

St. Croix
Hair Sheep
Breeders,
Inc.



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www.stcroixsheep.org

News & Views

PRESIDENT'S RAMBLE "MOMENTUM"



Definition: The impetus and driving force gained by the development of a process or course of events.

Guess what? There is a method to the madness of St. Croix sheep efforts in SCHSB. It's called momentum. "What is this guy talking about?" Well, here goes: St. Croix sheep had a great history, we saw where we were as a breed, we knew that ground had been lost, we saw that the industry had little knowledge of the breed so steps have been made to start and

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RAM SELECIION

The St. Croix developed as a landrace - a regionally adapted "type" guided almost solely by natural selection. Their feral past is what causes the breed to be one of the most rugged, work and wear type of sheep available to shepherds today. However, as a young landrace of the New World, the breed never went through the right of passage of data based selection which caused the Old World landraces to become the productive, industry standards of commercial shepherds.

Our sheep have a great deal to offer, but as many commercial

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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...

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build momentum.

A long term breeder of yesteryear, a pillar of the breed, a name in bloodlines that most would recognize and want, a man whose family is not a part of SCHSB, floored me with a statement that I did not ask for and I found to be startling. I can still remember the time, the place, the room, his frankness: He said, "The St. Croix sheep will never be a meat sheep". **WOW!!** All the years that they promoted, showed, sold, encouraged, met and did all things "St. Croix" and to end up with a total negative. I did not believe it, I did not want to be that man, I did not want to have such faithlessness in the breed, I did not want to be defeated. I wanted "better" and it required steps to build momentum. It resulted and started with the formation of SCHSB. It happened and it is happening.

"In 2019, the breed and SCHSB has momentum."

I've been at the bottom of a hill unable to get to the top while in a 2 wheel drive truck. I could have stayed there. But I backed up enough, got some speed, built some momentum and got out to sit here and type this ramble. The St. Croix breed, just a few years ago, needed some momentum. Let me tell you this as gladly as I can. In 2018, the breed and SCHSB has momentum. Let me mention a few steps we have made and also look to the future.

Annual meeting and News and Views editions have been set up to encourage selection of better sheep and to understand our history and our future. Our breed history, via the

original imports, were useful meat sheep. Decades of a lack of clear goals and a vision to make an industrial difference set the average sheep back to less than the original sheep were prized for in type, size, function and usefulness. The means and the ease to get sheep registered and transferred has been streamlined in SCHSB. The directors and officers have worked to learn history, apply what has been learned, breed better sheep, encourage the breeding of better sheep and share our story with all people including members, commercial producers, seekers, researchers, consumers and on down the line. Breeder education and encouragement, on a one to one basis, goes on with every phone call fielded by directors.

Some past annual meetings included outside speakers on the use of products, the successful historic cross breeding systems, common sense ways to breed better sheep, links to the industry such as the American Lamb Board and breeder testimonials. The 2018 meeting was more member driven with a showcase of St. Croix genetics at a central location in the USA ,at a well-attended Ozark Farm Fest. The planning reasons: a strong area for commercial sheep, an established venue, a central location, a chance to meet and enjoy fellow members, a chance to swap or sell the genetics of our breed without as much travel for any one individual.

Breeder input was and is a big part of the annual meeting. There are goals and hopes but at this meeting we heard from long term and short term members that the "breed fits the need".

I saw the 2018 meeting and outreach exhibit

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2018 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

Wow, what a great time was had by all, Oct 5,6,7 at the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds!

St. Croix Hair Sheep Breeders held its annual meeting in conjunction with the 2018 Ozark Farm Fest. It was a great venue and featured the first ever exhibit and sale/swap of some really incredible St. Croix sheep. It is safe to say, the sheep were a roaring success, attracting attention from young and old, and were easily the largest exhibit in the small animal barn. Many heads were turned, and eyes opened to what a St. Croix can and should be. Sheep at the Farm Fest represented breeders from as far east as Kentucky and as far west as Washington, with some Missouri thrown in the middle; so we covered a pretty large swath of the country and tapped into several good genetic lines. For those who stopped by, we thank you. For new friends made, we hope to see you again.

The annual business meeting was held Friday evening at the Holiday Inn and Suites, and was called to order by President Eddie Martin at 8:00 p.m. Eleven members were in attendance and the meeting was late in the evening but lively in discussions. General business items such as introduction of all attendees, minutes of the 2017 teleconference, treasurer's report, old business, new business, and two special discussions filled out the agenda. Draft data inputs for the upcoming flock data program was handed out and discussed. Members vary greatly from flock to flock and regionally on the specific traits that are important to them or their customers. That is the beauty of the planned program as each flock can

report as much or as little data as they prefer. Annual advertising was discussed and suggestions and discussions of potential publications or locations of ads were suggested.

Discussions in new business included how new members can be encouraged to learn and participate long term as active members, registering and retaining their new flock. Discussions covered welcome packages, promotional items, costs and more. It was confirmed that verified members can use the logo with the word "Member" under it. The increased fees, due to postage, were announced for 2019. An open question section allowed members to give their opinions on annual meeting options such as teleconferences, meetings with speakers, the current location and arrangements or other.

Matt Morgan opened and lead a discussion on "How to Integrate the Breed into the US Sheep Industry". It was a lively and useful time to hear of various views on the subject and ways members could consider to market their sheep or help customers.

