



President's Message

By Eddie Martin



Hello to each of you. I hope that your 2014 summer has gone well. The highlight of the year for our association is generally the annual meeting. This year did not disappoint, and I want to thank the Tafts for being such gracious hosts. If you ever want to see St. Croix sheep in a beautiful and tranquil setting, just visit the Tafts' farm. Thank you to both Charles and Lamar for making the meeting so memorable.

I think we all know our base roles are to be stewards of a special breed of sheep. Yet we all want to fit into the American lamb industry so that our sheep can be useful, fully valued and in demand as well as remaining unique and beautiful. But with a broader view, what commercial purposes do our breed fulfill? We have studies from both here in the United States and overseas where ewes that were one half

St. Croix were extremely fertile, productive, improved the average sheep and provided better economic returns to commercial shepherds. I find that to be a great encouragement.

The base question for me is "Can we gain market share in commercial flocks?" We have to know and offer the true advantages of commercial sheep that are 50% St. Croix. As you and I tell others about our sheep, what can we tell commercial breeders who traditionally overlook St. Croix sheep for the more popular hair sheep breeds and wool breeds? If you get a chance, look up one or more of the following articles on your computer, from your neighbor's computer or from a public library. I hope this quote from the last one referenced will whet your appetite to study up on the issue and sing the praises of our breed:

Implications

"For each 100 F1 ewe lambs exposed, 13 or 14 more ewe lambs would be expected to lamb if they were sired by

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News and Views

St. Croix Hair Sheep Breeders, Inc.
www.stcroixsheep.org

President: Eddie Martin
theebenezerfarm@gmail.com
864-296-0454

Vice President: Matt Morgan
morganmatt@aol.com
502-658-9484

Secretary: Kathy Bennett
rbr15863@hughes.net
541-825-3750

Treasurer: Richard Bennett
rbr15863@hughes.net
541-825-3750

Directors:

Northwest
(AK, ID, MT, ND, OR, SD, WA, WY)
Yates Colby
hairsheep@live.com
509-590-3627

Southwest
(AZ, CA, HI, NM, NV, CO, TX, UT)
Malia Miller
sheep4brains@yahoo.com
970-685-1942

North Central
(IA, IL, IN, MI, NM, NE, WI)
Lynne Vanderlinden
van@cavenet.com
541-592-3444

South Central
(AL, AR, KS, KY, LA, MO, MS, OK, TN)
Eddie Martin
theebenezerfarm@gmail.com
864-296-0454

East
(CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, MA, MD, ME, NC, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, SC, VA, VT)
Billy Hearnberger
bfhearnberger@hughes.net
936-269-3839

News and Views is published quarterly.
Editors: Richard and Kathy Bennett
For advertising or content contact:
Richard and Kathy Bennett
15863 Tiller Trail Hwy.
Days Creek, OR 97429
541-825-3750
rbr15863@hughes.net

hair-breed rams than if they were sired by prolific, wool-breed rams, and the 100 F1 ewe lambs from hair-breed sires would be expected to wean 180 kg more lamb than the 100 F1 ewe lambs from prolific, wool-breed sires. In the environment of southern Illinois, F1 ewe lambs of 50% hair breeding are expected to outperform most F1 ewe lambs of 100% wool breeding for lamb production."

Let me know what you think and your recommendations so that we can encourage commercial folks to use St. Croix sheep so that they can have less work and more money after selling their lamb crops. It will benefit us and our breed.

Eddie

References:

<http://medpub.litbang.deptan.go.id/index.php/jitv/article/view/99>

Performances of the first and second generation composite breed resulting from crossing between local Sumatra sheep and hair sheep. Subandriyo ., Bambang Setiadi, M Rangkuti, K Diwyanto, M Doloksaribu, Leo P Batubara, Endang Romjali, Simo Eliaser, Eko Handiwirawan

<http://portal.nifa.usda.gov/web/crisprojectpages/0194807-performance-of-crossbred-hair-sheep-ewes-under-extensive-management-in-the-tropics.html>
PERFORMANCE OF CROSSBRED HAIR SHEEP EWES UNDER EXTENSIVE MANAGEMENT IN THE TROPICS

Performance of Hair Breeds and Prolific Wool Breeds of Sheep in Southern Illinois: Lamb Production of F1 Ewe Lambs. R Bunge, D L Thomas and T G Nash
J ANIM SCI 1993, 71:2012-2017. 

