

St. Croix
Hair Sheep
Breeders,
Inc.



Volume 17
Issue 2

www.stcroixsheep.org

News & Views

PRESIDENT'S RAMBLE



Here in the south we have “sayings”. You didn’t think that Jeff Foxworthy made up all of that stuff, did you? We have terms, like “good-en” or “nice-en”. Let me ‘splain ‘em to ya’ll! Ring, ring (telephone) ...

Me: “Hello.”

Voice: “Are ya’ll the folks with the St. Croix sheep?”

Me: “Yes sir that would be us.”

Voice: “I was looking for a new ram or maybe some ewes.”

Me: “What are ya’ll wanting in the sheep or how do you plan to use them?”

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2017 ANNUAL MEETING

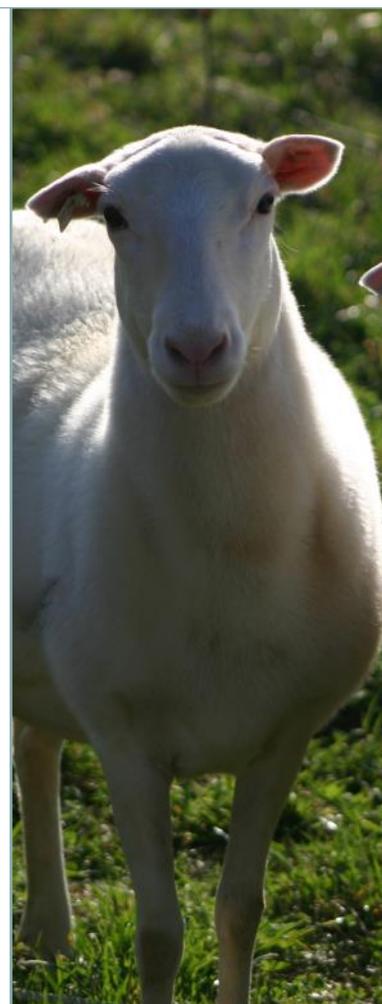
JOIN US ON THE BEACH!

AUGUST 25-26, 2017. REGISTER BY JULY 14.

The SCHSB 2017 Annual Meeting will be held at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, Alabama.

The meeting will be in conjunction with the 2017 Forages & Grazing Management Symposium for Sheep, Goats & Small-Scale Cattle Production, put on by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES), USDA and Tennessee State University.

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NEWS & VIEWS

News & Views is the membership news letter of the SCHSB, published three times per year.

If you are not a member and are interested in becoming one, please contact us using the information on the back cover.

HAPPY READING!

PRESIDENT'S RAMBLE...

(Continued from page 1)

Voice: “Well, I have some now that are OK but I wanted to improve my sheep and want a ram that is a “good-en”.

(Translated into non-southern English as “good one”!)

Me: “I think I can help ya’ll because I have some “nice-ens” (nice ones) that we just weaned.”

So, as I laugh at myself, I want to impress on us that there needs to be more than cultural terms to describe our sheep no matter what our region or how we talk. Current improvements, planned progress and future plans for St. Croix Hair Sheep Breeders, Inc. are all encouraging to me as building blocks for the St. Croix breed as a whole.

back to me days earlier and it saves SCHSB postage and handling costs. It was created as a service to all of us as members. Get that going for you to save time and postage costs.

Back to the colloquial terms for better and nice: the next big step for SCHSB is to begin setting up an online tool in a flock data program beyond basic pedigree information. This optional data collection program will be custom built for our association to help you to achieve a chosen level of your flock’s information that you want to collect, keep and sort. You will eventually have the option(s) to input your flock data such as lambing data for ewes, weaning information, trait scores of the flock or growth data on ram lambs and then be able to define “good-en” and “nice-en” in real data and with numbers and proof.

“...there needs to be more than cultural terms to describe our sheep no matter what our region or how we talk.”

I will digress for a paragraph; we have added the new directors that you elected by your votes. Thank you for taking the time to be a part of a living organization. Caleb Cunningham and Matt Brewer bring in new blood to the Board of Directors and have already weighed in as willing and able to make things better for all of us and for the breed. But as they come on the Board of Directors, they will inherit and help direct on-going projects as well as bring in new ideas. Please make them welcome and call or email them as you get the chance.

