

A U.S. TARGHEE SHEEP ASSOCIATION PUBLICATION

TARGHEE

TALK



Photo taken by Kristin Bieber, Skull Creek Targhees

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CONTENTS

PAGE 2

From My Flock to Yours - Message from
USTSA President, Susie Skinner

PAGE 3

Upcoming Events and Announcements

PAGES 4-5

Targhee Advantage: How Can the Breed
Benefit You? featuring Professor Matt Goble
from Snow College

PAGES 6-7

NSIP Corner: Genetic Change and Accuracy,
Dylan Laverell

PAGE 8

From the Shepherd's Mouth featuring Kristin
Bieber

PAGE 9

Starter Flock Application and Information

PAGE 10

Summary of minutes from past board
meetings

PAGES 11-12

Minutes from Bi-Annual meeting

PAGE 13

Tasty Targhee: Marinated Pan-seared French
Lamb Chops

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From My Flock to Yours

Message from USTSA President

The typical January weather is upon us, 20 degrees and snow one day and 50 plus rain the next. I hope this finds you dialing in the weather you like! I see by social media posts that many of you are beginning to lamb and I am sure some are just too darn busy to post anything. Then there are those of us who are a month or two away from the big event. Regardless of your timing, I hope all goes well this "lambing" season. Next to Christmas, this is the best season of the year!!

As you can see from emails you have received from Jackie McMartin about the Breeder's List, your Board of Directors has been very busy in 2023-24. We have met often to conduct the business of your Association. One huge piece of work was the hiring of Julia Selman as your new Public Relations person. She is young, and energetic and comes from a solid background in sheep. Please join me in welcoming her aboard.

Another time-consuming (and stressful) item the board has been involved in this fall was getting the finances of your Association in order. Jack McRae and Jackie McMartin are owed a huge THANK YOU for all of their work in this area. We are not in great shape financially but at least we know the clear picture now. There will need to be changes in how we conduct business in the future for this Association to remain fluent.

Until we meet again, I hope all of the BAAA-d weather stays away from your barn door and you have great luck lambing.

Susie Skinner



*Photo taken by Kristin Bieber,
Skull Creek Targhees*

Upcoming Events & Announcements



February 18th at 7 pm CST: Junior Association Meeting via Zoom

April 1, 2024: Starter Flock Application due

May 31, 2024: Nationals Forms due

July 4-7: All American Junior Show

June 20-22, 2024: Great Plains Junior Show

July 18-20, 2024: National Targhee Show and Sale

Where: Redfield, SD – Spink County Fair Grounds

Lodging Options for the 2024 USTSA National Show and Sale:

Super 8 Motel – 605 472-0720, Single and Double rooms available I have the entire hotel reserved for our event please tell them you are with the Targhee group when reserving your room.

Edelweiss Inn – Bed & Breakfast, 605 499-8026. They have 5 rooms with a mix of beds, each room has its own bathroom.

R&L Lodge N Inn – 605 460-2158. This is an apartment style lodge. This would be a good spot for a large group or family.

Rustic Haven Inn – 605 460-1252, Apartment style 4 bedroom / 2 bath.

Jim River Ranch – Farmhouse in the country about 8 miles from town. 605 765-8494.

Camping is also an option. There are 20 camper hookups with electricity and water right at the Spink County Fair Grounds.

**If anyone is interesting in donating sheep for the Starter Flock Program, please contact Scott Kilber.*

The Targhee Advantage: How Can the Breed Benefit You?

Written by Julia Selman

Across the Rocky Mountain range in the Western United States, sheep can be found amongst the base of the Tetons grazing newly bloomed wildflowers or dispersed between endless sagebrush deserts. The most common breed found in these regions would be a Rambouillet, Columbia, or a cross of the two. Each has their own specific strengths and from operation to operation, each are selected based on what fits for what they do. Targhee seems to be becoming more popular in the West, but how do Targhee affect operations? Growing up on a Colombia/Rambouillet operation, I have raised my eyebrow and wondered what potential it holds and how it could influence sheep ranchers in the West. As this question has arisen, I spoke with Professor Matthew Goble, who teaches at Snow College in Central Utah. Goble has been involved in the industry the entirety of his life, and has a deep passion for not only the animals, but for bettering the industry as a whole. In addition to being a professor, Goble runs approximately 500 ewes in Sanpete County, Dry Bottom Farms. His operation has some unique aspects in comparison to the majority of sheepmen in the area. He runs on irrigated ground as well as range ground, implementing a management intensive grazing system along with traditional range grazing. He understands how both affect each other, and because of this, can offer viewpoints that can help those of a more management intensive as well as those of a large range operations. In addition to the way his sheep are grazed, he has also implemented an accelerated lambing operation, where he lambs 3 times in 2 years.