Registry Office Relocation

A decision has been made to move the registry office from Milo, IA to Wamego, KS. **The Iowa office will remain open through September 26th.** The move will occur over the weekend of September 27th and 28th. The plan is to have the registry program up and running on September 29th in Wamego. New staff is being hired and will go to Iowa to learn as much as possible about the registry program prior to the relocation of the office. We expect little to no interruption of service as we transition the office to Kansas.

Please note: **the address for the Kansas office is PO Box 231, 305 Lincoln, Wamego, KS 66547. The phone number is 785-456-8500. The fax number is 785-456-8599.** Continue to mail your registry work to the Milo, Iowa office prior to September 23rd. All rush work can be emailed or faxed to the Iowa office through September 26th. If you have any questions about this transition please call Jeff Ebert, Executive Secretary at 785-458-9174.

Please keep this information for your business transactions with the registry.

St. Croix Membership

St. Croix Hair Sheep Breeders, Inc.

P.O. Box 231, 305 Lincoln, Wamego, KS 66547 • **785-456-8500**
All membership dues will be collected by Associated Registries. A membership application/registration/transfer worksheet can be found on our web site at www.stcroixsheep.org.

Serving St. Croix

Member Profile

Never underestimate a curious man and his talented wife. G.S. DeNino (Dino) is such a man. Teamed up with his wife, Debbie, they are a major cuisine force in southern Oregon. They own Dino's Italian Ristorante, which is the most successful and longest-lasting fine dining establishment in Roseburg, OR and surrounding areas. They serve traditional Italian and Pacific Northwest cuisine, paired with exceptional wine selections.

But that's just part of the story. In a former life, Dino and Debbie owned a winery and

challenge and, besides, the billy goats smelled awful. Dino considered sheep, but he knew he didn't want the hassle of docking tails and shearing them. He also associated sheep meat with mutton, and that was a definite turnoff. At the county fair, he saw hair sheep and became intrigued. Quite the researcher, he went online and checked out many hair sheep breeds. He discovered that St. Croix were used in the development of the Katahdin breed. Then he read about crosses using St. Croix sheep. When he read about St. Croix in particular, he was impressed with their mothering characteristics, parasite resistance, and gourmet meat. He wanted St. Croix sheep!

Dino looked up the Breeders List on the association website and called a local breeder. After a long conversation, he made an appointment to visit them in two days. Then he called another breeder on the list and went to see their animals. Turns out they were getting out of the sheep business, and he ended up

buying their entire flock (about a dozen animals, including a ram) and their livestock guardian dog. Keeping his appointment with his initial contact, he explained his situation and said he wanted to buy a ram to improve the genetics of his

somewhat inbred new flock. Then he attended this year's county fair and saw the St. Croix sheep being exhibited by 4-H students. One group had some nice looking St.

Croix, so he talked to those folks. He asked about buying a couple of ewes, but it turns out they were getting out of the sheep business. You guessed it—he bought their small flock as well. Now he had close to 20 sheep and an LGD. Not bad for a beginner!



provided their own wine for their restaurant. When it was financially advantageous, they sold the winery but continued the tradition of fine wines for their clientele. Also in the past they had owned a flock of 40 milk goats, and it was Debbie's chore to milk them twice a day. Thus they were familiar with animal husbandry.

