm tag that's fine too. The form has columns to report the location (which ear) and color of all tags.

If you are not the owner of the dam at time of mating then I need a statement from the owner who will be listed as the official breeder of the lamb. If you are not the owner of the sire at the time of mating I need a statement from the

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## Required Reporting, cont

*(Continued from page 2)*

owner that the ram was in fact used by you to sire lambs.

I need this on all purebred lambs, whether or not you choose to register them. If you did not breed any of your ewes send me a note stating no lambs produced.

For lambs that were born dead obviously there is no ear tag data. For lambs that were sold direct to slaughter I need to know the date sold and that they went for meat. Slaughtered lambs may not have federal tags depending on the age when sold for meat but they should still have at least one farm tag per our bylaws requirement to properly identify all sheep.

For lambs that you plan to register or that will be sold as breeding sheep I also need the sheep's name. If you do not name your sheep then I will assign the name to be the ID tag number, federal if you have one in that lamb or farm if not.

For transfers the federal regulations require that all breeding sheep must be tagged with an official ID when sold and I will be enforcing the Federal rule. If you are using the free federal ear tags as your ID and it is documented in the federal ear tag section that is sufficient. If you are using a farm tag only then you must apply an official federal ear tag when the sheep is sold and send me the data or I will not transfer the sheep.

Also please note that our bylaws require that the seller of the sheep is responsible for transferring sheep sold and paying transfer fees. When you sell a registered sheep please fill out the form on the back of the registration paper and send

it to me with the transfer fee of \$5.00 I will process the transfer and send a new registration paper to the new owner. It is common for breeders to send in a form and both register and transfer a sheep at the same time. That is fine and easy for me to do. In that case I need all the data on the buyer and the lamb to be registered and I will first register it to you as the breeder and then process the transfer. The fee for this is the registration fee plus a transfer fee.

For any sheep you wish to register please send in a fee of \$10/ewe lamb and \$5/ram lamb and I will send out the registration papers to you.

If you have this additional data on your lambs and wish it to be on the registration papers send it to me:

Birth weight

Average Daily Gain adjusted according to ASI rules for weight up to 30 days

Adjusted 30 day weights

Loin Eye scans

Genotype at codon 171

Genotype at codon 136

Micron count from an approved lab

UK registration number for rams or whether a ewe lamb is UK registered

Any text description or other info you want on the registration paper. Limit to about 30 characters.

The federal mandatory scrapie programs requires all flock owners to have a federal flock ID number. You are also required to keep accurate records of each and every sheep and who they were sold to for 5 years. If you properly fill out

the 2 forms for the registry then you will have all the data needed for the federal program with no additional paperwork required.

Anyone in the voluntary scrapie certification program has additional requirements that I will be glad to discuss.

## Events of Interest

16-17 August Michigan Fiber Festival Allegan, MI  
[www.michiganfiberfestival.info](http://www.michiganfiberfestival.info)

12-14 September California Wool & Fiber Festival Mendocino Fairgrounds Boonville, CA  
[www.fiberfestival.info](http://www.fiberfestival.info)

18-24 September American Livestock Breed Conservancy Annual Meeting Scotts, MI as part of Tillers International [www.albc-usa.org](http://www.albc-usa.org)

27-28 September Oregon Flock and Fiber Festival Canby, OR [www.flockandfiberfestival.com](http://www.flockandfiberfestival.com)

If you know of a fiber or sheep related event near you—please provide Oogie or Andrea with this information for the next newsletter!

[oogiem@desertweyr.com](mailto:oogiem@desertweyr.com)

[andrea@arare-breed.net](mailto:andrea@arare-breed.net)

## *Black Welsh Mountain Sheep Breeders—who was promoting the breed at Maryland Sheep and Wool 2008*

Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival—for us East Coast shepherds, it doesn't get any bigger than this. This festival has over 1,000 sheep and more than 250 vendors. Vendor spots are sold out usually a month after the previous year.

2008 was attended in record numbers. I read the article that said just how many, but can't find it now. It was definitely interesting walking through the throngs of folks at Howard County Fairgrounds.

Three BWMS breeders were pretty active in the festival—Bailey Bierhuizen, Kendra Jones, and myself.

First, congratulations to Bailey, who won 3rd place in the minor breed division for the sheep breed display. She also

participated in the parade of breeds, very patiently, considering she was in the beginning of the line-up, and there were over 35 breeds exhibited.

It was great to meet Bailey, who is an energetic young lady and did a lot to promote our breed that day.

Kendra, not only represented her flock with a vendor stand, but she and her father, Jerry, donated a ewe lamb for the Youth Conservation project. I got to meet the recipient later in the day, and he was one very excited young man.