Progress: In case you did not know, we now have an online option for dues, registration and transfers and PayPal capability. That is good for all of us. One small benefit as an example: I can get receipts of work emailed

It is purely voluntary but your data will help you first, and eventually the breed, to be more defined and attractive to commercial producers or other breeds who might shun us now as data-less breeders and a so-so breed without any proof. **Sheep with data are sheep of greater value to us all including sale prices which reflect increasing quality.**

SCHSB also plans to have a voluntary tie-in with more scientific data system(s). That is in the blueprint and will be farther down the road, so to speak. Such progress would allow even greater visibility and creditability in the American Sheep Industry or in the world market. **Any efforts that SCHSB can make to promote, expand and encourage the use of St. Croix sheep in the**

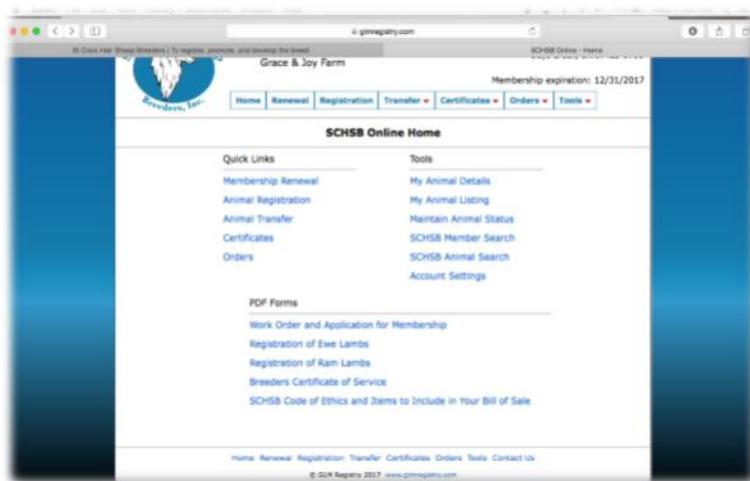
(Continued on page 4)

USING ONLINE REGISTRATION

Fellow breeders, I hope this letter finds you all well, with lambs on the ground and happy with your St. Croix sheep. I also hope some of you have had the chance to use the newly automated online registration feature on the website.

As most of you probably already know, you have a log-in for SCHSB website, www.stcroixsheep.org that you can use to access and create member classifieds. Do not confuse this with the login ID and password for the online registry feature. They are two separate entities, for the online registration you will need to create a separate ID and password. Nothing says they can't be the same, but from a security standpoint, it is probably advisable to make new ones.

The new feature is easily found in the top right corner of the website, under "Quicklinks" where you will find a blue clickable tab that says registry.



Once you click on it, you will find a log-in page from which you create your account ID and password. From there, it is rather simple and user friendly. You will notice many useful features; membership renewal, registration, transfer, certificates, you can search your own animal data, etc. Once signed in, you will see the screen to the left.

Everything really is user friendly and pretty self-explanatory. All of your registered animals will be built into the data base, so when you want to register a ewe lamb for example, it is done by simply clicking a drop down list of your current sheep to pick the dam and

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PRESIDENT'S RAMBLE...

(Continued from page 2)

USA and even in other countries is being discussed within the Board of Directors and with individuals both in and outside of the USA. There is more going on and I hope that if you are interested that you will contact a Director.

All money we pay in annual membership and fees is valuable and none has been wasted. Thank you for your support in prompt payments and keeping your sheep registered and transferred as part of the breed. Whatever money you send in helps to fund future and current improvements, breed advertising, continues to support and update our great SCHSB website, improves member services and keeps you informed.

Questions come up from time to time and it is good that people wonder what is going on in SCHSB. I will venture to be quite blunt to say that there is only one road, the high road, and one way, the right way, to make a breed organization work correctly. **There is only one important group in the membership of SCHSB: ALL MEMBERS!** There is no differentiation of any member: new, old, young, sheep owner, future sheep owner, long term, short term or whatever term you use to describe yourself. All members are equal and the goal of SCHSB is to provide equal services and opportunities. As I heard on a radio advertisement this week: "Others might treat you as "just a number", but with SCHSB (I added our name!), **you are #1.** Words are good but actions and results are better indicators and proof of how things are actually going within an organization. A strong breed organization is made up of active and satisfied members seeking to learn, raise and distribute the best animals they can produce. I know that is what SCHSB is doing and will continue

to do. But it is not just about the association only.

I honestly want **you** to choose exactly what **you** want, whom **you** want to be associated with and where and why **you** want **your** sheep to be recognized. I want **you** to be satisfied with **your** sheep and what **you** decide. Please look at the whole, the long term, your return and what is best for you and the breed. If you have a question about SCHSB, give any director or officer a call, send an email and find out what is going on. We serve you. We really NEED AND WANT to hear from you.