About two years ago, Dino decided that 10 acres of pasture land connected to his remaining wine grape vines needed some livestock to graze it down. Cattle were out of the question because they needed too much acreage and were difficult to work with. Goats were out of the question because they'd had goats and knew that confining them was a

Of course, Dino's property wasn't exactly ready for sheep. He jumped in and built fencing and cross fencing to make separate pastures. He has stories to tell about Debbie helping him and getting tangled in the barbed wire he was stringing... After Dino finished fencing and ran water to his pastures, Debbie reminded him that several of the ewes were pregnant and would need shelter when colder and wetter weather comes to Oregon. Without breaking stride, Dino built pre-fabricated 3-sided shelters with sloping roofs. He dragged the sides and roof parts to the fields to assemble them. They are perfect for the weather that is certainly ahead.



In the course of things, Dino acquired a second LGD—a much younger and more active dog than the one that came with the first sheep flock. Huge and long-haired, this dog required hours of brushing to get the mats off. Of course, dog number one also needed/wanted to be brushed, so that added to the time. Before long, the ewes started coming up for brushing, so this act of kindness became an extended daily ritual. Dino finally put a folding chair under a shade tree and spends hours a day watching his sheep, brushing his sheep and dogs, and sipping wine.

Back to the restaurant, where Debbie is a gastronomic goddess. She makes everything from scratch, including butternut squash ravioli and gnocchi. When Dino decided to get sheep, he remarked that in the past he had raised grapes and provided wine for the restaurant, and now he was raising sheep to provide fresh, local lamb to the restaurant. Debbie researches

recipes that optimize the taste of quality lamb. They have lambs processed locally, and Debbie instructs the butcher on cutting the lamb just perfectly for their restaurant menu. She personally oversees the butchering and packaging of their lamb.

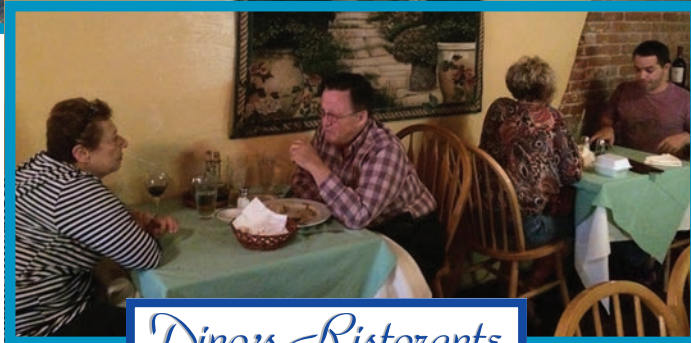
Debbie now serves one lamb special each night. The response has been incredible. Many people are amazed to see lamb on the menu and order it immediately. It's not uncommon for them to tell their friends and return with them to enjoy the special offerings. The lamb special is sold out every single night, and the restaurant's reputation is expanding.

Dino and Debbie are proud to have such a successful establishment, and their success is in part because they grow much of the produce they serve. Both embrace the "farm to table" concept and incorporate that belief in their offerings. They have heirloom tomatoes, zucchini and crookneck squash, butternut squash, beans, corn, and peppers, fresh from their garden.

The success of Dino's Italian Ristorante is absolutely a team effort. It has always been a family affair, with various aunts and grandchildren helping with everything from making gnocchi and raviolis to washing dishes. The three DeNino sons have worked in the restaurant, and now son

Stephen is head waiter, and his fiancée, Jessica, is a chef. However, Debbie is the glue of the entire enterprise—cooking, developing menus, bookkeeping, ordering, and organizing. Dino is the curious man—gregarious and inviting. When he gets an idea, he doesn't let go of it, and with Debbie's support and hard work, anything is possible.

You can see Dino and Debbie's website at www.dinosristorante.com. Salute! 



Dino's Ristorante

Italiano

St. Croix Hair Sheep



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Preparing for Ethnic Holidays

By Susan Schoenian and Richard Brozowski

According to a 2010 study funded by the American Sheep Industry Association, ethnic markets comprise a significant and growing portion of the US sheep market. For this reason, producers need to consider the dates of various ethnic holidays (or religious observances) when developing their marketing plans.

