



FINNSHEEP SHORT TALES

PUBLISHED BY THE FINNSHEEP BREEDERS ASSN.

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Chief Shepherd's Message By Naomi Leith Smith

The primary mission of all livestock breeders associations, including the Finnsheep Breeders Association, is to provide a national pedigree recording system and maintain the breed standard as directed by a Board of Directors. Finnsheep Short Tales is the newsletter of Finnsheep breeders members and represents the directors method of communicating with those breeders who do not have internet accessibility. Short Tales is also on the website <http://www.finnsheep.org>. I also try to send association news to *THE BANNER*.

We wish to thank Grace Hatton for years of dedicated production of Short Tales. We also appreciate her articles which are frequently published in several sheep publications. Grace also has Finnsheep logo items available. We welcome a new editor; Cindy Smith, Boulder Ridge Farm, HC 65 Box 517, Hominy, Oklahoma 74035. Her email is Cynthia.Smith@benham.com. Please send her any articles, press releases, pictures, etc., for inclusion in future issues of Short Tales.

I have attended workshops regarding COOL (Country of Origin Labeling) bill which is currently being debated in congress. The consensus has been the bill is in danger of defeat because the processors need a steady supply of livestock to enable them to maintain a profitable business for themselves and their employees. It would seem to me the answer would be to produce a steady supply of American lamb for the processors. More utilization of the Finnsheep breed could go a long way to help provide that steady supply.

The Finnsheep breed has received some free recognition this summer. For those who subscribe to *SHEEP!*, the winner of their photo contest and color front cover was a Finn. *THE BANNER* features articles about the various presidents of sheep breeders associations including House Mountain Finnsheep.

Please make your plans now to attend the 2004 annual meeting of the Finnsheep Breeders Association which will be held in conjunction with the Maryland Sheep and Wool Show, May 1 & 2, 2004. If you will not be able to attend that meeting but you have issues which you wish to be presented, please contact Grant Blackburn or me and we will add those concerns to the agenda.

Observations of a Retiring Short Tales Editor By Grace Hatton

I have enjoyed putting together Short Tales for many years, but it is time for a fresh approach. Over the years more and more of us have email. Perhaps ST could be sent electronically to those of us who chose to receive it that way, at a considerable cost saving to the Association.

It also seems to me it would be more appropriate and more inclusive to allow membership meetings to happen online. Perhaps an FBA mailing list could keep all of us abreast of what is going on with our Finnsheep and our Association. Onelist and Yahoogroups have free mailing list services. For those not familiar with mailing lists, emails from members are sent to the service and then sent out individually or grouped as a digest to all the members.

Observations of a Retiring Short Tales Editor (cont.)

Yahogroups also allows people who don't wish to receive email from a mailing list to read the list on a webpage. We could list animals for sale as well. The primary market for registered Finnsheep is to other FBA members.

Board members could have a separate mailing list if they wished for board business.

At the last official meeting of the FBA, only six people were present. The same devoted people keep coming to the meetings year after year. I think far more people would show up for online meetings. We could propose motions, pick a day or week to vote and vote on them or decide any number of different issues in a short time. The majority of those who have Breeders' Listings published in ST indicate they have email.

I wish Cindy all the best as our new ST editor and will help her in any way I can.

Finnsheep Scrapie Genotypes By Dr. Paul Hunter

Genotyping sheep for the so-called resistant gene has become a hot topic in sheep circles this year. It is believed that a genotype of carrying an R gene relays resistance to the disease. The question still remains is whether these sheep can act as carriers or if the just have delayed onset of the disease.

Despite some of these questions the Federal government has made genotyping an integral part of their infected flock cleanup program. In this new program owners may choose to have their sheep genotyped. All the QQ sheep are put down

and the QR and RR sheep are allowed to remain.

In addition a least one slaughter facility is asking its producers to only supply them with lambs carrying the R gene. Their idea is to lessen their liability. I have had several potential buyers of my Finn sheep ask about their genotype because of this.

To my knowledge the R gene does not exist in American Finn sheep. I have had some of mine tested and they all came back QQ. At least two other breeders plan to test at least their rams this fall. I have contacted the government agency that conducted the sheep survey two years ago (NAHMS). They had three listings for Finns carrying the R gene. Due to confidentiality reasons they are unable to give me the names of those breeders. They did try to contact them and let them know about my inquiry. One breeder from the northwest contacted me. Upon further questioning it was revealed the ewe in question was a Finn cross not a purebred.

If you or someone you know has genotyped their purebred Finns I would like to know what the outcome was. I would like to compile a list of how many Finns have been tested and what the results were.

The big question is what are we, as a breed association going to do if we find out the R gene does not exist in our breed? Will we open our flock book to allow cross breeding to bring the R gene into the breed? Should we ask the federal government to change its rules to allow for breeds that do not carry the R gene? I do not have the answers but would like to see the debate get started. I would welcome all input, comments and suggestions. You can email me at drhunter@bright.net or send me a letter to 11425 Bruns Rd., Ft. Loramie, OH 45845.

