

FINNSHEEP SHORT TALES

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http://www.finnsheep.org

Chief Shepherd's Message By Naomi Leith Smith

I am sorry to be so late with this message. We have experienced unusual weather conditions for Virginia this winter resulting in snow and ice coupled with temperatures in the teens. So not much thawing has occurred. It took most of the day to get feed and hay to the livestock. The lambs have started arriving, so things are looking up!

The annual meeting of the Finnsheep Breeders Association will be held during the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival on May 1 and 2, 2004. When you call the Days Inn, Frederick, Maryland for rooms, be sure to mention the Finnsheep Association. They will try to place the members in the same unit. We hope you will be able to attend the meeting and show. You might consider entering a Finn fleece. If you are unable to attend, and you have an item for the agenda, please contact me or Grant Blackburn with your ideas and suggestions. This is your association and we need a strong core of enthusiastic and dynamic leaders. We will be unveiling Finnsheep Logo banner which produced for us by the women of Nepal using wool from House Mountain and Anzar flocks at the meeting.

If you cannot attend the Festival in Maryland, there is the 7th World Sheep and Wool Congress to be held at Quebec City, Canada on July 17 - 23. For more information see their website. http://www.worldsheep.com.

Last, but not least, please send your annual dues and/or Breeders listing to: Finnsheep Breeders Association, 15603 173rd Ave. Milo, IA 50166. I am looking forward to meeting you all at Maryland Sheep and

Wool Festival. For show catalogs, send a request to Kris Thorne, 2367 Carrollton Road, Westminster, MD 21157.

From the Editor **By Cynthia Smith**

Well things are starting to get busy at our farm. Our first Finn lambed quads and we have 26 more ewes to go. Many sleepless but rewarding nights ahead. We would love to hear an update on your flock. You can send it via email or to my mailing address which I will list at the end of this article. It can be a short paragraph on your lambs, or an article if you like.

I wanted to make everyone aware of a great new Yahoo list that has 33 members so far. It is dedicated to Finnsheep and we are sharing lots of information, help and stories. Please join in on the fun. Go to http://groups.yahoo.com/group/finnsheep/ to join. We look forward to meeting you online.

Please keep in mind that this is your organization and it will only be what we all are willing to make it. If you really like the way something is done, please let us know. If you are unhappy with anything, also, please let us know. We would like to see a more active membership and the FBA is here to help you in your quest to continue the betterment of the Finnsheep breed. In order to do that, we need to know what it is you want. So please take a moment and drop a line or pick up the phone. Better yet, come to Maryland! There is a lot to do and learn at the festival and our best learning tool is talking to each other.

Cynthia Smith HC 65 Box 517 Hominy, OK 74035 918-519-4140 Cynthia.Smith@benham.com

Breeder Profile: Helena Korhonen, Rantasalmi, Finland by Tracy Sengupta

Helena Korhonen lives in Eastern Finland, 25 miles from Savonlinna and 200 miles north-east of Helsinki. Stone-age people once lived and hunted on the land where their farm now stands and there is archeological evidence of their "food chambers" in the ground. Helena lives with her husband and two sons, ages 11 and 14, in a log-home which they built themselves 10 years ago.

They have 30 black and grey Finn ewes (and one brown), two grey Finn rams for breeding, sixty hens of a native Finnish breed, beehives and several types of berries. They also produce hand creams, salves for people and animals, jams, jellies, candies and more. All of their products are certified organic. They sell fleeces, pelts, meat and breeding stock. They find that the meat is lean and tasty. They are beginning to produce more garments made from their wool and pelts. They also rent out simple lakeside cottages for travelers in the summer.

Helena and her family breed their Finns for dood health. wool and maternal characteristics. They find that the Finnsheep fit well into their organic farming operation. Their sheep are sheared twice a year prior to lambing and produce 2.2 to 4.4 pounds of wool per animal at each shearing. The wool quality varies greatly by individual animal. She finds that the quality of the wool in the grey sheep seems to be a little different from the wool in the other colors. It is not as consistent in length and micron count on different parts of the body, as it is in the black and brown sheep. However, when the wool from different parts of the body is blended together, it still results in lovely hand-spinning wool which is soft and warm.