Let me promise you this; **The goal of SCHSB: raise and promote the "original type St. Croix sheep"**. The imported sheep were the unique and useful sheep of their time and our sheep still need to be unique and useful today. SCHSB has just begun a new effort to get more background information, better historical documentation and great genetic knowledge of our breed. I hope to share all of that with you when we get it compiled.

This is "2017 reality": smaller, thinner and low value animals have no future in any closed breed that will survive. Wider services from SCHSB to members and those looking for and breeding good sheep, open dialog, stable and service oriented leadership and progressive efforts for both the good of all members and the breed is the high road to the future. We'll get there faster if all of our sheep are "nice-ens".

Eddie

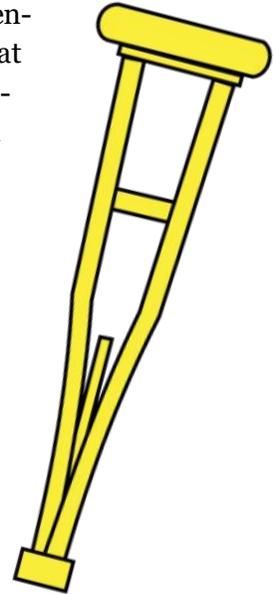
ENVIRONMENTAL SELECTIVE PRESSURE

The most basic function of any animal, be it wild or domestic, is to reproduce in the environment in which it is born. Over the span of time since domestication, the natural environment shaped species into landrace types most suited to the individuals' environments. From the craggy highlands of northern Britain come the hardy and thrifty hill sheep; from the midlands, the Leicester, a maternal breed with few peers; from the chalky coasts the terminal carcass breed of choice, the Suffolk. These breeds all originate on a small island, yet the environment into which they were born, coupled with the needs of their herdsman, molded them into the very different types.

Modern agriculture has given us a myriad of tools to utilize. Cheap grain has allowed us to raise animals larger than nature would allow. Anthelmintics allow us to purge the parasites from our flocks, but also allows sheep with little to no inherent parasite resistance to survive. Jug lambing allows us to lamb at inopportune times of the year, but also distorts our perception of a good mother by keeping lambs in close proximity until the ewe accepts them, readily or not. Bottle feeding allows us to raise lambs that would otherwise perish, yet we perpetuate genetics of sheep that nature culled from the flock. These practices have created an artificial environment that molds our animals in as real a way as the natural environment shaped their ancestors. The artificial environment releases genetic pressure from the

most fundamental and omnipresent forces of nature - nutrition, health, and the ability to nurture young.

Particularly in traditionally managed flocks, these environmental additives are crutches that are often necessary to ensure flock health and production. However, like a physical crutch, they are tools to be used until a weakness is overcome. We utilize the crutches in order to ensure our flocks are able to provide an income, but we use them to move from one plane of management to the next. As we become better husbandmen and improve our genetic selection, we can cast aside our crutches and move forward with rugged, environmentally adapted animals that can reproduce in the natural environment in which they are born with little to no artificial environmental pressure. That is the historic hallmark of our breed, and is something towards which we all must strive.



Caleb S. Cunningham
Director, SCHSB

2017 ANNUAL MEETING...

(Continued from page 1)

Join us for 2 days of great speakers, networking and learning.

Admission to the meeting is free, and the resort is offering a great discount on room rates. A downloadable brochure, registration info and full schedule can be found on our website, www.stcroixsheep.org.

WHITE MUSCLE DISEASE

White Muscle Disease, or Nutritional Muscular Dystrophy, is the clinical presentation of Vitamin E or Selenium deficiency. The deficiency is most common on nutrient depleted soils; however, supplementation of selenium is a simple counter to poor soils and forages. Selenium and Vitamin E act as antioxidants. Vitamin E acts in the lipid bi-layers while Selenium is a building block for antioxidant selenoproteins. When the body becomes deficient in either, the muscle cells begin to oxidize and degenerate.



The disease presents most commonly in young lambs experiencing a rapid rate of growth, and the signs vary in accordance with the muscle groups impacted by the deficiency. Classic signs of Skeletal Muscular Dystrophy are a hunched posture, stiffness of gait, and the inability to swallow. Symptoms of Cardiac Muscular Dystrophy mirror respiratory ailments and include difficulty breathing and accelerated heart and breathing rates. If the cardiac muscles become dystrophied, death is then imminent. Fortunately, if the symptoms of Skeletal Muscular Dystrophy are realized early the condition is treatable with injections of Selenium and Vitamin E.