Traditionally, the demand for lamb increases at Easter. This year, both (Eastern) Orthodox and Roman (Western) Easter will occur on the same day, April 20. Often, the Easters occur on different Sundays, as different calendars are used to calculate the dates of the holidays. When targeting the Easter markets, be sure to sell the right kind of lambs (usually milk-fed and “fat”) and place lambs in the market place at least 5-10 days before the holiday. As an option, you might consider spreading your risks and sending some lambs directly after the holiday. Prices sometimes are high afterwards as supply is decreased due to the holiday.

Muslim holidays have become increasingly important to the US lamb market. There are two major Muslim holidays. Eid ul Fitr or the “Festival of Fast Breaking” follows the holy month of Ramadan, in which Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset and have celebratory meals in the evening. In 2014, this three day holiday will occur on July 29-31. The most important Muslim holiday is Eid ul Adha or the “Festival of the Sacrifice.” In 2014, it will occur October 4-7. This holiday commemorates Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son in obedience to God. Instead, he sacrificed a lamb (ram).


Muslim holidays cannot be predicted with exact certainty, since they are based on a lunar calendar and the siting of the moon. For this same reason, Muslim holidays move forward

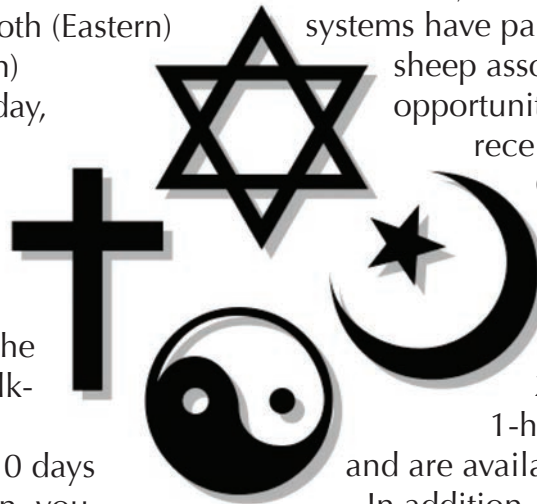
approximately 11 days each year. The type of lamb demanded by Muslim consumers varies, but is usually an older, unblemished lamb or yearling, usually an intact male. As with any market segment, it’s important to learn what potential customers want and will pay a premium for.

To help US sheep producers evaluate and develop potential markets to ethnic consumers, three University Extension systems have partnered with their respective sheep associations to help address this opportunity. Maine, Maryland and Ohio received funding from ASI’s Let’s Grow campaign in 2013 for this effort. A series of webinars on marketing lamb to ethnic consumers was presented in November and December of 2013. These webinars, each 1-hour in length, were recorded and are available for viewing.

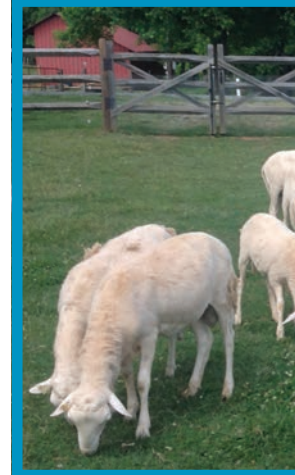
In addition, the tri-state ethnic marketing project has created several tools to help producers make better marketing decisions. Susan Schoenian Sheep & Goat Specialist for University of Maryland Extension has developed several spreadsheet templates to help producers evaluate marketing options. Richard Brzowski, Small Ruminant Specialist for the University of Maine has developed a template for producers to use in learning more about specific ethnic consumers as well as a set of questions for possible use in customer surveys.

For these tools on marketing lamb and mutton to ethnic consumers, go to <http://umaine.edu/livestock/sheep/ethnic-marketing-of-lamb-and-mutton/>.