Matthew Cummings, a member from Springfield, MO, discussed his family's view of their flock from soil health to animal management, the providing of all elements for animal nutrition and health, his marketing aspect and additional thoughts. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:15 PM.

Eddie



PRESIDENT'S RAMBLE...

(Continued from page 2)

of sheep to be due to building momentum in SCHSB. I am proud to be an officer and serve with the directors who want you and your sheep to have full use and value in the future. We hold a special place in the industry. Don't ever let that knowledge get diluted with talks of bigger, better, purer, lesser, different or whatever another sales spiel might be.

Also, do not be complacent. We still do not have the average St. Croix sheep to the point of the originals but we are quickly getting back to the basics. There were St. Croix sheep displayed at the 2018 Fest that were the envy of members and breeders of other hair sheep breeds. And rightly so. We can never get too relaxed on keeping and breeding quality animals when we actually depend on genes and gene mixes in our sheep which are invisible to our eyes. Use tools, including visual observations, farm records, weights, muscle determinations, weight gain, parasite resistance, positive mothering traits and whatever you can to select the best and make the breed progressively restored. It's doable.

But whatever you do, please just do something! Yet never think as a defeated owner of St. Croix sheep that they are never going to be a meat breed. To this day, I feel sorry for that man and his family. I do not plan to be like him. I want to breed sheep like the originals, sheep that fit and work, sheep that take their rightful place in the industry and all that while working alongside you as friends and members of SCHSB. As the old football cheer goes, "We've got the momentum, we're hot, we can't be stopped". Join the SCHSB team, jump on the momentum train, let's get up the next hill, the next hill and then the next hill. Momentum is here and will be here as long as the members support SCHSB and SCHSB supports the members. It's not about "me", it is about "us".

Eddie

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

It's time to elect or reelect directors for SCHSB. Four current directors have served a full term and all are willing to run again, to serve as directors. They include Yates Colby, Billy Hearnberger, Eddie Martin and Matt Morgan. If you know of another member in good standing who would be willing to serve, please nominate them by contacting one of the current directors. **Nominations are due in by November 15** and ballots will be sent out and returned by the end of 2018. Thank you.

INCREASE IN FEES IN 2019

There will be a **slight increase in registration and transfer fees in 2019** due to increase in postage costs that the registrar has incurred. Please keep this in mind if you have not registered all of the 2018 sheep that you plan to keep as breeders and watch for the new fees or costs on forms in the New Year.

MEMORIES FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING



RAM SELECTION...

(Continued from page 1)

sheep men will tell you, they are largely unimproved. What are some basic points of ram selection that we can make to improve our flocks? Read on!

Size If you've ever stood next to a show-bred Suffolk or even a show-bred Katahdin, you've likely noticed that the St. Croix is quite a bit smaller in both general size and muscle mass. Our breed is not a terminal one. Our foundation and great strengths are in the maternal capacity of our ewes and the increased milk and mothering our rams pass on to their daughters; however, the industry does not demand small carcasses! When you evaluate a new breeding ram, make certain to evaluate his dam first for the maternal traits she possesses. Then ask yourself, "Where does this ram fit into his contemporary group of peers? Is he average compared to the other young rams, or is he larger?" If he is a twin and above average in size, he is likely to be a keeper.

Rate of growth Arguably more important than size, we want to universally select for rams who weigh 100 pounds by a year of age, ideally without creep feed. They should get this gain on milk and grass until 90 days and then on grass alone until they are yearlings. If your management does not allow for grass alone, raise the benchmark!

“Make sure....you aren't being fleeced!”

Muscling and structure Lay hands on your rams. The shoulders should be broad and well muscled. When you run your hands from the shoulders to the rib cage, you should not feel a dip behind the shoulders, rather the rib cage should feel a seamless part of the body of the ram, almost a "torpedo" shape.

The ram should have plenty of gut capacity with a spring of rib. Some rams have a tendency to be flat sided. This is undesirable. They should look like barrels on legs! The ram should also be deep and wide, and he should carry the depth of body his entire length with no tendency to be shallow in the flank.

Also, feel the loin of the ram. The loin should be broad and well muscled. These are the prime cuts of meat and there should be plenty of them! The hindquarters are also important. Many rams look to be well muscled in the rear when, in fact, they are just hairy! Make sure to feel the use beneath the hair and ensure you aren't being fleeced! Also pay attention to where the muscles of the rump tie into the leg of the ram. He should be well muscled all the way to the hocks.

Parasite resistance This is the hallmark of the breed. It is one thing the breed does better than any other breed of sheep and is the number one reason people select St. Croix rams in cross breeding programs. Try to select rams from ewes that have never been wormed. If you can, select rams from flocks that have never been wormed.



Cal Cnningham

ARTICLES FROM MEMBERS

SCHSB welcomes member submitted articles. Please feel free to submit and share any interesting tidbits, learning experiences, pearls of wisdom, management philosophies that work for you, etc.

Please send your document with any appropriate high resolution pictures to: secretary@stcroixsheep.org.

By sending us this information, you are acknowledging that the article and images are yours to send and that you approve the use in this publication and on our website.

MORE MEMORIES



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 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 listed (Prices may vary depending on your requirements with the additional fee being charged separately):

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.