



# Cotswold Sheep Society Newsletter

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## Council Officers

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Secretary - Mrs. S. Webb    Treasurer - Mrs. L. Parkes

## Council Members

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Mr. S. Parkes, Mrs. M. Pursch, Mr. J. Dale

## Editor

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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.



Edie Welch (aged 11) with Ewe Tree Lucky at Stroud Show

# EDITORIAL

Mark Pettitt

I'm sitting in my living room looking out on a sunny morning with the golden autumn leaves gently blowing in the breeze. We've had a great summer and autumn has got off to a good start. The temperature across the UK has been about 2 degrees higher than average, resulting in good grass growth to finish off our lambs.

Although it may seem a bit early to be thinking about lambing, for many it starts within the next few weeks so I have included an article about ewe nutrition leading up to lambing.

We are all guilty of standing by and letting things happen about us. Kate Elliot, in her article below, warns us of the consequences of not getting involved with the running Cotswold Sheep Society and what you are missing out on.

If you haven't already done so, don't forget to put in your nomination for the Frank Williams Trophy. Read below about this Trophy and the previous winners.

If you didn't manage to get to the Show and Sale in August, you missed a treat so read Angela Reid's article below.



Davina and Andrew were married on 15th October - the Society would like to offer them many congratulations, and to wish them a long and happy life together.

# SHOW AND SALE 2016

The Annual Breed Show and Sale took place on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> August at Cirencester Market under the auspices of Voyce Pullin's Rare and Native Breeds Sale. The previous afternoon the sheep had been card graded by Steve Parkes and Caroline Cunningham. It was soon apparent that the sheep were all good breeding stock as 39 red, 3 blue, and no yellow or white cards were awarded. The show followed the card grading, with Davina Stanhope judging. The Championship went to a Colesbourne shearling ewe, while a Queenford shearling ram was Reserve Champion. The usual barbecue followed the sale and a very happy social evening was had by all.

There were an encouraging number of buyers present as the sale began the following day, and bidding was lively throughout. The Show Champion shearling ewe went for £270 and the Reserve Champion shearling ram for £400. With the exception of 6 shearling ewes, all sheep forward were sold. The average price paid for Senior Rams was £300, Shearling Rams £273, Senior Ewes £139, Shearling Ewes £141, and Ewe Lambs £110.

Following the official sale there was a dispersal sale of many of the Colesbourne senior ewes and shearlings. These were extremely well presented sheep, and whilst it was sad that such a long established flock was being dispersed, it provided buyers with a chance to acquire more excellent breeding stock, and this opportunity was not missed. These Colesbourne ewes added a real touch of class to an already excellent standard of entry into the sale. With sheep generally achieving prices well above the upset prices, it was altogether a successful day for the Cotswold Sheep Society and the Cotswold breed.



# Ewe Nutrition

With permission from XLVets

## **Ewe Nutrition for Lambing**

Correct ewe nutrition is perhaps the single most influential factor behind periparturient losses, from adult sheep as well as lambs.

Much has been done in recent years to provide correct nutritional advice for dairy farmers, with part of the approach being ration formulation. This article discusses many of the problems that are associated with ewe nutrition and provides practical solutions to them. It contains some recent research material as well as simple and practical advice from sheep practitioners

The twin-bearing (or more) ewe is under great nutritional stress during the last six weeks of pregnancy. This relates almost entirely to the huge demand that the multiple foetuses place upon the ewe at a time when she is increasing the growth of her udder and coping with a combination of low food availability and poor weather. The majority of conditions seen in sheep around lambing time are directly attributable to inadequate nutrition. This can include problems such as smothering, which may be due to an underfed lamb being too weak to get out of the way. Getting the feeding right will increase lamb survival, increase profits and reduce labour. If you have had problems in your flock relating to any of the following, nutrition is likely to be the primary cause:

- Twin lamb disease
- Hypocalcaemia
- Hypothermia of lambs
- Joint ill (naval ill)
- Watery mouth/rattle belly
- Liver abscesses
- Pneumonia
- Lamb dysentery

Even conditions that occur later in the lamb's life, such as joint ill or some of the clostridial diseases can be attributable to poor colostrum, as a result of poor nutrition.

## **Understanding the problem**

In the last six weeks of pregnancy the following takes place:

- The lamb has its greatest growth
- The ewe's udder grows
- Colostrum is produced
- Brown fat is laid down in the lamb

This all places great demands upon the ewe for energy and protein. She therefore needs a balanced diet as well as being able to physically eat and drink.

### **Practical issues:**

- Grazing
- Housing
- Trough space
- Water availability
- Ewe health
- Lamb numbers

The fitness of a ewe to carry lambs to term should be assessed as part of a pre-tupping routine. However, conditions such as lameness, which will reduce the ewe's ability to walk to available food, can arise later into pregnancy and need to be considered and adjustments made to help the ewe. Many farmers are naturally concerned about turning over pregnant ewes; however, the recent advances in lameness suggest it may be more appropriate to treat lame sheep with an antibiotic prescribed by your vet. This will be of minimal interference and has no ill-effect on the growing lambs.