For links to the webinar series on marketing lamb and mutton to ethnic consumers, go to <http://www.sheepandgoat.com/recordings.html#ethnic>. 



Reprinted from the *Maryland Sheep and Goat Newsletter*





2014 Annual Meeting

The 2014 annual meeting, held in historic Bethania, North Carolina, was an extraordinary event in every way. Attendees from across the country were treated to stimulating and informative speakers, a farm tour featuring heritage livestock breeds, and a relaxing gourmet dinner at Stauber Farm, home of hosts Lamar and Charles Taft.

June 6 began with a presentation by John Wilkes, a livestock marketing specialist. Wilkes presented "The Lamb Mantra" to capsule the perspective meat sheep producers should focus on. "Market focus is often high-end consumers with discriminating palates. It is vital the producers maintain high standards so those consumers have an outstanding culinary experience every time they eat their lamb. This is fundamental." Wilkes described St. Croix as "super sheep" in many ways, citing their

parasite resistance, heat resistance, prolific breeding, no need for shearing, and willingness to eat weeds. However, their smaller carcass size and slower growth are challenges for meat producers.

 Some of his recommendations for successful marketing of St. Croix lamb included emphasizing the mild taste. In addition, being slower to finish could translate to the meat's uniqueness and inherent depth of flavor that comes with time. He also recommended linking size to the sweetness of the meat.

 He mentioned that the Virgin Islands background gives the breed an interesting mystique and story. Customers love a story...

Later that morning Dr. Susan Duckett discussed the nutritional benefits of lambs finished on forage as opposed to beef finished on grain. The results of many studies indicate that lamb finished on forage exhibits:





🐏 leaner, lower total fat and saturated content

🐏 lower monosaturated fat content

🐏 higher omega-3 fat content

🐏 higher TVA+CLA content

In her professional opinion, “Lamb needs to become the LEAN, Healthy Meat!”

Friday afternoon featured a leisurely tour of Stauber Farm. Charles and Lamar Taft raise several heritage breeds of animals on the beautiful property surrounding their historic home. In addition to St. Croix sheep, there are Dominique chickens (which are on The Livestock Conservancy watch list) and Buckeye chickens, which are listed as threatened. Chicken trailers designed and built by Charles dot the landscape, surrounded by pastures of grazing St. Croix. Expansive gardens provide beautiful flowers and fresh produce for the table.

Perhaps the most remarkable portion of this event came **Friday evening**, when a gourmet

“farm to table” dinner, prepared by chef John Bobby, was served in the Tafts’ lovely home. Before dinner, guests relaxed in the shade of stately trees and shared St. Croix stories. A celebrated local artist, Sarah Watts, exhibited some of her pastel paintings of St. Croix sheep and heritage chickens.

Dinner was exquisite. Interesting appetizers, a beautiful salad, and a complex and delicious entree made the dinner an event to remember. The appetizers were made with local heritage chicken and duck eggs; the salad featured fresh local garden greens, and the entree included heritage lamb, chicken and pork.

All who attended this splendid event will attest to its being beyond description. Since a picture is worth a thousand words, we hope these photos will give you a sense of the unique experience we shared. Plans are being made for next year’s annual meeting, and we hope to see you then! **NV**



How I Got to See the Bigger Picture



some of the bigger displays were in a huge permanent tent. We had Kinder goats on one side of us and a Kune Kune sow with piglets on the other side. They drew quite the crowd all weekend!

I had thought I had things organized before we left, but not so much. My printer at home ran out of ink while printing articles about St. Croix. And I left my business cards at home. Crap! Never fear-Walmart is here. I bought an inexpensive printer with extra ink and made copies of my last business card. It

also ended up being quite “green” of me to only print out the articles as I needed them. Lemonade out of lemons!

Saturday morning took me by total surprise when the MEN Fair opened to the public. People of all shapes and sizes came swarming in to see everything,

including my St. Croix sheep. The sheep were not sure what to think of all the activity. Fortunately, I believe in bribery and had lots of treats for people to feed the sheep. All was well after that.

