



# News and Views

## President's Message

By Eddie Martin



I hate to start off the first column of 2015 without pizzazz and fireworks. But I have to be honest and tell you that my general demeanor is dull and I generally tend to fall back on old sayings, clichés and well-worn analogies! Maybe I find comfort there. I even know a few often told jokes but I will spare you that for now! So, to not break out of my shell, let me say “Happy New Year” and discuss some potential New Year’s resolutions and one analogy. We’re all St. Croix sheep people so let’s talk St. Croix New Year Resolutions. In 2015 we resolve to:

**👉 Breed better sheep.** What is a better St. Croix sheep? It is the one that best meets the purpose of the breed (meat sheep) while fitting into the breed standard. So, if you have a group of lambs, decide to “breed the best and eat the rest”. I cannot make it any simpler unless I say, don’t sell questionable or inferior sheep as breeders.

**👉 Set goals for our flocks.** Do you have requirements that your sheep have to meet to “make the cut”? For a list of just a few traits we can target, how about mothering ability, lamb vigor, milking ability, udder quality, weaning size or weight, worm resistance, feet and legs, muscling? You name it and you can set a flock standard. Choose at least one trait to improve in 2015 and you will make a positive impact for yourself and SCHSB.

**👉 Be active within the SCHSB community.** The annual meeting is coming up, we have a chat site, Facebook page, emails and phones. Let me “tighten the screws a bit” (another good cliché!) and ask you to please stay current with your membership, registration and transfers. Anything that you can do to keep us informed about you or you to be informed about others is time well spent. We learn from each other and St. Croix sheep friends are valuable friends.

**👉 Keep our sheep registered in SCHSB.** Once any of our sheep cannot be completely linked into the parentage of the registry they are not

### In This Issue

- President’s Message ..... 1
- Registration Clarification ..... 4
- SVF Foundation Preserves St. Croix..... 5
- Correct Feeding of Newborn Lambs..... 6
- Come to the Fair with Us ..... 7
- St. Croix Sheep Weather Weather Well ..... 8
- So What Do You Have to Lose? ..... 9
- Cute Puppies! ..... 10



# News and Views

St. Croix Hair Sheep Breeders, Inc.  
[www.stcroixsheep.org](http://www.stcroixsheep.org)

**President:** Eddie Martin  
[theebenezerfarm@gmail.com](mailto:theebenezerfarm@gmail.com)  
864-296-0454

**Vice President:** Lynne Vanderlinden  
[van@cavenet.com](mailto:van@cavenet.com)  
541-592-3444

**Secretary:** Kathy Bennett  
[rbr15863@hughes.net](mailto:rbr15863@hughes.net)  
541-825-3750

**Treasurer:** Richard Bennett  
[rbr15863@hughes.net](mailto:rbr15863@hughes.net)  
541-825-3750

## Directors:

Yates Colby  
[hairsheep@live.com](mailto:hairsheep@live.com)  
509-590-3627

Malia Miller  
[sheep4brains@yahoo.com](mailto:sheep4brains@yahoo.com)  
970-685-1942

Lynne Vanderlinden  
[van@cavenet.com](mailto:van@cavenet.com)  
541-592-3444

Eddie Martin  
[theebenezerfarm@gmail.com](mailto:theebenezerfarm@gmail.com)  
864-296-0454

Billy Hearnberger  
[bfhearnberger@hughes.net](mailto: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](mailto:rbr15863@hughes.net)

## SCHSB Membership

### St. Croix Hair Sheep Breeders

P.O. Box 224, Days Creek, OR

97429 • **541-825-0300**

All membership dues will be collected by St. Croix Hair Sheep Breeders Registry. A membership application/registration/transfer worksheet can be found on our web site at [www.stcroixsheep.org](http://www.stcroixsheep.org).

able to be registered. This includes knowing that the parents are registered with SCHSB before you purchase them and an assurance from the seller that your sheep and their registration will be properly transferred to you. A written purchase agreement is always good when you buy or sell sheep along with any necessary health papers for interstate transfers, bills of sale and proper ear tags to meet USDA requirements.