Some of their wool is sold directly to fiber artists. The rest is taken to a spinning mill where they can produce any type of yarn the customer requests. Many of the fiber artists who purchase their grey wool find it to be excellent for their weaving projects. Much of it is also used for felting, which is a very popular hobby in Finland today. They also sell pelts to individuals or make products from them such as slippers, mittens or insoles.

Helena's sheep ΑII have good temperaments. They all have names, and whenever she is outside with them they gather around her to be petted and to see if she has any little treats in her pockets. The lambs are very gentle and are easy keepers. They are very curious, and will even try to come into the house if the family forgets to close the door! Reporters visiting her farm have been amazed by the friendliness of her sheep. Even her 200pound rams are well behaved. While she feels that Finnsheep are not aggressive by nature, she does caution that it is very important not to touch ram lambs on the top or front of the head, as they very quickly learn how to use their heads for pushing. This playful behavior in baby lambs can become dangerous as the rams grow older, larger, and stronger.

The Finnish "Maedi Visna" Program

Many of the breeders in Finland belong to a voluntary Scrapie program as well as a program to eradicate Maedi Visna (also known as OPP in the US). Helena and her family belong to the Maedi Visna program, so if they wish to bring in new bloodlines, the ewe or ram must be at the same or higher status than their existing flock. Fortunately, they were able to establish a wide genetic background in their flock prior to entering the program. Their flock is currently at the second status in the Maedi Visna program. Breeders in Finland with only a few ewes often do not wish to join the Maedi Visna program or register as a

producer of purebred Finnsheep because the annual testing is too costly. For flocks of over 21 ewes, participation in the program is required. Because of this requirement, these costs are paid by the state.

In Finland, breeders who are registered as a farm producing purebred Finnsheep are supposed to use a ram which is the same color as the ewe... breeding grey to grey, As part of this brown to brown etc... registration program, Helena and her family have agreed to keep a certain number of grey and black Finnsheep. There is currently an effort in Finland to form an association for those interested preserving and breeding grey Finnsheep. An association Maatiaislampaat, Finnish Association. Landrace Sheep established in Feb 2004. Thev are attempting to preserve some of the older bloodlines and to assist owners of the smaller flocks in working together. have a website, which is still under construction at:

http://maatiaislampaat.rantasalmi.fi

Eventually, it will have photos of their sheep with special pages for registered members with pedigrees and more information. Currently the site is all in Finnish, but if they get foreign members information in English will be added also.

Preservation of Grey Finnsheep Genetics

Some of the breeders of the grey Finnsheep have recently managed to purchase animals from old lines which have been kept for many generations on small farms throughout Finland. These are sheep that would have otherwise been sent to slaughter as the owners have grown older and unable to keep them any longer. "People get older," says Helena, "and another generation seems willing to keep this sheep which doesn't need much but produces lovely 'lambkins', excellent wool One of the goals of the and meat." association is to take digital photos of all the grey sheep and collect data, such as measurements and facts of origin. If possible, they will draw blood for DNA analysis.

The new association is attempting to get Finnish financial support from the This would allow them to government. travel throughout Finland to collect the needed data, documenting different shades of grey and different lines of grey Finnsheep. Helena feels that it is important to take photos of the sheep as lambs and then again after they mature due to changes in color as the sheep mature and age. "Grey" lambs are usually born black and then change color at 6 months of age The head and legs should or older. preferably be black, but some have white on their heads.

Helena states that sometimes black sheep who have produced grey offspring can turn self-grey when they are five years old or older. These sheep have violet tongues and often have a white spot on the nose. A Finnish veterinarian, Dr. Pertti Hankonen, has been working toward conserving the grey Finnsheep in Northern Finland. He has classified approximately 20 different kinds of grey colors and wool types in his gene bank. If the new association's plan works out well, they will have grey Finnsheep semen to take to the gene bank this autumn with the state is collecting it in Pelso and perhaps elsewhere.