I talked and shared and answered questions non-stop for most of the day. Thank goodness I had brought my husband, Dennis, with me so he could get food and drinks while I attended to the fair goers.

I did get to meet Bill Frank, another St. Croix breeder from Washington. He stepped right in and helped answer questions and share his passion for the St. Croix. When I did finally get a moment to look around, I came back to find Dennis filling in for me in fine form. I had no idea he had actually been listening to me when I talked about my sheep.

Sunday at the Fair was a bit less hectic so I got to look around a little more. I had NO idea

By Yates Colby

Jumping right in—I have wanted to show my St. Croix to the public for a while. Opportunities where people would appreciate them for their many qualities are not very common in eastern Washington, where I live. I missed the chance to show them at the State Fair last year, so I had my eyes out for other options.

This spring I received an email looking for exhibitors to attend one of the four Mother Earth News Fairs in the US. It took a bit, but I got hooked up with the correct people and signed up to bring my St. Croix to the “MEN” Fair in Puyallup, WA at the wonderful State Fairgrounds.

I chose my St. Croix Hair Sheep exhibit specimens-2 rams, 2 ewes and 3 lambs. I was not too stressed because we were not competing with the sheep. I got my own informational materials together to give out. I even got business cards from other breeders to share. Kathy Bennett sent me a box of the News and Views to add to my table display so people could learn about the SCHSB.

We arrived on Friday evening and got the sheep set up in their “stalls”. The animals and



Artist Supports St. Croix Sheep

Breeders of St. Croix sheep often comment on how beautiful their animals are. Celebrated artist Sarah Watts agrees, and she translates that perspective into lovely pastel paintings of St. Croix and other heritage breeds. Of course, behind this painting there is a story...




The ewe pictured above lives on Stauber Farm in Bethania, NC, a North Carolina Heritage Farm in the western part of the state. Her triplets were born the night before this scene was recorded. The heaters in the two stalls behind are there because the lambs were born during a cold spell in April, 2014. Like the ewe pictured above, this breed is being revived, genetically managed, and preserved in the US by a group of dedicated farmer-conservationists, **people like you**.

Sarah Watts has made this lovely painting

available to members, friends, and all who value beautiful, functional animals. A giclee print of the painting above is now available for \$115, with free shipping in the continental USA. The print is 18 X 24 on a 24 X 29 heavy rag paper stock, printed in a professional studio. These are individually printed, signed and numbered


when ordered, in a limited edition of 100. Fifteen dollars of the price is forwarded to the St. Croix Hair Sheep Breeders. This print would be a treasured addition to any home and a memorable gift for someone special.

Artists' website: sarahwattsfineart.com

To order, contact Sarah Watts directly by this email: watts@wfu.edu. Sarah will send you her home address where you can send a check. Prints are shipped in a double wall thickness, oversized 4" mailing tube. 

Continued from p. 8

there was so much to see and learn in one place about things that I am actually interested in. I did get to listen to a couple of talks; I met Joel Salatin; I finally found some Delaware chicks and hatching eggs; I had the authors sign my copy of *An Introduction to Heritage Breeds* from the Livestock Conservancy; I got some free saplings and tons of literature from the hundreds of booths.

I came away from the MEN Fair with a renewed sense of what part my sheep and I play in a bigger picture of our communities. I came away with new ideas for marketing and husbandry. I came away feeling that there are a whole lot more people of a similar mind to mine than I thought. Well, maybe not that similar. That could be scary. 



Election of Officers

Members will be receiving a ballot by mail for the election of officers. It will be mailed out October 15th and should be returned by November 15th. Please return your completed ballots to:

St. Croix Hair Sheep Breeders
15863 Tiller Trail Hwy.
Days Creek, OR 97429

Who's Your Daddy? 2

Or Who Else Is Your Daddy?