**Promote the breed.** I told you an old analogy was coming: here it is. A three legged stool is a stable seat on uneven ground. It just flat out works and has been used forever as an analogy for stability. So what are the proverbial three legs of the St. Croix breed. This is my opinion but they go like this:

**Leg one is purebred meat sheep.** We need to work on this quite a bit to restore some original growth and muscling in today's average St. Croix market lamb but it is possible and it is necessary. Warning: It is not a short term goal. Try to select for more muscle in your breeder rams and try to see if you can weigh your lambs at weaning and use some way to compare them. It can be as simple as a set of bathroom scales, a pencil and pad. I will be glad to provide advice and information on these topics.

**Leg two is purebred lambs for the "ethnic market".** There is no well-defined market as a whole but it is something that you should research in your area. These folks are looking for a particular type of lamb and usually want a specific size, often smaller, than what we think of in commercial markets. Some want "unblemished lambs" which mean that the tails have not been docked, rams lambs are not castrated and it can mean that

*Continued on p. 3*

## Registry Update

**EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY** please send all membership, registration, and transfer paperwork to:

SCHSB REGISTRY  
P.O. BOX 224  
DAYS CREEK, OR 97429

PHONE: 541-825-0300

Our association has acquired its own software to process memberships, registrations and transfers and will be handling these matters in-house. Our goal is to provide the highest level of service to you, our members.

If you have any questions, please call me—Kathy Bennett—at 541-825-3750.



*President's Message Continued from p. 2*

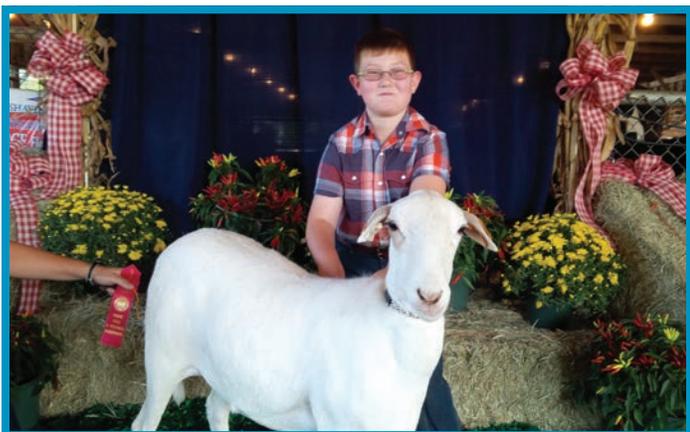
they do not have ear tags. I cannot tell you what your specific ethnic market is in your area but St. Croix sheep have the potential to meet a lot of those demands if you can grow the sheep and make the proper contacts.

**Leg three is 50% St. Croix commercial ewes.** Can it go without saying that a breeders of meat sheep need to be focused on their breed's best fit in the commercial sheep industry? St. Croix sheep will never be 300 pound Suffolk sheep. But 300 pound Suffolk sheep will also never be St. Croix sheep! Where does the St. Croix breed shine in the American sheep industry? I think we can research past university studies and see that a commercial ewe which is 50% St. Croix is a near perfect commercial ewe. She brings in hair, improved mothering ability, a slightly smaller mature size and weight to decrease how much she eats to maintain herself and her ability for out of season breeding

becomes a possibility without CIDRs. She has built in fertility, longevity and increased average number of lambs at each weaning. There is increased parasite resistance for her and her lambs. Overall flock production is increased for the commercial producer without additional costs. We need to take this fact and "run it up the flag pole" for all of the industry to see and know! I would like to promote the 50% St. Croix ewe as a part of SCHSB if I knew how to do it. I even know a tag name I'd like to call them. Hopefully in future News and Views we can showcase some commercial flocks that are benefiting from their choice to use 50% St. Croix ewes.

Well, "enough is enough"! Plenty of clichés for one article. Thank you for being a part of SCHSB, for improving the breed's future and may we all have a good year ahead. **(NV)**

Eddie



*Nicholas shows Annabelle and Allie shows Angel at the parish fair.*

# Registration Clarification

By Billy Hearnberger

I want to welcome all new and long time members alike to another Spring lambing season. Winters are long for all of us and even longer yet for some.. This past winter has been especially tough for those of us who may have lambed during the coldest months. With a lot of new babies on the ground, I would like to remind you and make all aware of the registration process here at SCHSB. We have had many requests from those wanting to register babies and/or ewes and rams into our association who may be registered in another association or have sires or dams registered in another association. Following are the guidelines that have been established by your BOD for doing so. We want to make it as easy as possible for those wanting to register sheep while still maintaining the integrity of our historical data base.

