



Cotswold Sheep Society Newsletter

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This Newsletter is independently edited and readers should be aware that the views expressed within its pages do not necessarily reflect the views held by Council.



Quintuplets !

EDITORIAL

Mark Pettitt

The sun is shining and Spring has arrived. It's that lovely time of year when the lambs are jumping into the air and running around like crazy things in the early evenings.

You don't need a Facebook account to have a look at the Cotswold Sheep Society Facebook page. Just type the following into your internet browser: www.facebook.com/CotswoldSheepSociety for information pictures and videos. You can also see how the Quintuplets, shown on the front page, have progressed.

I've never been to 'The Cotswold Sheep Society Show and Sale' but will definitely be going this year. If you are thinking of going to sell some of your flock then have a read of Davina's article which contains useful information and tips.

In the last Newsletter, I included an article on how to prepare to avoid problems with lambing. Now that most of our lambs have arrived, I have included another article that I found interesting, about the problem of lambs scouring and whether it is worms or coccidiosis, again with the kind permission of XLVets.

Don't forget, it's the 125th anniversary of The Cotswold Sheep Society which we will be commemorating in various ways – read about in Council Corner.

If you see something that might be of interest to other members, or would like to contribute an article about your own experiences, please do let me know. I would love to hear from you.

THE COTSWOLD SHEEP SOCIETY SHOW AND SALE

Davina Stanhope

Our annual Show and Sale will be held at Cirencester Market on Friday 5th / Saturday 6th August 2016. This being our 125th Anniversary year and also because it is the showcase of the breed, we really need to make it special, and for the future. We need the best possible sheep entered to represent the breed in order to achieve the best prices.

It would be lovely to have a few more breeders entering stock for sale, if you are worried about what to bring, then any Council member will be willing to offer help and advice, but to help in the first instance I have a few points to be considered.

First and foremost, if you are considering offering a sheep for sale it is a good idea to ask yourself why you are considering selling this sheep. Silly question you may say, however, it is usually because you have too many sheep. Consider if the sheep is one that you would have liked to keep in your own flock and is a good Cotswold, rather than cute and friendly with possibly a fault. If it is not good enough to keep in your own flock, then is it good enough for someone else? Personally I only sell anything that I would keep in my own flock; anything not up to this standard goes to the butcher. One of our older respected members once said, 'To keep a rare breed we must be able to eat them.' This is very true as it is a sad fact that we cannot keep every single lamb born, nor any that develop faults.

Council have agreed the following to help you make your selection, and helps to ensure that good breeding sheep do not go for slaughter.

Upset Prices:

- Senior Rams £150.00
- Shearling Rams £150.00
- Ram Lambs £100.00
- Senior Ewes £100.00
- Shearling Ewes £100.00
- Ewe Lambs £85.00

Recommended Weights:

- Shearling Rams minimum of 85 - 90kgs
- Shearling Ewes minimum of 80kgs

- Lambs minimum weight of 45kgs, but it does depend on the date that they were born. As a guide a 5 month old lamb should have reached at least this weight.

A weigh bridge will be available at the market should there be any concerns over weight.

Currently on the Friday all sheep to be offered for sale are Card Graded. This is an inspection by two experienced people and every sheep is checked to see if it is a good sheep and that it has good Cotswold traits. Please refer to the Breed Standard and Undesirable Characteristics in the Flock Book. Each sheep is awarded a coloured “card”: Red being awarded to a correct sheep, Blue to a sheep with a minor fault and Yellow to a sheep with a more serious fault. You should be harder on Rams than Ewes as they influence the whole flock, whilst a minor fault in a ewe can be corrected by the use of a good ram - a fault in a ram can ruin your whole flock and take a few years to correct. An article on selection of ram lambs was in a previous Newsletter; if you wish for a copy of this, please contact the Secretary.

Council are considering changing the Card Grading to a Breed Inspection next year and would like your input; it will be on the agenda at the AGM so please come along, we would like your views.

Once the Card Grading is finished, the show goes ahead; only red carded sheep are allowed entry. Everyone can relax after this - we have a sociable get together with ‘Bring and Share’ food and drink – all members are welcome – you don’t have to be a buyer or a seller!

Some of us stay on site, but if you are not and go to B&B or such like, please ask one of us to look after your sheep. It is not acceptable to go off and leave your sheep and then turn up just before the sale next day. Not only is it not fair on the sheep, but it looks bad to anyone coming in early to view the sheep. Any of the people staying on site will be happy to feed and water your sheep - you just have to ask.