In regards to establishing the grey color in the US, where the numbers of grey Finnsheep are so small, Helena states that if you breed grey to grey for three generations, then all resulting generations should be grey also. "There are five genes which have to come from both the ewe and the ram to produce a grey Finnsheep and these genes can be found in black Finnsheep too," Helena says. "When looking at the tongue of a sheep, if it is blue / violet in color (like after eating blueberries) then the sheep is most likely a grey or black

carrying the grey gene." She said that white sheep can also have blue / violet tongues. She said that if you have a very good grey ram, you can use a grey father to his grey daughters and establish the color in a flock sooner, but there are always risks associated with this type of breeding.

Feeding and Nutrition

Helena's sheep graze in the forest throughout the year with access to mineral and salt stones year-round. They have shelters to protect them from wind and drafts. They get most of their nutrition this way throughout early pregnancy. They do not give extra nutrition in the autumn, as they do not want the ewes to have lambs too large to deliver or litters too large to care for independently. They do give additional feed to the ewe-lambs after they are bred. About 2 to 2 ½ months prior to lambing, they begin to supplement with additional feed. They have free access to hay and also feed them some oats. In the winter, they supplement with vitamins. They are also careful with calcium. especially in the ewe-lambs. Helena finds that if the ewes get enough calcium along with vitamin D, the lambs have strong legs with good bone with they are born. Occasionally, they have too little selenium in their hay, so they must check for this also.

Their sheep are also fed twigs up to 1 ½ to 2 inches thick, which they call "kerppuja", taken from willows, birches, quaking asp and alders. These are collected in June through August, taken both from the forest and when clearing the fields of willow and bushes. In Rantasalmi, where Helena lives, the snow melts in April or May. The twigs they harvest in clearing the fields are thinner, having only grown from May through July, while the twigs taken from the forest are thicker. It is felt that the twigs collected in June have the most nutritional value.

The twigs are cut and dried with the leaves still on them. They collect the twigs in the forest, take them home with their tractor and then make long bundles of 10 twigs tied together. These bundles are hung from the ceiling or walls inside the barn to dry. It is important to dry them quickly after cutting in a dark place with good ventilation. Traditionally, this was a job for children and old people on the farm, who cut them by hand and made small bundles.

Helena's ewes love to get the twigs during the winter. If the twigs are thin, from young trees or bushes, then the ewes consume all of them. If they are thicker, the ewes leave the thick parts or just eat the bark. (The leftovers then become kindling for heating the house!) They also give fresh twigs during the summer, when the bushes grow too big or they are becoming overgrown in the fields. Even the small lambs like to eat them.

<u>Lambing</u>

When the ewes are ready to lamb, they are taken indoors into the barn for about 2 weeks. The lambs are born in March and April. Those that are kept as replacements are bred in late autumn at an age of approximately seven months, so that they will have their first lambs as yearlings. Her sheep have usually had one to three lambs in their first litter, with twins being the average. Helena feels that this is a good number. because twins enough are responsibility for a first-time mother. subsequent breedings, the ewes generally have triplets or quads. She says that they could probably have sextuplets if fed differently, but they do not want to raise bottle babies. Occasionally, they do have a weak lamb who must be bottle fed. For these lambs, they use organic goat milk which they purchase from a farm across the lake. She said that usually the lambs are all born alive and survive.

Helena and her family are currently setting up cameras and computer equipment to assist them in monitoring the lambing. They prefer to leave the ewes undisturbed and find that they very seldom require any One year when they overfed the ewes with oats, their lambs grew very large in utero - 11 pounds each - which she feels is too large. Even then, only one ewe required assistance with her twin ram lambs because the second had a very large head and his legs became tangled. Helena feels that about 9 pounds is a good weight, but if the lambs are guads, then 4 ½ pounds is fine. These lambs are born all legs with a tiny head and body, but within a few days they are plump and strong.

Predation

Most of the predation problems that they have on their farm have come from hunting dogs chasing their lambs. They have been able to catch these dogs and report the problem to the owners. They have been fortunate that no lambs have been killed. but they know other farmers who have lost lambs. They do not use any type of flock guardian dog or other animal, but have an electric fence to deter bears. The only ewe they lost to predation was a pet, black ewe that was pastured in the fields away from the house. A bear jumped the fence and the ewe was killed while defending her ewe-lamb. The bear was caught and shot by local hunters one week later. After this incident, the state paid them for putting up an even higher electric fence. A few years ago, they lost 2 bee hives less than 100 yards from their home, also to bears.