Any person who wishes to register St. Croix Hair Sheep with the St. Croix Hair Sheep Breeders

(SCHSB) must be a member with the current year's dues paid in full. Animals which are the offspring of two identified St. Croix registered parents are eligible for SCHSB registration if:

- 👤 they are descendants from registered St. Croix sire and dam,
- 👤 they possess the proper physical characteristics (listed below),
- 👤 copies of registration papers of animals registered with another association are submitted with application,
- 👤 applications for registration or transfer of offspring whose parents are registered with another association are submitted with copies of both parents' pedigrees (if one parent is already



registered with SCHSB, submit only copy of non-SCHSB parent pedigree).

We are now in control of our own registrations and are no longer dependent on any other registry to conduct our

business. We are excited to begin a new year and look forward to a much smoother and much improved service for all our members. If you have questions about registering any of your sheep, we encourage you to call or email Matt Morgan at [morganmatt@aol.com](mailto:morganmatt@aol.com) or 502-648-9484.

## PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

👤 Fiber – Hair that is shed annually and that is free from permanent wooly fiber.

👤 Color—All white except pigment in the hooves, skin on lips, muzzle and around the eyes, colored hair limited to not more than one-fourth of the ear tip, or a spot anywhere on the body or head less than the size of a quarter. Sheep meeting this color specification shall be designated with a “W” following their registered name.

👤 Sheep exhibiting more color than the “white” description shall be designated with a “C” following their registered name.

👤 Polled – Sheep exhibiting no scurs shall be designated with a “P” following their registered name.

👤 Scurs – Sheep exhibiting scurs which are loosely attached to the head shall be designated with an “S” following their registered name. No horned sheep will be eligible for registration.

👤 Soundness – Freedom from physical defects including mouth, udder, testicles, and back, legs and feet. **NU**

# SVF Foundation preserves Saint Croix sheep in a unique genetic preservation program

The mission of SVF Foundation is to preserve germplasm (embryos, semen, cells and blood) of rare and endangered breeds of livestock.

Though they've been with us since the earliest days of animal domestication, "heritage livestock" are becoming increasingly rare, and many breeds of sheep, goats, pigs, and cattle are facing imminent extinction. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) currently estimates that one breed per week is being lost forever.

In nature's library of genetic diversity, heritage livestock are some of the oldest "volumes" of unimproved, naturally selected traits—resistance to parasites, good birthing and mothering instincts, adaptability to harsh environments, and uncommonly good-tasting meat.

Why are these traits so important to preserve? As the commercial food industry concentrates on fewer and fewer breeds of livestock, the world's food supply faces numerous challenges and potential crises. In a worst-case scenario, these dominant varieties—inbred for uniformity and a feedlot existence—could be decimated by an infectious disease as a result of their dangerously narrow gene pool.

SVF Foundation preserves heritage traits in the event of such a calamity, and could reawaken a breed with its full genetic diversity within one generation. Much like a seed bank protects plant diversity and food security, SVF is one of the few institutions to collect and store animal germplasm in a frozen state for future use. SVF supports "on the hoof" conservation of heritage livestock by introducing breeders to ever-wider markets, as well



as educating the public to the importance of diversity in our animal agriculture.

Located in Newport, Rhode Island, on historic Surprise Valley Farm (aka "Swiss Village"), SVF was founded by Dorrance Hamilton in 2002.

The foundation is sited on 45 scenic acres and operates in collaboration with Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University.

SVF recently announced an exciting new partnership with the Smithsonian Institute (SI). The SI is currently building a new cryo repository at its research facility in Front Royal, VA, which will house the SVF germplasm collection long-term into the future.

This year, SVF began work with Saint Croix sheep, making them the 26th rare breed to be represented in the gene bank. Several flocks and bloodlines have been selected so far, including a few beautiful ewes and a ram from Charles Taft's flock at Stauber Farm. A total of 3 rams and 29 ewes from 5 flocks are currently residing at the SVF for collection this fall and winter, plus an impressive 11 lambs born from 5 ewes which arrived bred this summer – no lambing assistance needed! Next spring, many of these Saint Croix will be available for purchase or trade for those breeders who would benefit from incorporating new genetics into their flocks.