For more information regarding White Muscle Disease and other nutritional deficiencies common to your location, contact your local extension agent.

Caleb S. Cunningham
Director, SCHSB, Inc.

GROWTH CURVES



A young “studly” ram walks into a singles barn with his usual swagger. A gold neck tag glistens in his wavy and manly mane. He spots a single ewe over by the feed trough, salters over and says that famous sheep pickup line, “Hey Ewe, what’s your growth curve?” Growth Curve???? We think that all animals in a breed will

be just about alike. We want uniformity, we breed for uniformity, we look for replacement animals that are like ours and yet we get slapped in the face with differences. What are we seeing, are we wrong to want all animals to be similar, what causes the differences we see and so the questions roll around and around in our heads?

First, we want “impressive”. Mankind must be wired for that: the biggest buildings, the nicest farm, the truck with the most horsepower, the best of sheep, the highest % lambing crop, the heaviest weaning weights, the smartest kids and so we go. We want our _____ (fill in the blank) to be #1, the fastest, the greatest or the _____-est (name your superlative). Is that what we REALLY want in our sheep? Do we miss differences in comparing good sheep to good sheep because we do not recognize genetic or phenotypic differences? Do we visualize that our sheep mature at different rates or have different growth curves?

“...the growth curve does not define goodness...”

We know that differing growth curves exist. Look at people and it is easy to see that some kids are physically fast maturing in the tween years. Some lag over and mature in high school. I had a friend in college that was a pee wee in his freshman year and then went on in the next 4 years to make me look like a squirt. Which of us was “better”? That is a poor question because the growth curve does not define goodness in people. That judgement might also apply in sheep.

In sheep, growth curves and affected traits are obvious if we look for them. Quick maturity can be seen as early bone fusion or shorter framed type animals. Some people seek early phenotypic signs such as male traits which are obvious with manes, sexual activity and such. Early maturing ewe lambs might end up being shorter and will possibly breed early.

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GROWTH CURVES...

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Later maturity patterns can be seen, as well. Later maturing ram lambs will be sound and adequately muscled but slower or later to stop growing in height and possibly muscling. They will not have the complete mane and mature looking head traits as early. Later maturing ewe lambs might not breed at very early ages and will also continue to grow in height for more months.

I want to be clear and helpful; I am not tying growth curves to growth rates or the need of adequate growth although there might be overlaps. I honestly do not know the complete answers. But I will also spill the beans on my experiences. We keep records and track growth rates, muscling and kill info in retained ram lambs after weaning if I get the chance to gather the data. Over the years there have been some nice ram lambs that weaned at average weights or better. When they were about 7 or 8 months old they seemed to quit gaining weight or dropped to a low rate of gain while the other ram lambs continued to gain and grow. What happened and why? My guess; the sheep had inherited different genes for different growth curves.

This is not just a St. Croix sheep issue. It is a living organism issue if the species have genetic differences. We had an annual meeting in TN and VA some years back and the folks on the farm tours told us that they had tried another breed of hair sheep only to find that the ones they purchased hit a weight and stopped growing just like the above mentioned. Even in their use of the animals in crossbreeding efforts they saw the same issue.

So this is not a single breed issue but it can affect our sheep. We need to be able to recognize the effects for how they can impact us. I want to have sheep like the ones described to me as the original imports to USU: able to have ram lambs at 100 pounds, on the average, around the one year mark. I do have sheep which can meet that goal but not without years of sorting, selection and culling and not at a high % of the retained ram lamb crop. But it is improving because of selection. **Here are some related issues for us to consider:**

The ram lambs increase muscle mass, as compared to other body parts as they near the yearling age if their growth rate does not drop off and they are adequately muscled.

Increased muscle mass allows a higher dressing percentage of carcass to live weight when processed

With a fixed cost to transport and slaughter, a minimum dress out percentage and acceptable meat yield in pounds of final wrapper lamb products has to be realized by the customer for them to be able to afford to buy lambs from you

“Customers” can be order buyers in a sale barn or family wanting a freezer lamb

Ewe lambs that mature into moderate sized ewes will do well in most situations while smaller ewes are not always desired or in demand. Small ewe lambs can be your birthing problems.

GROWTH CURVES...

We sometimes get mesmerized by a young, good looking, fast maturing ram lamb at weaning.