### **Physical constraints:**

A ewe can only consume 2-2.5% of her body weight in dry matter (DM), therefore all the requirements for this period of intense growth must be contained in this volume. For an 80kg ewe this equates to 1.6 to 2.0kg DM. This is complicated by a 10% reduction in dry matter intake (DMI) during the final two weeks of pregnancy.

Ewe nutrition can be simplified into energy and protein requirements and in many cases energy can be the main focus. As the lamb can only utilise glucose, the diet must provide sufficient for the lamb and for the ewe's daily needs. The energy requirements for ewes carrying different numbers of lambs is well established and

can be compared to the energy available for the diet. The bulk of energy has to come from forage so that a forage analysis is vital. In creating a diet, it is accepted that there can be huge variation between forages, even from the same field, but the analysis forms a starting point. Fine tuning is discussed later.

By knowing the forage analysis, the analysis of the concentrate and the calculated DMI of the ewe, the energy content of the ration can be determined. By comparing this to the known requirements, the energy excess or deficiency can be seen and any corrections made. Whilst the calculations are not difficult, your XLVets practice has a nutritional spreadsheet that can perform these. This method can also be applied to homemade diets, and to a TMR.

## **Scanning**

Scanning for foetal numbers is a very cost effective procedure that can make a huge difference to ewe feeding for the following reasons:

- Barren ewes are identified early, so do not receive supplementary feeding
- Single bearing ewes can be identified and fed accordingly, they may get sufficient energy from forage alone, reducing supplementary feed costs
- Twin and above ewes are identified so that they can be fed and monitored separately

As well as being beneficial for nutrition, identifying foetal numbers can help as part of your worming plan, if wormers are to be used at lambing.

## **The View from Here**

**Mark Pettitt**

Our 20 lambs have done quite well this year and we have started selling the ram lambs for meat in half lamb boxes. The ewe lambs have just moved onto a wild flower meadow owned by the council. A short term measure which the council argues will improve the floristic diversity of the field. Well, anyway, the lambs are pleased to have some fresh new pasture.

Kespar Harvey (No Ears) is the ram we have rented from Steve Parkes. He's done a fine job, marking all of our ewes within 3 weeks, with no sign of a second mark on any of the ewes. So, with a bit of luck, we will have a short lambing season. We will definitely have the ewes scanned again this year as it is so useful to know how many each ewe is carrying. The ewes carrying more lambs can then be fed more food and when they start lambing, we can be sure when they have finished!

# THE FRANK WILLIAMS TROPHY

The Frank Williams trophy was presented to the Society by Frank William's family following his untimely death in a car accident. The trophy is a wonderful pottery Cotswold ewe with twin lambs, sculpted by Henry Klein. Frank was a rare breeds enthusiast, with a particular interest in Gloucester cattle, Cotswold sheep and Longwools in general. For many years he was both, a Cotswold judge and exhibitor, as well as a great supporter of the Society.

Each year the members can each nominate someone, not necessarily a member, for their service to the Society. Council then discusses at all the nominations and takes the final decision as to who will be awarded the trophy that year.

You will have already received the nomination form. Putting forward someone's name is an excellent way of thanking them for all they have done for the Society over the years. Council thought it might be helpful to publish the list of previous winners.

1999 Mr & Mrs S Gibbings	2000 Mrs Judy Wilkie
2001 Mr Robert Boodle	2002 Mr Tony Foster
2003 Mr Joe Henson	2004 Mrs Pat Quinn
2005 Mr & Mrs Nick Cordery	2006 Mrs Shelagh Tooze
2007 Mr Stephen Parkes	2008 Mrs Lynne Parkes
2009 Mr David Jones	2010 Mrs M Pursch & Mrs Frances Whiteman
2011 Miss Davina Stanhope	2012 Miss Alison Garne
2013 Mr Adrian Loker	2014 Mrs Edna Powell
2015 The Hon. Mrs Angela Reid	

## A Cotswold Rant – Kate Elliot

I was somewhat perturbed at this year's AGM, which was well attended, that I was the only non-officer of the Society who spoke. The officers were asking for the members' opinions on various matters, yet nobody seemed to have any.

It really is very difficult to run a society like ours if nobody joins in. Everything is left to the same people – and we are very lucky that we have stalwarts like Davina, Steve and Lynn Parkes, Judy Wilkie and Margaret and Frances, to say nothing of Adrian Loker who wasn't even a member until we made him an honorary one. But they can't go on for ever, and unless others come forward the Society will die and we won't reach our 150th birthday.

I am always conscious of how much the officers do. It isn't an easy job, and it is very time-consuming. The Cotswolds are luckier than most societies in that their geographical base is quite small so people aren't required to travel from Somerset to Yorkshire for Council meetings. Being on Council is interesting, fun and you get to know a lot of people. However, it is only that if Council feels it has the backing of an enthusiastic membership. If the members have no ideas of their own, and yet moan about what Council decides to do, it is no fun.