Just recently, a mother lynx with her baby visited their lambs. They were seen just one yard from the sheep fence near their house. This winter, there have been many lynxes in Rantasalmi and they do prey on sheep. After the recent sighting Helena's family began lighting small fires at night to scare the lynxes away. The lynx is a protected species in the European Union,

so it is nearly impossible to obtain a permit to shoot one, even if it is preying on sheep. The same protection applies to wolves in Eastern Finland.

Thank you to Helena for giving us a glimpse of her farm in Finland and the heritage of our

sheep!







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.

Southwest Montana Flock & Fiber Festival June 5-6, 2004 Beaverhead County Fairgrounds Dillon, Montana

Fiber arts and farm workshops, sheep and angora goat show, wool show and sale, photo contest, vendor booths, and more fiber related events. Contact info: swmtfiberfest@hotmail.com or Drin Becker, PO Box 460494, Polaris, MT 59746

WELCOME!!

We would like to welcome these farms to the Finnsheep Breeders Association!

Michael Copeland Ceres, California

Dayna Nelson San Martin, California

JT & Julie Korkow Volborg, Montana

Dale & Martha Livermore Brookville, Pennsylvania



Picture courtesy of XXXXX Farm, XXXX



Picture courtesy of Firefly Fields Farm, Tracy Sengupta

Pictures on page six are from Helena Korhonen's farm in Finland. Picture one is the ewes with their lambs. Picture two is a picture of two of her grey ewes. Picture three is some of this seasons lambs.

FINNSHEEP BREEDERS DIRECTORY

CALIFORNIA

Connie Santos, 34843 Wiemiller Rd., Tollhouse, CA 93667 flynsbar@psnw.com Purebred Finnsheep Black, white, grey

COLORADO

Janet Herman
7054 S. Hwy. 83
Franktown, CO 80116
(303) 668-9812
Purebred Finnsheep/Crossbred Finnsheep
(Finn/Dorset)
Commercially processed batts. Specializing in out of season lambing

IOWA

Dale L. Amendt 6815 Waterman Blvd. Sutherland, IA 51058 (712) 446-3489 Purebred Finnsheep/Crossbred Finnsheep (Finn X Suffolk, Finn X Corriedales)

Marvin Blair 3402 Fletcher Ave. Lake City, IA 51449 (712) 464-8153 Purebred Finnsheep Crossbred Finnsheep (Finn X Hamp & Finn Dorset)

MICHIGAN

Don & Sandra Domerese 6600 N Crawford Rd Rosebush, MI 48878 (989) 386-6887 Finn/Romney, Finn/Cotswold

MONTANA

JT and Julie Korkow HC 40 Box 28A Volborg, MT 59351 (406) 554-3123 itkinmt@midrivers.co http://www.finnsheep.us

Flock prefix JK, Purebred Finns and Finn/Texel cross. Flock enrolled in VFSCP (MT30), OPP tested, no history of footrot or Johnes. Production of color and white Finns with selection for prolifacy and size.

NEW YORK

Elenore Eimers 8162 Titus Rd Sherman, NY 14781 (716) 761-6737

Elizabeth Luke
Stillmeadow Finnsheep
HC 65 Box 495
DeRuyter, NY 13052
(315) 852-3344
stillmeadowfinns@hotmail.com
Purebred Finns: white, black, grey, piebald
Whole flock tested OPP neg., foot rot free.
Enrolled in USDA Voluntary Scrapie Flock
Certification Program , NY69. Selected for
maternalism, udder quality, broad based
genetics. Handspinner fleeces available.

OHIO

Paul J. Hunter, DVM 11425 Bruns Rd. Fort Loramie, OH 45845 1-800-628-LAMB (5262) drhunter@bright.net

Breeder of Finnsheep since 1989, Cesarean derived-disease free flock, OPP test negative entire adult flock since 1996, Scrapie Certification Program OH 20, White Finnsheep selected for commercial important traits, 3 separate lines available for genetic diversity Finn/Dorset and Finn teaser rams also available.