So, what do we do?

We first need to set a goal. Do you want cheap lawnmowers or do you want to help the breed? Do you use breed history, trends and other forces to set your goals? (Another way to ask: do you have a goal for your sheep?)

Can you begin to notice sheep that are different but might be more useful?

Can you see yourself getting some data on your sheep so that you or buyers know a bit more about your sheep? Even notes and observations jotted down and dated will help you know more.

Do you want your sheep to be worth more?

Our sheep have great value to us because they are unique, useful, practical, and I hope, profitable. I want St. Croix sheep to be owned by more folks who think the same thing about them. I want commercial breeders to try and to know that adding a St. Croix ram to their breed rotation is a good and profitable effort. I want our sheep to be historically correct. In my way of thinking, the growth curve is a thing to see, deal with and use for the greater good of the breed. Consider developing the “eye of the master” and collecting data as two of the basic building blocks for a better flock.

Eddie



TREASURER'S REPORT

As of 5/12/2017 we have a balance of \$4513.95. We have no debt and all bills have been paid.

Billy

RESEARCH SNIPPETT

Researchers at Virginia State University are currently evaluating soyhulls as a supplemental feed source for hair sheep lambs consuming forage-based diets. In two pen-feeding trials in which orchardgrass served as the forage source, intake and growth rate of hair sheep lambs increased linearly as supplemental feeding of soyhulls increased from 0 to 3 percent of body weight. Grazing lambs supplemented with soyhulls grew faster than those supplemented with cracked corn at 2% of bodyweight. Soyhull supplementation improved growth rates of lambs by 80 percent as compared to those grazing pasture only In another study with hair and hair x wool lambs, soyhull supplementation improved the color and texture of the meat.

Read the full article here: <http://www.sheepandgoat.com/#!soyhulls/cbwi>

This is an extract from the [Maryland Small Ruminant Page](#) .

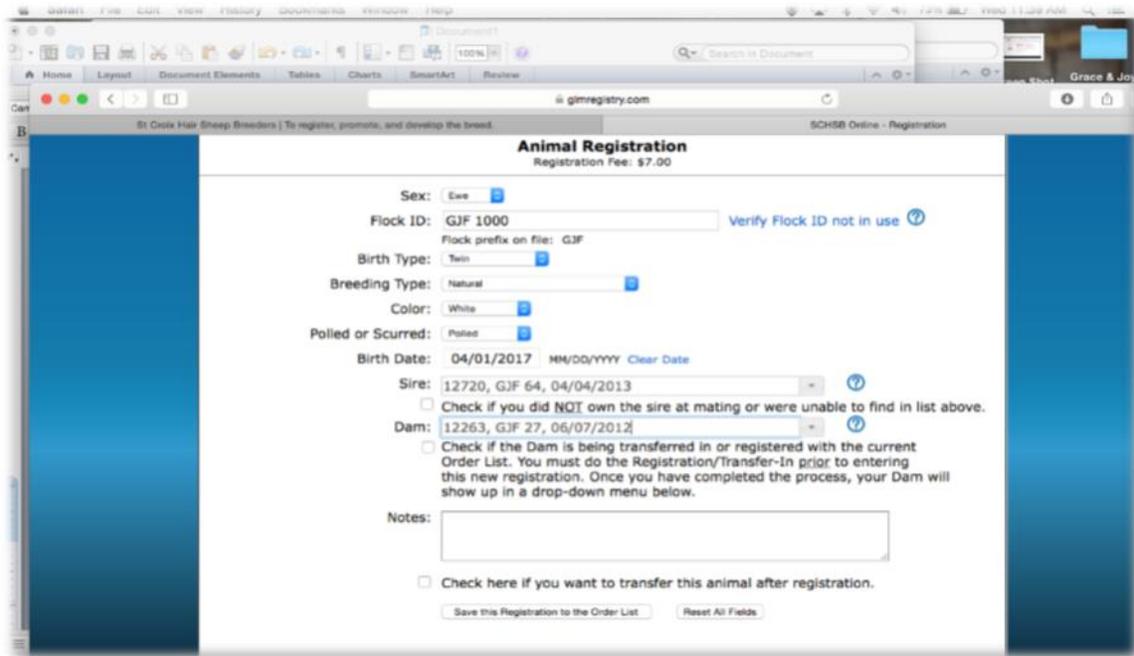
Summer Plenty!



USING ONLINE REGISTRATION...