It is also expensive to run a small society. There is a limit to how much can be charged for registrations, memberships etc. before that becomes counter-productive and we find fewer sheep being registered. We have been lucky so far in that we have from time to time received generous donations from founder members, but that can't go on for ever. Once these members retire, others soon realise what hard work it takes to keep a society, such as ours, going. But the more people there are, the less burdensome it is, and members pull together and make good and lasting friendships.

I am aware that I have not done very much for the Society, but I have always been very busily self-employed and I do live rather further away than most members. Also, when I had to give up Cotswolds because they just wouldn't grow in the foothills of the Mendips I thought it wasn't right for me to take an active part in the society if I didn't have the sheep. But I have always tried to help where I can. So I volunteer to look after the merchandise stand whenever I can and I attend all the Society functions and buy the merchandise. But where is everybody else? At Moreton this year we had to do without Alison Garne, our demon raffle-ticket seller. Our second-best ticket sellers are Frances and our wool judge's daughter, Keeley. She couldn't come down from Bradford, and Frances had other things to do. I can't sell raffle-tickets to save my life, but I can fold the counterfoils. It's about time somebody new volunteers to do that, and then go on to help in other ways.

Come on, members. Have ideas and get involved. If you don't, the Society and the sheep will die. Do you want that?



## COUNCIL CORNER

- **REGISTRATION** - By the time you receive this Newsletter you should have sent in your Lamb Registration forms, or even better, registered them through the online Flock Book. However, we would like to remind anyone who has not yet done so, that you should Birth Notify all lambs. We are aware that these may not meet breed standards but it is extremely helpful for the Society if we know which rams are working. Just to be clear - Birth Notified lambs DO NOT have to meet breed standards, however REGISTERED lambs must do so.
- **JUNIOR CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION** – We are looking for budding artists to paint, draw, or otherwise create, next year’s Christmas cards. There will be two age groups – the ‘**10 and Unders**’ and the ‘**11 to 16s**’. The winner in each group will receive their choice of a Society hoodie, and the pleasure of seeing their design printed on the Christmas cards and sold. They will each also receive a £10 Amazon voucher. Designs should be original, the work of the artist, and contain at least one Cotswold sheep (it could just be their head!!). All entries should be sent to the Secretary, with details of the designer, by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017.
- **DROINTON DANIEL & EDWARD** – Straws of semen from both these excellent rams, currently stored by Innovis Ltd, have very generously been made available to members of the Society by Debi MacKellar. If you are interested and would like more information, please contact Davina Stanhope on 07968 218470 or via email [devina@stanhope1.orangehome.co.uk](mailto:devina@stanhope1.orangehome.co.uk). There is no fee for using the semen; the only request is that there should be a donation to the Society of £10 per straw.
- **THE SOCIETY SUMMER SHOW 2017** – Looking ahead to next year’s Summer Show (provisionally planned for 23<sup>rd</sup> July, venue to be confirmed) Council will be adding some additional classes to the showing mix. There will be a ‘Veteran’ Class for sheep of either sex, which are five years old or more – mouths will not be inspected! There will also be a ‘Mother and Daughter’ class for ewes of any age – the only criteria being that one must be the mother of the other!!
- **WINTER SOCIAL (26<sup>th</sup> Nov, The Westwood Centre, Northleach)** – Please do put the date in your diary and come along. It is such a good way to meet up with old friends, and for new members to make new friends! You should have already received the Winter Social form, but if you have misplaced it, you can either telephone the Secretary to be sent another, or download one from the Society website. Please do remember that all raffle prizes will be gratefully

received as the Winter Social raffle does make a significant contribution to Society funds each year!

- **FRANK WILLIAMS TROPHY** – The nomination forms have already been sent to you separately. Please do read the piece elsewhere in the Newsletter regarding the Trophy. Nominating someone for this is an excellent way of saying thank you to any one you think has worked hard for the Society over some years, even if they are not a member.
- **FLOCK BOOK** – Please do consider advertising in the 2017 Flock Book, either your flock, or your business, or maybe even encourage someone else to advertise. All adverts help to mitigate the costs of producing the Flock Book each year. We do however, need all adverts for the 2017 Flock book to be with the Secretary by **31<sup>st</sup> November 2016**.
- **CHRISTMAS PRESENTS** – Don't forget that the Society does have a range of merchandise which could make the perfect Christmas present for any sheep enthusiast. There are hand-painted mugs, 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary mugs, tea towels, hoodies, 'light' pens and more. All will be on sale at the Winter Social, but they can also be obtained by contacting the Secretary. Photos of the merchandise will shortly be on the Society website.
- **HELPERS ALWAYS WANTED** – Council is always grateful for offers of help from members and their friends, whether it is to put up stands, sheep pens, make cakes, sell merchandise at shows, or joining Council. Becoming involved in the Society really is a great way to support the breed and to have some fun at the same time!
- **PLANNING AHEAD** – As tuppings gets under way, lambing is on the horizon for many of us, and plans for next year are already being formed. If you need advice on selecting stock for breeding, selling at the sale, or showing, experienced members of the Society would be happy to help, so please do contact the Secretary in the first instance.

## **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.