To learn more about SVF Foundation and the Smithsonian & SVF Biodiversity Preservation

Project, please visit [www.svffoundation.org](http://www.svffoundation.org). If you have St. Croix sheep which may be important for this project, or are looking to obtain stock once they have passed through the program, please email SVF's Program Director, Sarah Bowley, [sarah@svffoundation.org](mailto:sarah@svffoundation.org) 



# The Critical Importance of Correct Newborn Lamb Feeding

## Point #1: Holding the bottle correctly

In an article dealing with correctly feeding a newborn lamb, you would expect colostrum to be the number one point. Colostrum is that life protecting first milk from a newly freshened, or newly lambed ewe that gives the baby not only nourishment but also life saving antibodies. Still, if that all important colostrum is not fed correctly, then the very life of the newborn is at risk.

The idea of holding the bottle correctly might seem simplistic; however, let me explain why it is important to hold the bottle in a specific position. At the back of the lamb's mouth, the epiglottis sits at a point where the trachea and the esophagus split. The trachea carries oxygen from the nose and mouth to the lungs. The esophagus, which lies dorsally (behind) and slightly to the left of the trachea, leads to the four stomach digestive system.

That epiglottis! It is the reason for this first point. The epiglottis is essentially a trap-door which normally points upward at the base of the tongue. When swallowing, the epiglottis folds over the top of the trachea to prevent liquids and food from entering the trachea and further down, the lungs.

In these pictures you can see that feeding bottle lambs with their heads extended upright can

allow milk to flow down the trachea. Feeding when the head is at or below the point of the withers will create a physical path to assist the epiglottis closure, and the milk will be sent correctly down the esophagus and on to the digestive system.

## Point #2: Into the mouth and into the correct stomach!

Now that you understand the dynamics of correct bottle position, we can be amazed at the miracle of a really good design of a newborn

lamb. Up to about three weeks after birth, the first three stomachs do not have muscle development to accomplish peristaltic movements -- rhythmic rippling of muscles to move food through the stomach -- or the bacteria necessary to break down nourishment. Here's the unique and amazing proof of a good design: the esophageal groove. The sucking reflex causes the esophageal groove, which is at the end of the esophagus, and before the first stomach, to close. This closure causes the milk to bypass the first three stomachs and allow the milk to be deposited directly into the fourth and only stomach that is mature and ready to digest colostrum and the first feedings in an amazing way. For only about 24 hours after birth the fourth stomach, the abomasum, is lined with epithelial cells that are able to absorb the antibodies and nutrients from colostrum. This ability to absorb nutrients from colostrum is called pinocytosis. Once normal bacteria is picked up by the newborn lamb and enters the digestive

system, the brief process of pinocytosis ends.

The esophageal groove only functions for about three weeks after birth. According to *The Nature and Control of Gastric Motility in Ruminants*, D.A. Titcher, 1976: consistency in feeding help in the closure of the esophageal groove.

A regular schedule of feeding times, physical environment, and even "mommy talk" (speaking to the lamb) helps to trigger the groove closure and is another important point of correct bottle feeding.

The lamb should have access to good quality hay or pasture and clean water within days of birth. By the third week the lamb has ingested enough healthy bacteria and roughage to populate and enlarge the first three stomachs. During this time the stomach musculing matures



and normal peristaltic movement begins. If milk were to have been deposited into the first stomach before this three week period, the immature stomach would not have been able to move the milk. The milk would ferment and cause a toxic condition that likely would lead to the death of the lamb.

### Point #3: How much? How long?

In my 30+ years of experience with ruminants I have developed a successful feeding program of at least 2 ounces of colostrum within the first hour, or at least 8 ounces within the first 12 hours. Pipestone Veterinarian Supply recommends a minimum of 7 - 8 ounces for

immunoglobulin protection and up to 32 ounces in the first 18 hours.

Even though the process of pinocytosis ceases after 24 hours, the lamb will still benefit from colostrum feedings. The colostrum will coat the digestive system walls with serum immunoglobulins that protect against bacteria, helping to prevent scours.

