

# American Black Welsh Mountain Sheep Association Newsletter

SPRING ISSUE 2010



## ABWMSA Founder donates \$10,000

The ABWSA Board of Directors would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Mr. Tom Wyman for his generous donation of \$10,000. Tom is the Past President (and founder) of the American Black Welsh Mountain Sheep Association.

Mr. Wyman, a longtime resident of Maryland's Eastern Shore — first intro-

duced the rare Black Welsh Mountain breed to the United States in 1973, and he and his family continue to welcome new members of their flock each spring at their lovely Wye Heights Plantation just north of Easton, Maryland.

*Photo - Tom and his Black Welsh Mountain Sheep.  
Ed. note - both ewes and trees have lovely cuchddu!*

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# Save An Orphan Lamb!



Before nutrition, drying and maintaining the little ones body heat is vital. Besides having towels for rubbing, the handiest portable heating unit is the everyday household hair dryer. Alone or with towel, the lamb will be quickly dry. Careful not to apply too high a temperature!

The next important step for survival of the orphan lamb is to make sure it receives colostrum (first milk) during the first few hours after birth. Colostrum contains high levels of antibodies and Vitamin A. Antibodies provide the newborn lamb with protection from many types of common infections and diseases. However, the lamb must receive the colostrum soon after birth to gain this protection.

If there is no colostrum from mother, colostrum from another ewe, or even from a cow can be used. There is also some cow colostrum product on the market formulated for lambs. This dry powder is handy to keep on hand. Because it is a high fat product, care must be taken to blend and emulsify it well with very warm water. Never use a microwave, as this alters the nutritional value. Surplus natural colostrum can be frozen. Again, use warm, not hot water to prepare it, and no microwave!

Each lamb should receive at least one ounce (28cc) of colostrum, however up to 4.5 ounces (125cc) will provide the lamb with greater protection against disease and infection.

Give the lamb the colostrum is through a stomach tube. A tube, about 1/4" outside diameter, is easily passed through the mouth and into the stomach. The colostrum (or any other liquid) can be put down the tube and into the stomach using a large syringe attached to the tube.

It is very important that no liquid get into the lungs. Determine the correct location of the tube. The lamb's windpipe can be felt as a hard tube just under the skin on the lamb's neck. The esophagus (tube leading from the mouth to stomach) lies just behind the windpipe. The plastic tube passed into the stomach can be felt behind the windpipe. If you can't feel the plastic tube, it is most

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## A Letter from the Past

This letter was found in an old issue of Rare Breeds Canada and was written in French. Here is the English translation...

"We bought a farm in 1989, intending to farm organically. Our dream of an old fashioned mixed animal farm was beginning, bit by bit. The first thing we did was to research hardy old breeds, we believed easily adaptable (well suited?) to a small familyfarm.

Our interests in conserving endangered /threatened breeds led us to an article in Cognition, written by Jy Chipertzak. Later we would meet him at a seminar on heritage birds. Since we were already members of Rare Breeds, we decided to become a host farm as soon as the possibility would present itself.

We only had an old, cold barn which we had arranged as a free stall to welcome our new tenants, Black Welsh Mountain sheep. This is a meat breed, that naturally shed their wool. This small, gentle, intelligent animal seduced us immediately. The really interesting thing about this program, (host farm) was that it allowed us to build our own flock without the initial expense of buying the animals. It also allowed us to benefit from the a small flock, while building our own knowledge.

Obviously it was necessary to build some solid housing, free up a pasture and buy and install some fencing. With horns that could bang, we needed some solid doors and walls! All of this time, these gentle beasts would come and allow us to pet them.

Would we recommend them? Yes even if they weren't very financially profitable. There is a joy in having these animals, mostly in the satisfaction of having done our part in securing their survival - and who knows, maybe ours as well. We all do our part." - *Rare Breeds Canada*



# Journey of a Black Welsh Mountain Fleece

Shearing a few weeks ago, so I have chosen a fresh fleece to process and spin. For those of you who may not have done this before, I'll go through the steps.

**PLAN** Have a project in mind. This will determine what methods and equipment you will use.



*There's never enough hand knit Black Welsh socks at our house so I plan to spin some more sock yarn.*

**SKIRT** I remove as much VM (vegetable matter) as possible, along with heavily soiled or matted areas. Shaking the fleece removes the little chunks of second cuts (second passes of the shears).

**WEIGH** Knowing starting weight is helpful. This fleece was from a little yearling ram and is 2.5 lbs.

**COLD-SOAK** I immerse the fleece in a deep sink of cold water and let it stand undisturbed for at least 12 - 24 hours. If the water is extremely dirty I may change it, but in this case, no change of water. After the cold-soak, I put the fleece in a spinner/extractor. This takes out so much water, it doesn't take long to dry.