(Continued from page 3)

sire, etc. From there, you enter the flock # you want to assign the new lamb, birth type, etc. If the lamb was a twin or triplet, of course you identify that but then have the option to add another (the twin, triplet, etc) using the same dam and sire data. The next photo is a sample registration page and how it should look.



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the 'Animal Registration' form on the SCHSB Online Registration website. The form includes the following fields and options:

- Sex:** Eye
- Flock ID:** GJF 1000 (with a 'Verify Flock ID not in use' link)
- Flock prefix on file:** GJF
- Birth Type:** Twin
- Breeding Type:** Natural
- Color:** White
- Polled or Scurred:** Polled
- Birth Date:** 04/01/2017 (with a 'Clear Date' link)
- Sire:** 12720, GJF 64, 04/04/2013 (with a help icon)
- Check if you did NOT own the sire at mating or were unable to find in list above.
- Dam:** 12263, GJF 27, 06/07/2012 (with a help icon)
- Check if the Dam is being transferred in or registered with the current Order List. You must do the Registration/Transfer-In prior to entering this new registration. Once you have completed the process, your Dam will show up in a drop-down menu below.
- Notes:** (empty text area)
- Check here if you want to transfer this animal after registration.

At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: 'Save this Registration to the Order List' and 'Reset All Fields'.

From this page, you simply add it to your order list and continue on, adding a twin or triplet with the same info or your next lamb, or finish the order, etc. Again, following the well noted tabs until you are finished, review and then submit. You will have the option to pay online as well.

Matt Morgan
Director SCHSB

SCHSB MISSION STATEMENT

Establish a central organization (within the United States) to register, promote, and develop the growth of the St. Croix breed of sheep.

Define the distinguishing characteristics of the breed and establish specific minimum standards for registering individual animals

Insure that individual animals meet specified criteria in order to be registered as members of the St. Croix breed

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ADVERTISING

All N&V publications are emailed to every member on the dates below. You have the option to purchase a mailed copy of N&V (3 editions per a year) for \$15 if you prefer.

Publications will be sent on 2/1, 6/1 and 10/1. Cut off dates for articles and ads are: 1/15, 5/15 and 9/15.

The full color ad sizes available for the publication are as follows:

Name,	Size(s),	Single	Year (x3)
Business Card	3.5" x 2"	\$15	\$40
Quarter Page	3.25" x 4.5"	\$30	\$75
Half Page	7 x 4.5" or 3.25" x 9.5"	\$55	\$140
Full Page	7" x 9.5"	\$90	\$240

Please note these prices assume you have acceptable artwork available for publication. If you do not have artwork available one can be created for you for free (business card text format only) or a fee (see below). Artwork should be one of the following formats: jpg, tif, tiff, png, pdf, ai, cdr, doc, docx, pub, eps. Art should either be in vector graphics format or stored with at least 300DPI. The publication is in color and images will be converted to RGB for web publication and CYMK for paper production. There should be no passwords on any files submitted. We do not accept any responsibility for any errors in your artwork. **Scanned ads are not acceptable!**

You have a couple of ways to request ads. You may use the online form available on our website. This is the easiest way as it also allows you to pay online using check, debit or credit card via Paypal (you do not need to have a Paypal account). The form is located at: <http://stcroixsheep.org/ad-request>.

Alternatively you may send an email to ads@stcroixsheep.org with your request and artwork. If your artwork is too big, we have a Dropbox that you can use to upload your file. When you request an ad by email you will need to send a check and will receive a reminder to do so (with the correct address) via email.

Creation of Artwork for Ads

We can prepare your artwork for you for a fee. Artwork for a business card sized ad will be created for **free** if you only want text. There will be no images and we reserve the right to edit your text to fit. You have room for a short phrase or sentence to describe your business along with your farm name, your name and address a phone number and your email. If your text is too long we will edit it as necessary without contacting you.

If you want a business card ad with images or a larger sized ad created, then there will be a one off charge. Just let us know you want artwork created (using the ads@stcroixsheep.org email or [online form](#)) and the editor will contact you to discuss your requirements. The artwork created can be used as many times as necessary without another charge (even in other publications). The additional one off fees are as follows (Prices may vary depending on your requirements with the additional fee being charged separately):

Ad Size	Cost
Business Card	\$40
Quarter Page	\$75
Half Page	\$140
Full Page	\$240

Our editor also provides website creation and hosting for farms and businesses at a reasonable fee. If you have any questions about these services please contact them directly at richard@chventures.com.