Kendra's husband apparently spent Saturday dressed in Black Welsh Mountain sheepskin...creative marketing if I've ever heard of it!

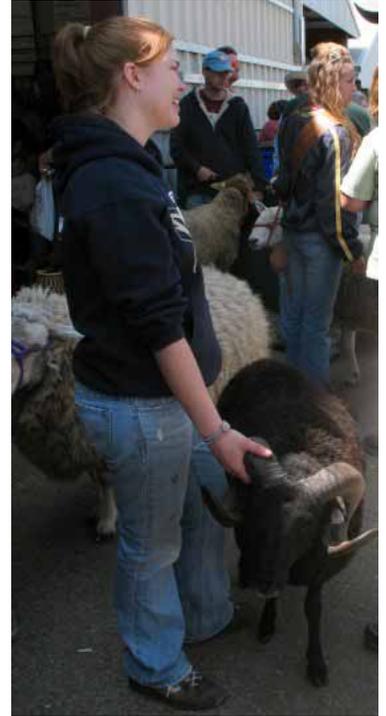
I did little more than stand around at take pictures for the newsletter you are viewing now during the festival. Two weeks before, however, I mailed in two skeins of Black Welsh blend that I handspun. You know, just to see if I could perhaps, well, you know, promote the breed?

Turns out, both ribboned. One in the Alpaca special class (yes folks, you read this right, Black Welsh Mountain Sheep in an Alpaca yarn class). That one got a blue ribbon. My Black Welsh with PolyPay blend won 3rd in the novice class.

—Andrea Minicozzi

A Rare Breed

[www.arare-breed.net](http://www.arare-breed.net)



## *Youth Conservation Award at Festival*

It was truly an honor this year for us here at Rockbridge Farm to donate a Black Welsh Mountain Sheep to the Youth Conservationist Award Program at the MD Sheep and Wool Festival. The Youth Conservationist Program fosters interest in rare and heritage breeds of sheep. The purpose in giving a lamb to an aspiring shepherd is to create an awareness of the importance of preserving heritage breeds and to help others to:

**Experience first-hand the many unique values of heritage breeds of sheep.**

**Learn about the various uses of wool and / or effective marketing of fleeces.**

**Experience caring for and exhibiting a wool breed of sheep.**

**Learn about the life cycle of sheep.**

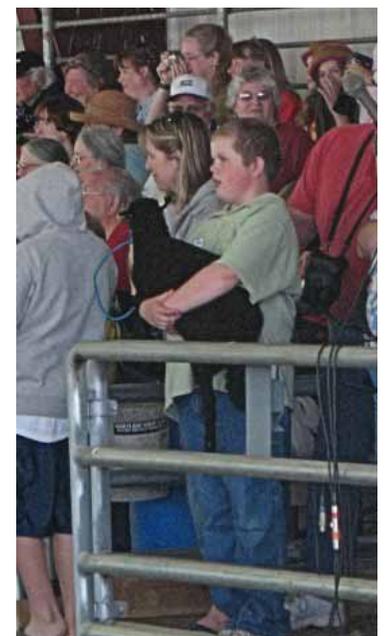
I would strongly recommend that everyone in this organization consider donation, if for nothing else than to keep the interest in rare breeds alive and well. Who better than today's youth to carry on enthusiasm for Black Welsh Mountain Sheep into the next generation?

The recipient of our lamb was a 9 year old young man named

Joey from Youngsville, NC. Here is an excerpt from Joey's essay, answering "Why would I like a Heritage Breed?":

"I would like to preserve this heritage breed – the Black Welsh Mountain, because I think it's important for future generations to see and know about this wonderful animal. I read that "In the Middle Ages, the mutton of black-fleeced Welsh Mountain Sheep was prized for its richness and excellence. The black wool, known as Cochddu (reddish brown) was much sought after by merchants. During the mid 19-th century some breeders

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## Breeder Spotlight—Ellen Bokde

Editor's Note—Each issue I am trying to spotlight a breeder member and a board member.

### How long have you had Black Welsh Mountain Sheep?

. I am relatively new to the Black Welsh Mtn. Sheep and I have 2 rams and seven ewes who are pregnant. This will be the first crop of lambs for me as the ewes wouldn't breed last year due to a move I made from Colorado to Minnesota. Hoperfully they have adjusted by now.

### How many sheep and other animals do you have?

I also have 35 Icelandic Sheep which I breed and sell the wool for handspinning. I also have 4 Angora goats who will have kids this spring. The buck is a real character and enjoys apple treats. I also have 2 older llamas that I keep for fiber and one did guard duty for some time. Now I have two Great Pyrenees Swiss Mtn. dogs, Leo and Sugar Lee who are my guards. I chose the BWM breed because they are kind of close to the Icelandics in size and origin and I wanted to try

some cross breeding to see what the wool would be like.