Finnpower

REMINDER!! Next Annual Meeting is to be held at the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival, Howard County Showgrounds. MAY 1-2, 2004

Rooms at discount rate of \$65/night are available at the Days Inn, Frederick, MD for nights 4/30 & 5/1. Individual members will have to make reservations, pay deposit etc. Just mention Finnsheep Breeders' Assn/MD Festival, for discount.

"My favorite Finn ewe died at 13 and left me with triplets to raise. She had 43 lambs in 13 years, with occasional twice a year lambing. One of her great-granddaughters just gave me 6 lambs." *Leanne Hughes*

The July issue of *The Shepherd* (pg 10) had a USDA study that showed that Finnsheep sired lambs had the most tender and juicy cuts of meat of all the crossbred lambs tested.

Sandy DeMaster attended the Michigan Fiber Fest and won Grand Champion Colored Fleece with Katie's fleece. Katie is an F1 black ewe out of imported genetics. (See Dr. Hunters article on how to purchase imported genetics for your farm.) Two other fleeces also placed very high. One was white and the other was one of her first brown fleeces. The judge loved the fiber characteristics of the Finn's fleeces.

**New Short Tales Editor
By Cynthia Smith**

I thought I would take a few lines to tell you about myself, my flock and farm. First I would like to thank Grace for all the time

and work she has put into Short Tales and for the help she has given me. I'm sure I will be asking Grace questions for months to come.

I am married and have two children ages 18 and 16. My husband, Jody, does all the "hard" manual labor on the farm and my daughters pitch in often to help feed and water the sheep along with any other needed help (like catching them to be tagged or wormed). I wouldn't have my flock if it were not for them.

We purchased our first Finns from Bea McKaig, in Georgia, April 2002. A few months later we made a quick trip to Wisconsin and bought three sheep from Sandy DeMaster. Sandy was an invaluable source of help, inspiration and information for us our first lambing season.

This year we have added sheep from Harry Koenig and Naomi Smith's farms. We also were able to visit Grant Anzar's farm and picked up some pointers from him. We are looking forward to seeing what our next lambing season brings for us. Harry's rams were beautiful and had some size to them! Naomi had a gorgeous flock of white rams and ewes and we are excited to add her ewe to help improve our wool quality in the white line.

Please let me know if you would like to see anything in Short Tales or simply have any comments or suggestions.

**MINUTES OF THE
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD
7PM,
MAY 16, 2003 AT TOFTREES RESORT,
STATE COLLEGE, PA**

PRESENT: Naomi Smith (President), Dr. Paul Hunter, Denny Haugh, Joe Smith, Cathy Soder, Grant Blackburn (Secretary)

PRESIDENT. The President opened the meeting welcoming members and expressed thanks to Paul and Grant for arranging the meeting venue. The meeting acknowledged the work done by the Secretary/Treasurer and Grace Hatton, editor Short Tales, and wished to record a vote of thanks.

PREVIOUS MINUTES. The previous minutes were read and accepted with the following amendment: Add Paul Hunter to action of Grant Funding paragraph.

Moved: Dr. Hunter;

Seconded: Denny Haugh.

Carried

TREASURER'S REPORT. The attached financial statements were presented to the meeting. The report was accepted by the meeting.

Moved: Dr. Hunter;

Seconded: Denny Haugh.

Carried

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS. One director's position, (Elizabeth Luke) was vacated through term limits. Naomi Smith completed a first term and agreed to serve a second term.

PREVIOUS BUSINESS. - Committee Reports

Health Protocol. Dr. Hunter reported limited progress on the health protocol. After some discussion it was agreed to approach other breed organizations to co sponsor an application for grant money to defray cost of testing, highlighting the economic advantage for producers.

Action: Paul Hunter

Logo The President advised the meeting that a logo carpet is being woven in Nepal with finnsheep wool. The carpet will be part of the display case.

Grant funding for future AI. Following the collapse of Elite Genetics, the remaining imported semen is now located with Kim Caulfield in TN.

It was revealed that Elite Genetics did not complete payment to the Finnish Finnsheep Breeders' Association for the semen. About \$1000 is still owed to them. It was agreed the FBA should make final payment upon gaining ownership of the semen.

A letter of release of ownership of the semen is with Kim Caulfield and when signed ownership will pass to the FBA.

Once ownership is transferred the meeting agreed to relocate the semen to the Central Ohio Breeders' Association (COBA) laboratory for storage and management.

The meeting discussed sale of the semen and agreed:

- FBA members should have exclusive access to the semen for six months from date of ownership (i.e. pay for straws within the six months but may use them at a later date after paying any storage costs).
- Membership price be set at \$30/straw, plus cost of shipping/handling etc.
- After six months any remaining semen be sold on the open market.