**WASH** When dry, I immerse the fleece in a very hot sink of soapy water (no-name dish detergent). I push through it a few times, avoid agitation. I cover the water to hold in the heat and let it soak for an hour. Black Welsh in general is not high in lanolin, so one wash usually does the trick. After the wash/soak, I again spin it in the extractor.

**RINSE** The fleece then gets immersed in a clear warm bath. The temperature should be approximately what the standing wash water was. It is important not to give the wool a shock with temperature extremes.

**SPIN** The fleece is pulled from the rinse water, and again is spun out with the extractor. If you don't have an extractor, you may find a vintage "washer/spin dryer". These spin dryers work as well as an extractor, and is such a labor saver.

**DRY** Now the fleece is spread out on a rack covered with mesh so the air can circulate freely around it. During this

stage (and all the stages), little bits of vegetation are picked off. The small bits that remain will very likely be knocked off in the following stages. If you are outside you can have fleece in a mesh laundry bag so it won't blow away!

**PICKER** The fleece is put through a picker which pulls apart the fibers and prepares it for carding or combing. If I was doing a small amount I could pull it apart by hand, which is called "teasing" the wool.



*A Patrick Green Triple Picker work wonders on Black Welsh Mountain sheeps wool!*

**CARD/COMB** Wool is hand carded or put through a drum carder. Unless you have sorted by length, there will be a lot of short pieces that create texture. It can be spun now. If you require a finer preparation or a blend then comb and diz to make lovely, soft top. I'll save the topic of combing and spinning for another day! ~ Val Fiddler



*When the carding teeth are full its time to gently take the fibre off and roll the batt, to spin from or to comb into top.*

# 2010 Events

**May 1st & 2nd, 2010**

## **MARYLAND SHEEP & WOOL FESTIVAL**

West Friendship, MD

<http://www.sheepandwool.org/>

**May 21st -23rd, 2010**

## **ALL CANADA SHEEP CLASSIC / 2010**

Richmond (QUÉBEC)

[http://www.sheepbreeders.ca/pdf/](http://www.sheepbreeders.ca/pdf/Invitation%20classic%202010.pdf)

[Invitation%20classic%202010.pdf](http://www.sheepbreeders.ca/pdf/Invitation%20classic%202010.pdf)

**May 29 & 30, 2010**

## **MASSACHUSETTS SHEEP & WOOLCRAFT FAIR**

<http://masheepwool.org/>

**June 25 - July 2, 2010**

## **OLDS COLLEGE FIBRE WEEK**

Olds, Alberta Canada

[http://www.oldscollge.ca/programs/](http://www.oldscollge.ca/programs/ContinuingEducation/trades-career-studies/fibreweek/)

[ContinuingEducation/trades-career-studies/fibreweek/](http://www.oldscollge.ca/programs/ContinuingEducation/trades-career-studies/fibreweek/)

*Save an orphan lamb - continued from page 2*

likely inside the windpipe to the lungs. Pull out and begin again.

After surviving the first critical hours its time to bottle feed. There are many products out there that may not meet the nutritional requirements. If you or your neighbors have milking goats or sheep, you have it made. If you must use formula, it should contain 25 to 30% fat and at least 20% protein. The fat must be adequately emulsified by mixing well with water. Bottle-fed lambs should be given milk at body temperature, three or more times a day for the first week. Extra expense for the best lamb milk replacer available will pay off big dividends in the orphan lambs performance.

### **ARMENIAN LAMB PILAF**

- 1 lb. or more ground lamb
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 3.5 cups water or veg. broth
- 1 c. long grain rice
- 1/2 cup of grain like kamut, wheat, etc.
- 1/4 c. lentils of your choice
- 1/2 c. each - onions, cauliflower, frozen peas
- 1/2 c. raisins or currants
- 1/4 c. slivered toasted almonds
- 1/2 tsp. - marjoram, cumin, tumeric, paprika
- salt and pepper to taste.

## **Board Of Directors**

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Becky Bemus	Heather Morrissey
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**Newsletter Editor** Val Fiddler, [bvranch@sasktel.net](mailto:bvranch@sasktel.net)



*Strange things happen when winter is too long and cold. You might see the funniest things - like a tiny pixie-lamb perched on top of a frosty ewe. Thank goodness spring is here!*

*Satisfying carbs, veggies and spicy choices make this lamb dish a surprise that you'll serve again and again.*

Brown lamb in skillet. Drain fat. Set aside and stir fry the onions, cauliflower, spices, currents in the oil. Stir in meat, rice noodles and water. Bring to boiling, then turn into a casserole dish and bake **covered** for 30 to 40 minutes or until liquid is absorbed. Stir once after 20 minutes. Sprinkle on toasted almonds. Serves approx. 6.