### Anything else?

I have had interest shown by others in the breed from this area so hope to sell some breeding stock as well. I personally do not sell my sheep for meat. I plan to show both breeds at the county fair this year and see how I do. I also do fiber shows and had a booth at the fair this past summer. It's fun trying to sell wool socks when it's 95 degrees out! I love having the sheep and when I do sell

lambs, I know where they are going so that they have a decent home. I have an old Corriedale wether who was one of my first sheep who is 12 years old and still gives good fiber. I live on a 20 acre hobby farm just north of Minneapolis. I raise my own hay and have beautiful pasture so my expenses are down now as I was pretty much feeding hay year round in Colorado.

## Youth Conservation Award, cont.

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began to select specifically for the black fleece color and the result is the Black Welsh Mountain Sheep.” It would be horrible for this very interesting animal with such a special history to become extinct. I think more people should help rare animals. After researching different breeds, I became interested in the Black Welsh Mountain Sheep. The Black Welsh Mountain is a small, dual purpose black sheep with no wool on the face or on the legs below the knee and hock. The rams are typically horned and the females are polled. I think their black wool is beautiful, would love to use it to learn to spin and in my felting projects.

If I were to be awarded this breed, I would include it in our L.E.A.P. (Livestock Education and Agricultural Program) and pet therapy programs to teach people about heritage breeds and

their uses. I would also show the lamb at the 4-County Show, the Vance County Fair and the NC State Fair. One day I would like to give back to the Youth Conservationist Program.”

And that says it all – thanks Joey!

by Kendra Jones—Rockbridge Farm—kaj128@hotmail.com



## Care around the Calendar, cont.

(Continued from page 1)

scores at 2.5 to 3.5. Vaccinate with Clostridium C-D and Tetanus toxoid and tag sheep if needed 1 month before lambing. Start spring worming program by worming sheep with febendazole or ivermectin while vaccinating. Give ewes an injection of Vitamin E-Selenium (BO-SE).

April:  
Monitor closely lambing; make sure lambs get adequate and a timely amount of colostrum (within first 6 hours). Continue monthly spring worming of adult sheep. Continue same wormer you started with in March; worm with same wormer throughout the year. Change to different wormer next year. Continue grain supplementation (1/2 to 3/4 lb/

head/day) until lambs are weaned at 2 months of age.

May:  
Vaccinate lambs at 1 to 2 months of age with Clostridium C-D and Tetanus toxoid. Give lambs an injection of Vitamin-Se (Bo-Se). Creep feed lambs from 2 to 3 months of age (12 to 16% crude protein); Booster Clostridium C-D and Tetanus toxoid in 3 to 4 weeks. Worm all sheep and finish spring worming program. Shear sheep and trim feet if needed.  
June, July, August, September:  
Maintain sheep on pasture. Monitor body condition. Cull poor doers, ewes with unsound teats or udders, barren females, and structural defects, etc.

October:

Start feeding ewes 1/2 lb/head/day of pelleted feed about 2 to 3 weeks before start of breeding season (flushing). Commence fall monthly worming of sheep.

November:  
Begin breeding; continue supplemental feeding of pelleted feed for 2 to 3 weeks after start of breeding season. Worm and finish fall worming of sheep.

December:  
Watch body condition of sheep. Check pastures condition. Supplement with hay if needed.

In closing, I would like to add one bit of personal advice. A good old-fashioned crab net from the Chesapeake Bay is an excellent tool for catching escaped lambs. And I'm sure my wife

has a bit of personal advice to add herself. Never permit the official shepherd or shepherdess to plan an extended fishing trip in the middle of lambing time. The flock was greatly expanded when I returned!

Note from editor: While Steve's calendar shows an excellent place to start for new breeders who plan on using grain supplementation, keep in mind Bo-Se is a prescription only item, and most worming and vaccination schedules will vary due to regional differences. Check with your vet about proper parasite management and vaccination suggestions, as well as your Selenium or other supplementation needs!

## Farm machinery abuse—summer at A Rare Breed



Apparently, my Black Welsh have the idea that Tractors are lamb shelters, and manure spreaders make good ram backside scratchers.

Incidentally, the lamb, 'Hope' was found under the tractor after I had spent over an hour in the hot sun erecting yet another shelter they probably WON'T use! Not to mention the tractor is parked right next to an open and vacant horse stall!

— Andrea

Be sure to send me your favorite pictures before next newsletter!

andrea@arare-breed.net