Starting about 10 years ago, Goble began to introduce the Targhee breed into his existing Colombia/ Rambouillet cross herd. Since then, he has seen how they have benefited his operation for the following reasons.

One of the reasons he introduced Targhee into his herd was to create a better wool yield. He found the micron he wanted with the Rambouillet, but was able to maintain that micron, and even improve upon it, while increasing his staple length. He mentioned that he was able to see a difference in his Targhee cross lambs almost immediately in their staple length and has been able to increase his fleece weight since then.

In addition, he stated that his yield has increased to 60-62% from the mid 50% range with the introduction of this breed. Within his crossbred ewes, he averages around a 23 micron with a 4 inch staple length, which has greatly benefited his operation.

continued...

The Targhee Advantage: How Can the Breed Benefit You?

The talk of any sheep man seems to be in the spring is “What’s your docking percentage” and in the fall it’s “How heavy were those lambs.” Lambs are central to any operation, and it’s the same with Goble. He looks for the same things we all look for, is to have rapid growing, happy, healthy, and heavy lambs. Goble mentioned that as he has introduced Targhee, he has had heavier weighted lambs that have finished sooner, as well as having an overall good confirmation. Because his Targhee ewes have a strong maternal instinct in addition to a high milk production, he has witnessed weaning more weight of lamb per ewe than in previous years. In addition to crossing on a Rambouillet or Colombia, he has also crossed with a Dorset for



his accelerated lambing. He mentioned that those lambs are able to have a little more meat and finish sooner, but also maintain the wool quality he needs from the Targhee. Polypay still holds a large advantage when it comes to an accelerated operation, but he states that the Targhee cross will still perform very well and is able to produce not only the amount of lambs he’s looking for, but as well as the weight gain. He currently weaning around 185% with his Targhee crosses.

Offering a word of advice to anyone considering the Targhee breed, he mentioned a few key factors. He mentioned looking for sheep that fit your operation and your goals. Don’t go to an extreme with something that won’t easily transition to what you already have. Be thorough, and look for those genetics and benefits that you are wanting, then find the producer that has those similarities, or a similar operation to your own.



To have more insight into Matt Goble’s operation, follow Dry Bottom Farms on Facebook

NSIP Corner: Genetic Change and Accuracy

Written by Dylan Laverell, Targhee Representative for NSIP

This year at ASI, Dr. Ron Lewis, former NSIP Technical Director, gave a talk on factors that affect the rate of genetic change. It was a well-attended meeting with standing room only. I found myself standing next to Todd Taylor with just enough space on the wall to lean on. For those who haven't heard, Dr. Lewis has announced his retirement. The industry, and NSIP, has him to thank for all the research and knowledge that he's shared through the years.

Nonetheless, Dr. Lewis said that with all this new technology, it's still important to go back to the basics and understand the elements that make-up genetic change. We measure the rate of genetic change by the *Key Equation*:

$$\Delta_{BV/t} = \frac{r_{BV,BV} \hat{i} \sigma_{BV}}{L}$$

Where: $\Delta_{BV/t}$ = rate of genetic change per unit of time

$r_{BV,BV}$ = accuracy

i = selection intensity

σ_{BV} = genetic variation

L = generation interval

When I showed this to my brother, he thought it looked like Egyptian hieroglyphics, whereas I got flashbacks to my 45-page Principles of Animal Breeding final exam I took in undergrad. While understanding this equation could be a semester long college course, I'm going to briefly give some definitions for each variable and discuss more on one variable of interest throughout the next few Targhee Talks.