Preparation of Sheep for the Show and Sale

It is very important that sheep put forward are correctly presented as this does have an impact on the pre-sale card grading / inspection, for example dirty legs can in some cases look like coloured legs and cause the sheep to get a lesser card. All sheep obtaining a Red Card can go forward for sale, Blue Cards cannot. Obviously placings in the show can make a difference in the price obtained in the sale ring. The Champion will be sold first, and the Reserve Champion 2nd, after that sheep will be sold in catalogue order.

A Few Pointers:

- Do check your sheep before entering them, read the “Ideal Cotswold” in the Flock Book and also Points of Disqualification And Undesirable Characteristics, this has been updated for the 2015 Flock Book to include “Coloured legs” – legs should be covered in white hair and not brown or covered in spots, “Teats” - 2 only are required, 4 are undesirable (extra teats are often blind, but lambs will latch on to them and simply starve).
- If in doubt of any aspect, do contact any of the Council Members who will be pleased to help and offer advice.
- Wash legs and faces
- Trim tails.
- Trim fringes if long and untidy, especially around the eyes so that the sheep can see.
- Remove stains from fleece and any debris
- Trim feet
- It is a good idea to mention on the entry form in the “comments” box any treatments that the sheep has had, for example worming and with what product, also the date. Also mention fly control, for example Crovect and if the sheep are on the Heptavac P+ system. Any new purchase should be wormed as a matter of course, but it does help a new purchaser to know the history.
- Try to get to the Market in time for the sheep to have a rest before the inspection - if they have travelled a long way they will be tired and this shows in the pasterns, they may appear to be down, but after a rest they often are correct.
- Take enough feed and hay, a small amount of straw is provided, but it is a good idea to take extra, clean sheep look better than dirty ones!
- Take a white coat for showing and for taking your sheep in the sale ring.

Finally – enjoy the day! Seeing your sheep selling well is extremely rewarding!!

Worms or cocci – what’s causing my lamb scour?

Roger Scott, of Scott Mitchell Associates, Hexham, advises what to do if your lambs are scouring – The Northern Farmer

Article kindly supplied by XLVets

If it’s not worms, it must be cocci right?

My lambs are scouring and I’m sure it’s not worms so it must be coccidiosis?

Is this right? Well, a few scenarios spring to mind.

Scenario one: Lambs at four to six weeks old start scouring. You worm them. They continue scouring. So is it cocci? It could be. But it might not be, they may have Nematodirus and you may have underdosed them with wormer. You may have wormer resistance (but to be fair, despite huge amounts of resistance in most worms, Nematodirus isn’t usually a problem for this (yet)! Could it be a nutritional scour from too much milk? Maybe, but not usually, so it might be cocci!

Scenario two: Lambs at four to six weeks start scouring. You do a worm egg count. No worm eggs are seen but there are some cocci oocysts (eggs). It’s cocci then? It might be, but the cocci may be a harmless strain – you need to know which strain it is. The level of infection may be too low to be a problem – the lab needs to actually count the oocysts. It might be Nematodirus – remember the young Nematodirus worm causes a lot of damage well before it starts laying eggs so you can’t diagnose Nematodirus in such young lambs from a worm eggs count. Again, it may be a nutritional scour from too much milk? Maybe, but probably not, so again, it might be cocci.

Scenario three: Lambs at three to four months old start scouring. You worm them. They’re still scouring. You may not have given it long enough (two days isn’t enough). You may have wormer resistance – these days that’s the most likely explanation. You may have underdosed. Could it be cocci? A worm egg count at this age will tell you if it’s worms or not. But what if cocci oocysts are detected? Again, they may be a harmless strain or they may be in small harmless numbers but at this age the lambs may be too old to have cocci. By this this age, they are often toughened to it but if they’ve been on anticoccidial buckets they may not have developed immunity to cocci. So, they may have cocci. Could it be grass? Probably not! It’s highly likely its wormer resistance.

Too many questions, too many answers, so let’s keep it simple. These are a few key questions and answers:

How old are lambs when they get cocci? Between two to eight weeks, but sometimes later depending on immunity interference from anticoccidial buckets.

How old are the lambs when they get Nematodirus? Four to 12 weeks, but sometimes later depending on weather.

Can you diagnose early Nematodirus with a worm egg count? No they aren't laying eggs yet – you need a post mortem.

Can you diagnose late Nematodirus with a worm egg count? Yes

Can you diagnose cocci with a worm egg count? Yes, but the lab needs to count them to see if they're a bad strain or not.