Walter R. Threlfall, DVM
& Barbara A. Threllfall
Falling Tree Ranch
7012 Liberty Road
Powell, OH 43065
(740) 881-4417
OPP negative & entered in Scrapie program. Flock was established in 1977.
Crossbreds include Finn/Dorset, Finn/Dorper, Finn/Texel. Ewes and rams available. WRTDVM@aol.com

OKLAHOMA

Cynthia Smith
HC 65 Box 517
Hominy, OK 74035
(918) 885-1284
Cynthia.Smith@Benham.com
http://www.boulderridgefarm.com

Purebred Finnsheep, OPP, Johnes and Footrot free, Voluntary Scrapie Program (OK001926). Breeding for maternal instincts, prolifacy, size & wool quality. Also raise Great Pyrenees Livestock Guardian Dogs.

PENNSYLVANIA

Grace Hatton
HC 8 Box 8151
Hawley, PA 18428
(717) 775-9136
hatton@microserve.net
http://home.ptd.net/~hatton7/
Purebred Finnsheep, white and black, since
1986, OPP negative, Enrolled VSCP-PA
43, Spinning wheel repair, antique wheels
for sale.

Dale and Martha Livermore RR 5 Box 134A Brookville, PA 15825 (814) 328-2720 Flock Prefix: ARK, purebred Finnsheep, natural purebred Finnsheep, OPP, Johnes test negative. Footrot, abcess, bovis test free. Breeding stock for sale.

June Roshong
P.O. Box 276
St Peters, PA 19470-0276
(610) 326-5612
e-mail: lelu@oco.net
www.geocities.com/finnsheeppa
OPP tested Negative. We have been
breeding Finnsheep since 1995. Registered
and unregistered, color and white. Mostly
triplets & quads.

Megan Loyd-Thompson 1140 Creek Road Carlisle, PA 17013 (717) 249-4321 cowdance@epix.net

Purebred Finnsheep, color and white rams with very fine fleeces. Micron tested. Naturally colored and white handspinning fleeces available.

VIRGINIA

Grant W. Blackburn "Anzar Sheep" 142 Gravel Lane Lexington, VA 24450 (540) 463-4594 anzar@rockbridge.net

Purebred Finnsheep, Breeder of Finnsheep since 1994, participating in Finnsheep semen importation and specializing in high quality pure white pedigree livestock. We have never had scrapie, foot rot or OPP and the flock is enrolled (VA18) in the USDA Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program.

Grace G. Robelen
A—Plus Farm
Route 4, Box 369
Farmville, VA 23901
(434) 392-3451
aplusfarm@hovac.com
Breeder of healthy, quality white registered
Finnsheep and a few Finn/Dorsets. We also

raise white registered Angora goats and healthy, sensible AKC Collies.

Joe and Naomi Smith

House Mountain Finnsheep

available for crossbreeding.

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(540) 463-6062
Enrolled VA Scrapie Program, Purebred
Finnsheep. Farm established in 1985 in the
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50 breeding ewes, mostly quads and
quints. Bred for size, multiple births,
mothering ability and structural correctness.

Glen Avon and Root bloodlines. Also rams

Linda and Leanna Witt
154 Quail Call Lane
Amissville, VA 20106
(540) 937-4707
linda@MistyMountainFarm.com
www.MistyMountainFarm.com
OPP free, Scrapies free VA flock 26. Very
prolific white and colored Finnsheep.
Handspinning, weaving, and felting
equipment and supplies. Fiberart classes.
New! Guardian llamas!

WASHINGTON

TRIPLE L FINNSHEEP
Dan and Leanne Hughes
89202 N. Harrington Road
West Richland, WA. 99353
(509) 967-3975
danlea23@msn.com
purebred white, black and gray finnsheep,
all ages. OPP and disease free flock.
Breeding records since 1982. Breeding for
size, milking and lambing ability.