Don't over feed! Feeding more than the abomasum can hold could allow a situation where the excess could be pushed up the esophagus, push under the epiglottis, and seep down the trachea and into the lungs.

*Continued on p. 11*

## Come to the Fair With Us!

Mother Earth News will be holding its wildly popular trade fair June 6-7 at the Linn County Expo in Albany, Oregon. SCHSB has been invited to host a booth where we will introduce St. Croix sheep to an entirely new audience. The average attendee is interested in small scale agriculture, livestock suitable for homesteading, gardening, and all things akin to a sustainable lifestyle. Hundreds of exhibitors and vendors will be offering related products and services.

SCHSB will have two pens of St. Croix (hopefully some lambs, too!) so folks can have a real hands-on experience. There will be educational handouts and on-going "workshops" in the form of question and answers sessions. Nothing like live, cute critters to start a discussion!

Over the two-day event, hundreds, if not thousands, of fair-goers will see and learn about St. Croix sheep, most for the first time. With the current sustainable living and locavore movement sweeping the nation, this is a tremendous opportunity to make the name "St. Croix" a familiar one.

Things to help your experience be the best possible:



📍 On Saturday night (June 6), your SCHSB Board of Directors will hold the Annual General Meeting and no-host dinner at the Cascade Grill (adjacent to the Fair) at 7:00 PM. Please email Lynne Vanderlinden at [van@cavenet.com](mailto:van@cavenet.com) should you wish to attend.

📍 If you plan to stay overnight, Comfort Suites is located next door. You can contact them directly at 541-928-2053 for reservations.

📍 A 2-day entry wristband can be pre-ordered for \$20 from Mother Earth News by calling 800-234-3368. Wristbands are \$30 at the gate. Kids under 18 are free. The wristband includes access to all demonstrations and workshops.

You probably have a million questions about the MEN Fair. The best way to get them answered is to go to [motherearthnews.com](http://motherearthnews.com) and click on "Fairs". When that page comes up, go to the top and click on "Albany, OR, June 6-7, 2015". That page has a FAQ link, a link to the vendors and services, maps of how to get there and booth locations, and just about anything else you might wish to know.

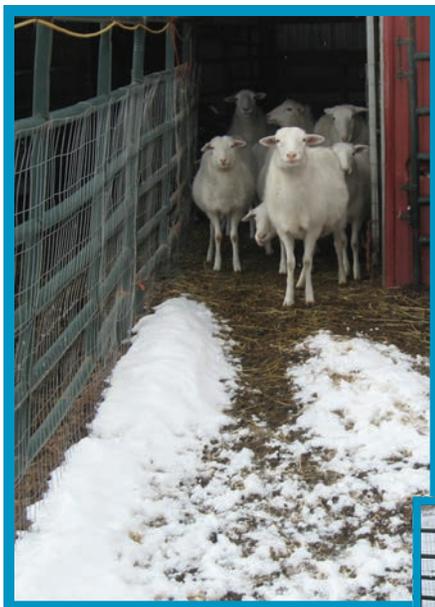
Come help us man the booth, share your knowledge and experience, visit with fellow SCHSB members and have LOTS of FUN! See you there!! 📍 *Lynne Vanderlinden*

## Views from You

Association members have unique opportunities to view various aspects of raising and marketing St. Croix. From time to time, we will feature some of those observations and perspectives.

### St. Croix Sheep Weather Weather Well

In the Spring 2014 newsletter we featured Karen Zell, Weldwood Farm, Janesville, Wisconsin, who shared her experience dealing with lambing during the Polar Vortex (5' ft. of snow, -26 temperatures). She had taken some innovative measures to keep everyone as warm and dry as possible. Thought we'd check back with her to see if Mother Nature is being a bit kinder this year. Karen reported as follows:



Hah!—warm temps sound like a foreign concept to me! This winter started out early; first week in Nov. below zero and single digits during the day. My new plan was to breed three ewes for November lambing and three ewes for April on each side of the really cold weather. I make plans and God laughs..... First ewe lambbed about two weeks early in late October and delivered one ewe lamb live and second one dead. No suck reflex and the ewe got pretty sick also; took about 2

weeks to get them both going well. Naturally, the second ewe had two ram lambs during that really cold week, but lambs are healthy and doing well. Third ewe did not catch, so no lambs there. Put her and the other 3 ewes in with the ram around Thanksgiving and told him to get busy on those April lambs! Keeping my fingers crossed that we have some real, old-



fashioned spring weather.