Can you treat cocci? Yes, ask your Vet - some treatments are better than others.

Do wormers always kill worms? Definitely not – wormer resistance is a huge problem.

What's the correct treatment for Nematodirus until we hear otherwise? White drench (not combined with flukicide)

When should you worm for Nematodirus? When the disease forecast says so (scops.org.uk/nematodirus-forecast) or if they scour and it's not cocci.

When should you worm for standard gut worm? When your egg count says so, not before. Don't over-worm.

Slow Roast Shoulder of Lamb

Ingredients

(2 kg) lamb shoulder, bone

1 bunch fresh rosemary (a large bunch, or two small bunches)

1 bulb of garlic, unpeeled (use 2 bulbs if you love garlic)

olive oil

sea salt, crushed

black pepper, freshly ground

Sauce

1 tablespoon flour

500 ml chicken stock (from a can or carton is fine)

2 tablespoons capers, soaked, drained and chopped (optional, I hate capers, so I leave them out)

1 bunch of fresh mint, leaves picked off and very finely chopped (a large bunch, or 2 small bunches)

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

Method

First, preheat your oven to as hot as it will go. Now, using a sharp knife, slash through the fat layer of the lamb at about 1" (2.5cm) intervals and then do it in the opposite direction to form a diamond pattern. Pour a little olive oil into the base of a high-sided (2-3" deep) roasting tin and then add half of the rosemary sprigs - I guess I used about 12 x 5" sprigs on the bottom, and another 10-12 on top. Scatter over half of the unpeeled garlic cloves (a full bulb if you're a garlic freak, half a bulb if you're a little more timid). Now place the lamb on top, pour over enough oil to coat the lamb and rub it in with your hands. Sprinkle with sea salt and black pepper and rub into the lamb. Scatter the rest of the rosemary and garlic cloves on top of the lamb. Cover the roasting tin tightly with aluminium foil (you may need several layers to make sure it's tightly covered), then place on the centre rack of the pre-heated oven. Immediately turn the heat down to 170°C (325°F) or slightly lower if you have a fan oven - I cooked mine at 160°C in my fan forced oven. Cook for four hours.

When the lamb is cooked, remove from the oven, remove the foil, and you will find the large bone simply pulls away clean. Now, use two forks to separate the meat from the smaller bones, and pile the meat onto a plate - being careful to remove any small bones. Cover meat and keep warm while you prepare the sauce. Remove and discard any sprigs of rosemary in the baking tin - (don't worry about the little leaves

that have fallen off the sprigs). Remove the roasted garlic cloves to a plate and let them cool a little. Pour off all but about 1 tablespoon of oil, but try to ensure that you leave the cooking liquor in the pan. Now, pop the roasted garlic cloves out of their skins and add to the roasting pan and smash up with the back of a wooden spoon. Place the roasting pan on the stove (I place it over two hobs) over a medium heat. Stir in 1 tablespoon of flour, then stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, gradually add the chicken stock. Boil, stirring, for about 5 minutes (this doesn't make a thick gravy, so don't be concerned if it doesn't thicken much). Now add the finely chopped mint and the red wine vinegar and the capers if using. Boil briefly and then pour into a jug remember this is more of a sauce than a gravy, so it won't be thick. Serve the lamb, giving each person about 3-4 tablespoons of the sauce poured over the top of the meat.

The View from Here

Mark Pettitt

Our smallholding has just dried up after the wettest winter on record. With 20 lambs, we needed the grass to get growing as quickly as possible so we ordered some over-seeding grass to spread on some bald patches as well as 10 bags of urea to get things moving. The grass is growing, but not quite as fast as we would like. Our five acres is split into four fields and we are keeping the sheep on one field for about three weeks at a time before moving them to the next. The lambs love the feeling of fresh grass under their feet. They are growing well but we didn't castrate the ram lambs this year so we will soon need to split up the lambs from the ewes and the ram lambs from the ewe lambs.

We will definitely sell all the ram lambs for meat again this year but not sure about the ewe lambs. We are looking for more land. If we are successful, we will keep any ewe lambs worth breeding from and buy a few more ewes or shearlings, otherwise we will take the best to 'The Cotswold Sheep Society Show and Sale' and the rest sell for meat.

Moles love my fields and I am constantly putting down traps. It amazes me how quickly the molehills pop up if left un-checked. I do admire them though and quite like the idea that they are aerating the soil and providing drainage channels but I can't afford to lose any valuable grass. This morning I watched while the earth was being shovelled up from below. No sign of the mole and I didn't like to disturb him.