WEST VIRGINIA

Melissa Orr 604 Orr Drive Martinsburg, WV 25401 (304) 267-4754 Morrsheep@aol.com Purebred Finnsheep, Crossbred

Purebred Finnsheep, Crossbred Finnsheep (with Shetlands). Beautiful healthy reg. rams & ewes. Excellent fleeces, roving, handspun/millspun yarns, handknitted and woven items for sale.

WISCONSIN

Sandy De Master Wee Croft Finnsheep N 7087 Hillside Dr. Watertown, WI 53094 (920) 699-7420

weecroft@execpc.com www.weecroftfinnsheep.com

Health status: OPP Free (3+ flock tests) and Voluntary Scrapie Program WI Flock 28. White and colored Finnsheep selected for maternal traits, prolificacy and wool quality. Covered handspinning fleeces, roving, and yarn.

Tracy Sengupta
Firefly Fields Finnsheep
4110 W. Plymouth Church Rd.
Beloit, WI 53511
608-361-1446
tracy@fireflyfields.com
Certified Status - Voluntary S
Program - WI Flock 1990. White
colored purebred Finnsheep. Bree

Certified Status - Voluntary Scrapie Program - WI Flock 1990. White and colored purebred Finnsheep. Bred for health, prolificacy, and lovely wool. Covered handspinning fleeces. www.fireflyfields.com/finns

MEMBERSHIP/BREEDERS LISTING DUES ARE NOW PAST DUE!

If you would like your farm added to this list as well as our website, http://www.finnsheep.org please fill out the previous page and send \$35.00 for your listing to the address shown.

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

NAME:	() Initial Membership \$35		
ADDRESS:	() Breeders Directory \$30		
	() Annual Dues \$25		
PHONE:	() Flock Prefix, \$10 per letter		
EMAIL:	Amount enclosed \$		
amended from time to time, and to ke size of Finnsheep, and further that I			
Signed	Dated		
Signed	Dated		
BREEDERS' DIRECTORY LISTING Fee: \$30 per three issue year January, May and September FBA members only Includes web page listing. The directory is sent to people inquiring about the breed and to fairs and shows. Please check: Purebred Finns (), Crossbred Finns (), What crosses? Other info. not counting your name and address, email, webpage, health status re: OPP and Scrapie, you are allowed 20 words free to describe what you offer. Over 20 words is \$1 per line which must be included with Breeders Directory Listing Payment.			
Tales and your registration fees will be FLOCK PREFIX: \$10 per letter. A fl	do not pay the fee you will not receive the FBA newsletter, Short be doubled. ock prefix enables exclusive use of your name or that of your farm use your last name, the full name of your farm or some initials.		
·	mbers with unpaid annual dues, or animals over 12 months of age) Transfer of ownership-\$4 Pedigrees-\$5 Duplicates-\$1 1. 1/2 Finn-\$2 2. 3/4 Finn-\$6 3. 7/8 Finn-\$6		

FOR REGISTRATIONS AND TRANSFERS AND ALL MEMBER SERVICES:

Send all information to the Finnsheep Breeders' Association, 1557 173rd Ave., Milo, IA 50166, Phone (641) 942-6402, Fax (641) 942-6502 Email - kclaghorn@earthlink.net

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Rescued from the original 1998 IMPORTATION

Black, brown, gray and a few white FLEECED RAMS AVAILABLE

Semen has been found to be viable but cannot be guaranteed

\$30.00 per dose, shipping and handling is extra

Please note, your flock needs to be enrolled in the federal Scrapie Flock Certification Program and permits will be required.

CONTACT
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1-800-628-LAMB
drhutner@bright.net

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Full Page (approx. 7" by 10") members \$40.00 nonmembers \$60.00	Advance payment on all ads required.	

Send your ad copy to Cynthia.Smith@benham.com Please put "ST Classified" in the subject line or send your hard copy and fee to Cynthia Smith HC 65 Box 517, Hominy, OK 74035. I can help you design your ad if you need that.

Counting Words: Phone numbers count as one word. Each number and two letter initial count as one word. For example "I. M. Wright" is two words, and "P. O. Box 999" is three words. Hyphenated words, (e.g.: Jones-Smythe) count as separate words.

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED	Finnsheep Breeders' Association 143 Gravel Lane Lexington, VA 24450