Richard M. Bourdon defines each of the following in his textbook, "Understanding Animal Breeding," 2nd ed:

1. Rate of genetic change – the rate of change in the mean breeding value of a population caused by selection.
2. Accuracy – a measure of the strength of the relationship between true breeding values and their predictions for a trait under selection
3. Selection intensity – a measure of how "choosy" breeders are in deciding which individuals to select.
4. Genetic variation – variability of breeding values within a population for a trait under selection.
5. Generation interval – the amount of time required to replace one generation with the next.

In its simplest terms, the key equation is quite intuitive. If we are very selective in our flock for a trait with a high heritability (like wool traits: staple length, fleece weight), and reduce the generation interval by only keeping young animals in the herd, we can expect to make significant genetic progress for a trait. However, if we aren't as selective for a lowly heritable trait (like prolificacy), and keep ewes for a long time, we would not expect to make as much genetic progress or change to the mean breeding value of the flock for the same unit of time.

I'm not trying to advocate for one method or another, because they both have their place. However, understanding the factors that contribute to genetic change is important for seedstock producers.

Accuracy

Why does accuracy matter? Accuracy gives us more confidence in predicting breeding values. The higher accuracy, the more confidence we have in a breeding value. Accuracy can vary based on a few factors: heritability and pedigree data. Heritability of traits plays a key role in predicting accuracy. Traits that are higher in their heritability estimate equate to a stronger relationship in performance and breeding values. Heritability estimates for traits can be found in Table 1. As a rule of thumb, traits with heritability estimates under 0.20 are lowly heritable, between 0.20 and 0.40 are moderately heritable, and above 0.40 are highly heritable.

Table 1. Heritability estimates (h^2) in sheep.

Trait	h^2
Number born	0.15
60d weaning weight	0.20
Fleece grade	0.35
Yearling weight	0.40
Fleece weight	0.40
Loin eye area	0.45
Staple length	0.50

*Adapted from Bourdon (2000).

The second factor that influences accuracy is pedigree data, or the number of data from closely related relatives. Unborn or very young animals, only have information for ancestors or collateral relatives (aunts, uncles, cousins, etc.). As the animal matures, their own performance data is recorded. If they are retained in the flock, then the animal will have progeny data. The more pedigree data an animal has for a trait, the accuracy increases. Depending on the trait, once a certain number of datapoints are reached, the increase of accuracy is minimal.

New technologies

Genomically enhanced EBVs is one of the main pillars of interests for the Sheep GEMS project, of which Dr. Lewis will continue to spearhead in his retirement. Genomic data greatly influences the rBV, BV or accuracy of the key equation. Collecting genomic data allows for higher accuracy, especially for younger animals. Usually, we would have to wait years for traits that are expressed later in life, like number of lambs born. However, with pedigree information and integration of genomics, producers can be able to evaluate that data at a younger age. This speeds up information and decreases costs associated with evaluating those traits. The sheep GEMS project is currently being evaluated with Rambouillets, Katahdins, and Suffolk breeds. Once their evaluation is complete, it won't be too long until the Targhee breed is evaluated.

While it's easy to get enamored in new technologies, understanding the foundational science and their application in the industry should give better understanding for future application. NSIP members should have received an email from Hilal Yazar Gunes (hyazargunes2@huskers.unl.edu), Dr. Lewis' graduate student, about participation in the GEMS survey. If you initially disregarded the email, please email them back and participate. Stay tuned for next edition of NSIP Corner as I will dissect another variable that drives genetic change.

From the Shepherd's Mouth

Written by Julia Selman

Hidden away in Eastern Montana, you can find a band of sheep with the prettiest pink ear tags that have the most endearing names. They are watched over by Axel, the old dog that seems to take better care of the sheep than anyone else could. These belong to Kristin Mcrae Bieber, a 4th generation shepherdess and her family. Kristen emulates the essence of the sheepman, its ways, and all the traditions that we hold dear. Sheep have a way of tying us all together, and she is a representation on how making connections is what makes our way of life so rich.



A wise sheepman once said, "The best way to build character and raise kids is in a sheep corral", and Kristin is no exception to this rule. As a toddler, she spent her time in a crib set up in the lambing barn. For her entertainment, it was either a cookie with the same flavor as sawdust or a bumb lamb to keep her company. Sometimes those lambs would end up knocking her down on their way to get their timely feeding or to follow Kristin's mother. Through speaking with her, you can hear the fondness of those memories and how it has fostered her love for the way of life she was brought up with.