Last summer was wetter than most and made pastures richer than other years with no dry down, I did not realize how fat my ewes were, but I have to work harder and at watching how the pasture condition is and feed less or off pasture more as ewes that are too fat just have more difficulties.

**Now we'll move to my neck of the woods, Oregon, where just the opposite is happening.**

We are in our third (some say fourth) year of drought. Temperatures are way above normal (70 as I write this) and I haven't seen a single snowflake. We depend on our snow pack for

summer irrigation and well water. Last year my well went dry in May(!) and the watermaster cut off agriculture water, so the fish could have what was left. This summer looks to be even worse. You don't even want to know the price of hay! The sheep are shedding like crazy; more like June/July. Every time a town dweller revels about our "beautiful weather," it takes all I have not to scream.

The message here is just how wonderfully our St. Croix adapt to climate extremes. Karen will be dealing with wet pastures while I deal with dry ones this summer, but the hardiness of both our critters will see them through with flying colors. 

---

*Submitted by Lynn Vanderlinden*

---

## So What Do You Have to Lose?

The following was spotted on a non-St. Croix chat site, and I thought it interesting enough to pass along. It brought to mind swaddling of a human baby. The link at the end is the study referred to in the article.

I've had a reasonable lambing, but over the weekend I had the stereotypical set of twins where one was bright and vigorous, but the other just couldn't seem to get it together. They were born quickly, but I wasn't right there. Their mother had a bag out, and an hour later both of them were out and the bright one was up, and that's how I found them.

It's been so rotten cold that this year's SOP has been to make sure they get some groceries straightaway, and I had time enough to let them suck a bottle, so that's what I did. They both nursed, but the dumb one was a pain, and continued to be. So, I was talking to my veterinarian wife about something I'd seen on the internet regarding a dose of dexamethasone as an agent to reduce brain swelling in dumb lambs. After the loud clicking of her eyeballs rolling back subsided, she said "You do realize that the neonate has some of the highest circulating steroid levels already, don't you?"

She then told me about some research in racehorses suggesting that dumb foals are a result of too rapid passage through the birth canal, thus preventing the long squeeze of normal delivery. The solution to this, evidently, has been to cast the foal using ropes, and more or less truss it up like a turkey for about twenty minutes, during which time the foal almost seems to pass out. When they wake up, they're like different animals. Evidently, this experience releases some kind of a very, very specific steroid- which there is no synthetic analog for- which jumpstarts their brains and away they go.

So I figured what the hell, and I trussed her up like a suckling pig in the birthing position, and she settled immediately. I left her that way for probably 25 minutes, then I untied and released her. She was perky, but it was 10 pm and I didn't feel like fooling with her. She was vastly improved at 7 am, and is indistinguishable from her twin now. I'll be the first to say that my sample size is small, that she might have been coming out of it anyway, all of that, but the fact remains that she's better. 

---

<http://ucdavis.edu/ucdavis-today/2015/february/03-foals.html>

---



*Sheep photos submitted by Joel Swecker*

# Cute Puppies!

*Photos Submitted by Matt Morgan*



*Critical Importance Continued from p. 7*

Dr.G.F.Kennedy of Pipestone Veterinary, says the average lamb should be able to drink 8 ounces on an empty stomach. Gradually increase the amount of milk as the lamb grows. By three weeks the lamb should be offered a maximum of 12 ounces of milk and should be nibbling hay and getting nourishment other than milk to help develop the first three stomachs.

So: hold that bottle so the milk will go where it should; get colostrum into the lamb as soon as possible; set up conditions to help this amazing design to work at it's best... and love that sweet little bottle baby! 

---

Contributed by Jan Bothwell, OR St. Croix member.



# News and Views

---

*St. Croix Hair Sheep Breeders Newsletter*

15863 Tiller Trail Hwy.  
Days Creek, OR 97429



[www.stcroixsheep.org](http://www.stcroixsheep.org)

- Easy Care
- No Shearing



## 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

***Sheep That Work Better For You!***