COUNCIL CORNER

- **125th Anniversary of the founding of the Cotswold Sheep Society** - Council have looked at various ways of marking this important year.
 - There will be a Grand Raffle, which will run through the summer and be drawn at Moreton Show on 3rd September. 2 books of raffle tickets are included with the Newsletter and we would be very grateful if you would sell these to raise much needed funds for the Society. Further books of raffle tickets can be obtained from the Secretary. Prizes include 2 Family Passes to the stunning Elizabethan gem, Burghley House, Stamford, (home to one of our newest flocks) with ‘Cream Tea’ in the Orangery restaurant afterwards, on a day of your choosing. Henry Cole & Co. Ltd. have most generously offered a half tonne tote of Premium Sheep Blend feed. Other prizes include freezer ready boxed lamb, hampers of all sorts, including one perfect for any ‘Chocolate lover’! Any additional prizes will be very gratefully received, please contact the Secretary with the details.
 - There will be special commemorative rosettes for all exhibitors at both the Society Summer Show and at Moreton Show.
 - We would like to have as many sheep at Moreton Show as possible – maybe we could achieve a magic 125 entries! This would make it a special and most memorable day for the Society, so even if you have never shown before, please do enter Moreton this year!
- **The Show and Sale at Cirencester Market (Friday 5th/Saturday 6th August)**. This event is our ‘shop window’ and it is vital to the future of the breed that we showcase quality breeding stock. To assist members in putting forward correct sheep, please read Davina Stanhope’s article concerning the Show and Sale elsewhere in the Newsletter. If you have any questions about selecting and preparing stock, please contact the Secretary.
- **The Annual General Meeting (Sunday 24th July)** - This will take place at **Burghfield House, Bourton on the Water** after the Society Summer Show and ‘Bring and Share’ lunch. The AGM Notice is included with this Newsletter, as is a Council Nomination Form. Being on Council is extremely rewarding and good fun too, so please do consider putting your name forward. You really do not have to be a sheep expert to join Council, but just have an enthusiasm for the breed, a willingness to get involved with events and an interest in contributing to Council’s deliberations.
- **The Society Summer Show** - The entry form is included with the Newsletter. Please do consider entering even if you have never shown your sheep before,

as there are Novice classes designed especially for you. Showing is a wonderful way to see how your sheep shape up, and find out what you can do to improve your flock, or indeed you may discover that your sheep are already winners! If you prefer to leave your sheep at home, you can always bring a fleece or two to exhibit instead.

- **‘Frog Racing’ Fund Raiser for Berkeley Show (Saturday 11th June)** – Any help our members can give to support future Berkeley Shows will be greatly appreciated. This is an important show in the Society’s diary of events, and it would be an enormous shame to lose it. To raise funds there will be a ‘Frog Racing’ evening (where no frogs will be stressed, or in any way injured!) in the Tockington Village Hall, near Thornbury. The evening will begin at 7.30. Tickets - £10 (participants will need to bring along a £20 - £30 float, but there is always the chance you will end the evening a winner!) For further details, please contact Lynne and Steve Parkes on Tel: 01451 830461
- **Trademark** – A reminder to anyone considering joining the Pedigree Lamb and/or the Wool Schemes that they should contact Richard Mumford for more information Tel: 01386 860373. We would encourage as many members as possible to join the schemes as this will strengthen our Trademarks in the future should anyone try to infringe them.
- **Website** – A reminder that members wishing to advertise their businesses on the website, may do so without charge. Please contact Angela Reid at web@cotswoldsheepsociety.co.uk.
- **Facebook** – If you have interesting stories and photos of Cotswolds you would like to share, you can forward them to Angela Reid at the above email address, or you can easily add them to the Society Facebook page yourself. If you need help with this, please contact Angela. Hundreds of people do already look at our Facebook page, and the more photos added, the more comments and ‘Likes’ we get, will help to raise the profile of the Society and our sheep. Indeed, a recent photo of ‘Cotswold Quintuplets’ has reached an unbelievable 95,500 people, many of whom will have heard of Cotswold sheep, and the Society, for the first time because of that one photo.

SHEEP FOR SALE

This is a free service for buyers and sellers. The list is constantly being updated, so please do contact the Secretary, or check the website, if you wish to buy.

RAMS FOR HIRE: Contact Mr Steve Parkes, 47 King George's Field, Stow On The Wold, Gloucestershire, Tel. 01451 830461 for further details.