Kristin received her first ewe, Miss Muffy, when she was 2 or 3, which was a triplet bumb lamb. From then on, she has been raising lambs, rams, or both since. As years went by, she sold her first ram, Isaac, when she was 9 years old. Coming from a deep wool-growing history, in her words, "lanolin is in the blood." Nowadays, she manages to

wrangle kids and sheep on a daily basis, and share her passion with those around her. She currently shed-lambs around 550 ewes in addition to some western white faced range lambers. Among her herd are registered Targhee in addition to an NSIP group. Skull Creek Targhees, lambs in the months of April and May. The rest of the year they're on rotationally grazed pasture when it's available and if the grasshoppers don't get it first, and feed through bucking and lambing. Some practices she uses that have benefited her and her outfit include her handy dandy milk machine and maintaining and keeping accurate records. She says that "records are her happy place," and it has truly changed the operation. Most of their profit comes from raising seed stock rams which is about 60 head annually, in addition to replacement ewes. In addition to that, they also sell commercial ewes through private treaty, and some commercial lambs as they come available.

Within the Targhee Association, we are lucky to know and have Kristin as a member. She wears many hats, including a shepherdess's daughter, wife, mother, sheep-lover, caretaker, and a friend to all. She shows us what hard work can accomplish, and what a true love for the breed looks like.



To have more insight into Kristin's operation, follow Skull Creek Targhees on Facebook

Join Team Targhee!

Want to get your start into the sheep industry? Apply for our Starter Flock program!

What's the purpose?

To promote growth and visibility of the Targhee breed, and to promote youth involvement and education within the breed.

Who is eligible?

Any youth, age 9 to 17 as of January 1, 2024, whose immediate family does not raise Targhee sheep.

What comprises the starter flock?

The winner will be awarded one (1) ewe lamb, one (1) yearling ewe, and one (1) brood ewe donated by members of the USTSA. Each animal will be a USTSA registered animal, and at least QR in scrapie codon 171 genotype.

To view the application,
please scan the QR code or
copy and paste the link below



file:///Users/juliaselman/Downloads/Starter%20Flock%20Application%20edited%20DML.pdf



**If anyone is interesting in donating sheep for the Starter Flock Program, please contact Scott Kilber*

USTSA Board of Directors Minutes

December 13th, 2023 @ 6:30 p.m.

All Directors were Present

- Approval of Minutes
 - The minutes were emailed to the board of directors. With Scott Kilber motioning and Wendell VonKrosigk seconding. The minutes were approved as emailed.
- Approval of Financials
 - Jack provided the balance sheet report via email. Jackie emailed bank statements to the board of directors. Financials were approved by the board.
- New Business
 - Promotions Contract Expectations: Promotions job description was outlined with the board and with Julia Selman, making future plans for Targhee Talks, website, and social media presence.
- Rejection Emails
- Agenda for January Meeting
 - We need to add Registration tags, All American and Great Plains to the agenda Scott sent. Scott will update it and send to Jackie along with the Zoom information for the notice to send to the membership.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m. CST motion was made by Scott and seconded by Dylan. Motion passed.

January 14th, 2024 @ 6:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m. by President/East Director Susie Skinner.

All Directors Were Present

- Approval of Minutes
 - The minutes were emailed to the board of directors. The minutes were approved with amended corrections.
- Approval of Financials
 - Financial status was discussed and Jackie provided the balance sheet report via email from Jack. Jackie emailed bank statements and Associated Registry invoices to the board of directors. The financials were approved as emailed.
- Old Business
 - Updates from Julia on website design and other promotional activities including Targhee Talks
- New Business
 - In summary, the board went over plans for the upcoming bi-annual meeting, national form specifics, fees for associated registry, ordering new ear tags for organization, rosetters and banner amount and specifics for national show, and options for over-age sheep being admitted into the organization.

Next Board Meeting will be on February 21st at 6:30 p.m. CST.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m. CST motion was made by Scott and seconded by Dylan. Motion passed.

January 20th, 2024 @ 8:05 p.m.