By Yates Colby

Oh no! Not another article about genetic testing on St. Croix sheep! You got the point the first time, right?

You are in luck. This story is VERY different from that and involves something other than our amazing sheep. This is a saga featuring the trusted protectors of my vulnerable flocks--my guard llamas.

Not all llamas are as they appear. And so my story begins.

The first guard llama we got was a gelded male we named Mad-Eye. We purchased him with some St. Croix lambs from a very knowledgeable llama breeder. She told us to be very careful about feeding male camelids too much alfalfa hay as it can cause urinary calculi (stones) that are basically untreatable. But I feed my sheep alfalfa! So I kept Mad-Eye & obtained 3 female guard llamas as back-up. Over-kill-YES, regrets-not yet.

I got paid \$40 to take Lily the Llama off the hands of her previous owners. (I should have seen it coming.) That was in March of 2013. I got a little history on her and brought her home to guard sheep. That worked quite well until THAT FATEFUL DAY in July.

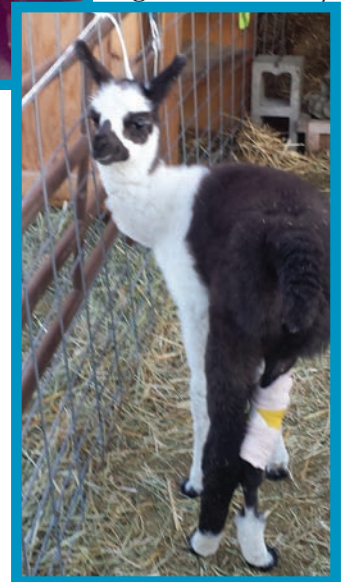
My lambs were big enough to safely allow the horses into their pasture to clean up any hay/alfalfa the sheep might have left on the ground. The llamas were already in the sheep pasture. This was the first time I had left for work with the sheep, llamas & horses together. (I should have seen it coming.)

I returned home that evening and headed out to feed the animals. I saw 2 llamas standing over something in the pasture. I thought it might

be an injured lamb they were guarding. I started taking pictures of my dedicated guards as I walked out to look. Two things quickly became apparent. One, the thing on the ground was the wrong color to be one of the lambs, and two, it had tall, erect ears. OMG! There was a baby llama lying on the ground! I know NOTHING about baby llamas! The baby did not get up, so I gently picked it up to get it on its feet. Three of the four legs worked. The right rear leg was broken. OMG! I really know nothing about baby llamas with broken legs.

I managed to make some "what should I do" phone calls before I almost hyperventilated.

Thank heavens the trailer was already hitched to the truck. I wrapped the baby's broken leg against its body



after it and Lily were in the trailer. Off I went to WSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital with my precious cargo.

The 3 hour drive gave me time to think of lots of things, which included me trying to remember what the previous owner had said about Lily's history. None of it included, "Oh,

An Economical Sheep Gate for Your Working Facilities

Submitted by Billy Hearnberger

Do you ever wish that you had a gate or two to build your working facilities or to improve what you have? I bet the costs have made you hesitate. We have pens in several areas and do not want to overinvest in multiple working facilities. So when my brother suggested this option, I gave it a try.

What do you need? Two metal wall studs used to hang drywall, three small lengths of a 2X4, a few pieces of 1X 3 or 1 X4, some wood screws and that is it. Is it a gate that will rival one that comes from companies that sell complete systems? Not in the least, but it sure makes handling sheep a lot easier for less than \$20 each. See the pictures below.

Overall view: gate closed. This one is the end gate for the entire chute run. The bungee strap holds this gate up for open.



Top detail. Bottom is the same. Each has just 4 screws and a piece of 2X4 that is around 12" long to fit the chute.