Moved: Grant Blackburn;

Seconded: Denny Haugh.

Carried

Constitution Revision. Tabled for next meeting.

Action: All members

NEW BUSINESS.

Registrations. The Secretary presented registration printouts of breeders for 2002. A total of 355 finnsheep were registered in 2002. It was agreed to publish the 2002 list in the next newsletter.

**MINUTES OF
THE BOARD MEETING HELD 8 AM MAY
17, 2003
AT THE LIVE STOCK ARENA, STATE
COLLEGE, PA**

Moved: Dr. Hunter;
Seconded: Naomi Smith
Carried

Annual Sale. The matter of holding again an annual sale was discussed. It was noted that insufficient breeder participation on a national level was the reason for suspending the annual sale. And the meeting agreed, judging by the low attendance at annual meetings, not to sponsor an annual sale in 2004.

Moved: Dr. Hunter;
Seconded: Grant Blackburn
Carried

Annual meeting. It was agreed to hold the next meeting in conjunction with the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival, May 2004. Dates yet to be confirmed. Denny Haugh agreed to coordinate the next meeting.

Action: Denny Haugh

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Advertising Budget. The meeting agreed to an advertising budget of \$2000 to be spent on advertising in nationally circulated publications, depicting animals that conform to the Breed Standard.

Moved: Grant Blackburn;
Seconded: Naomi Smith
Carried

Scrapie It was agreed that an awareness program needs to be developed to advise breeders on the QQ/RR factors in Finnsheep.

Action: Paul Hunter

Adjournment. The meeting agreed to adjourn at 10:30pm.

Moved: Grant Blackburn;
Seconded Denny Haugh
Carried

PRESENT: Naomi Smith (President), Dr. Paul Hunter, Denny Haugh, Grant Blackburn (Secretary)

PREVIOUS MINUTES. The previous minutes were read and accepted as a true and accurate record.

Moved: Naomi Smith;
Seconded: Dr. Hunter.
Carried

ELECTION OF OFFICERS. The directors elected Naomi Smith, President and Denny Haugh, Vice President for another term.

TREASURER'S REPORT. The Board concurred with the annual meetings sentiments that the FBA was financially viable at the present moment and accepted the Treasurer's report.

Moved: Dr. Hunter;
Seconded: Denny Haugh
Carried

BUSINESS

Annual Meeting Acknowledging the discussions of the Annual Meeting the Board concurred with the general direction FBA resources are being used to enhance the breed across the nation.

Editorship Short Tales The Board acknowledged the efforts and time Grace Hatton has put into producing the newsletter and recorded a vote of thanks in appreciation of her good work.

Moved: Naomi Smith;
Seconded: Grant Blackburn
Carried

The Board agreed to three newsletters for the upcoming year in: September 03, January and June 04.

Moved: Dr. Hunter;

Seconded: Grant Blackburn

Carried

Advertising fees for the newsletter were discussed and it was agreed to review them for the next meeting.

Action: Naomi Smith

Stipend A stipend of \$50 was paid to each Board member attending the meeting.

Moved: Dr. Hunter;

Seconded: Grant Blackburn

Carried

Next Meeting Several locations were discussed for holding the next meeting. It was agreed to hold it in conjunction with the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival, Fredricks MD, in May 04. The date and details will be confirmed in the January 04 newsletter.

Action: Denny Haugh

Registration Fees. The treasurer brought to the notice of the meeting that the cost of duplicate certificates is \$1 yet it is costing the FBA \$2 to process them. The meeting agreed to raise the cost of duplicate certificates to \$3.

Moved: Grant Blackburn;

Seconded: Dr Hunter

Carried

ADJOURNMENT The meeting adjourned at 9:40am

Moved: Grant Blackburn;

Seconded: Naomi Smith

Carried

Animals Registered by Members for 2002

US MARC	6
Elizabeth Luke	33
Triple L Farms	28
Cindy Pleinis	20
Marvin Blair	18
Denny Haugh	17
Connie Santos	14
Dale Amendt	13
Carol Winchell	12
The Wee Croft	12
Shady Grove	12
House Mountain Farm	11
Linda D Witt	9
Water/Barbar Threfall	9
TJ's Sheep Haven	9
Mrs. Harold Judy & Sons	8
Bobby Bayne	8
Grant Blackburn	7
Daniel Frantz	6
Jake Paterson	6
Brenda McKaig	4
Pat & John Rice	3
Grace Hatton	3
Sokel Family	3
Bob & Holly Mills	3
A-Plus Farm	3
Whitney Family	3
Donna M Tuttle-Perkins	3
Brian H Magee	2
Rachel Schuster	2
Patricia Ramapuram &	
Sandy Ezersky	2
Jaime Meleri	2
Cloven Hill	2
Melissa Tarantino	2
Kathy L Neiman	1
Kim Depp	1
Total Registered	355