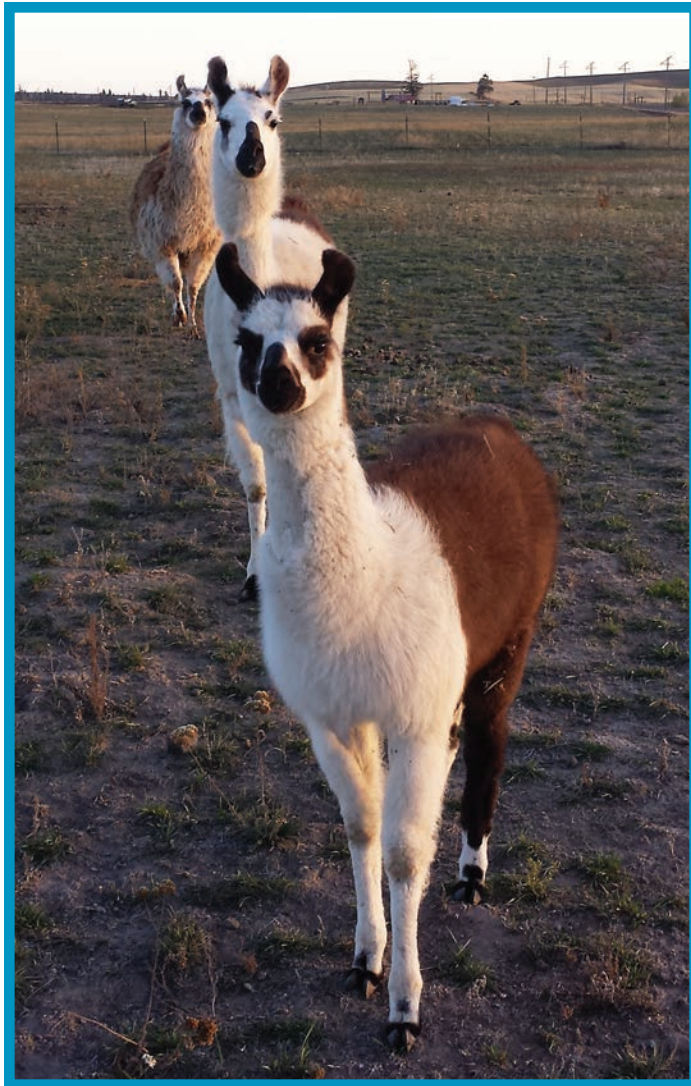


View from the back of the chute: Another gate is in the middle to help split groups.



The actual gate is one vertical 2 X 4 about 3' long with horizontal 1 X 4s screwed onto the 2X4. Leave cracks to let sheep see other sheep ahead of them to improve the speed that the sheep move through the system.

Two or three of these gates, six steel T posts and two 16' hog panels will be a quick working facility for a starter flock, a remote location or as a quick and portable setup. **(NU)**



she may be bred/pregnant." I figured out later that the previous owners had no clue she was bred; she had been exposed before they got her. They had gotten a "if you buy these 2 llamas, you get this one free" deal. (We all should have seen it coming.)

The staff and students of the Ag Animal Department of WSU were AMAZING. They answered all of my millions of questions. An orthopedic specialist came in at midnight to stabilize the baby llama's leg. I credit one of the students for the baby llama's name--Kazoo. Lily and her cria (correct name for a baby llama or alpaca) received care that was second to none.

Kazoo had surgery the next day and came home two weeks later. After a total of 6 weeks, the orthopedic pins were removed and Kazoo got to know freedom for the first time in her life. And I got to know A LOT more about the llamas that are guardians to my flock than I did before. **(NU)**

News and Views

St. Croix Hair Sheep Breeders Newsletter

15863 Tiller Trail Hwy.
Days Creek, OR 97429



www.stcroixsheep.org

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First in Internal Parasite Resistance

Kathy Bennett, Secretary
15863 Tiller Trail Hwy.
Days Creek, OR 97429
541/825-3750
rbr15863@hughes.net

Registrar:
St. Croix Hair Sheep Breeders, Inc.
P.O. Box 51, 222 Main St.
Milo, IA 50166
641/942-6402

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