- The meeting was called to order at 8:05 p.m. by President/East Director Susie Skinner.
- All Directors were present
- Financials were briefly discussed about payments and reimbursements regarding 2023
- Discussion was had regarding the meeting and all thought it went well and reviewed any business that needed to be carried out post-meeting.

Scott motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m. and Dylan seconded it, Motion carried.

USTSA Bi-annual Meeting

January 20th, 2023 @ 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President/East Director Susie Skinner.

Directors Present: President/East Director - Susie Skinner, Vice President/Montana Director - Dylan Laverell, Secretary/Treasurer/Board of Directors At-Large East - Jackie McMartin, Central Plains Director - Scott Kilber, Board of Director West - Wendell VonKrosigk, Board of Director At-Large West - Jack McRae, Director of Public Relations & Promotions - Julia Selman

Membership Present: Dallis Basel, Lynnette Taylor, Darrell Deneke, Todd Taylor, Gary Eikmeier, Logan Johnson, Jessie Taylor, Cal and Julie Ward, Lacy Raisler, Kristin Bieber, Bryan and Susan Allred, Victoria Carroll, Kari Premisiri and Missy Holtz.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes were emailed to the membership.

With Scott motioning and Dylan seconding. The minutes were approved as emailed.

Approval of Financials

As of December 31st, 2023 the current balances in the Garfield County Bank, primary bank of the association, there is:

- \$15,984.54 in General Checking
- \$3,834.76 in National Sale Checking
- \$1,573.55 in General Savings
- \$2,228.12 in Promotion Savings
- \$6,070.88 in Junior Assn. Checking

As of December 31st, 2023 the current balance in the Bennington Bank Account is \$1,000.00.

Jackie provided the financials that Jack put together. Dallis Basel had a question on what was different from the first set of financials. Jackie explained the movement of money to try and not show the association at such a loss for the year. Julie Ward had a suggestion on how to list the commission from the National Sale. Jackie explained that Jack and her would be doing that for 2024 along with the registration income also. Logan Johnson had a question on the \$900.00 charge for a junior expense. Jackie explained that that was the funds paid for All American last year.

With Scott motioning and Wendell seconding. The financials were approved as emailed.

Susie took time to introduce Julia Selman as our new Director of Public Relations & Promotion. Julia gave an introduction of her background and is looking forward to working with everyone.

Old Business

All American - Todd Taylor gave an update as to how things are coming along for this summer in Michigan and he will be going. Jackie then explained that the Association will be unable to fund this opportunity due to the financial condition of the Association this year. Susie asked Logan Johnson if the Juniors would be able to pay for this out of their funds. Logan will discuss at their meeting in February, Lacy Raisler brought up her family will be going. Lynette brought up that her basket at Nationals was to be used for funding for this year's All American. Jackie explained she is unable to find any records in the totes to know the amount but she will go back and look again. Jackie asked Jack if he found anything and he said he hadn't come across anything.

Great Plains - Jackie explained that this will be the same as All American due to our financial condition. Susie brought up maybe breeders can pitch in funds to help cover the expenses. Scott explained that normally the Kilber, Scheel, McMartin, Burgraff and Lamont families attend and DATA may be able to fund this.

USTSA Bi-annual Meeting

January 20th, 2023 @ 7:00 p.m. - continued

New Business

2024 Budget - Dylan walked through the screens on the power point explaining the fees we pay to register/transfer sheep. He then showed how it would affect breeders if we would increase the ewe fee by \$1.00 and the Annual Fee from \$10.00 to \$25.00. The annual fee will need to be voted on in Redfield as it will be a bylaw change. Jack then explained when we started and that the fee has not increased but inflation has. Julie Ward motioned to pay the \$25.00 annual fee to the association and not Associated Registry. Dallis Basel seconded. Motion carried.

Metal Ear Tags - Jack brought up that we do not have any metal ear tags and wants to know if we need to order more. Bryan Allred stated he only had a few left and would need some. Julie mentioned she had some she could give to Jack. Julia explained she will be sending out a survey to the breeders and to fill that out so the board can move forward with ordering the metal tags.

Kristin brought up discussion on the fees, She would like to increase the ewe fee by \$1.00 and change rams to \$10.00. She said it would increase her fees by \$70 a year. Gary Eikmeier typed in the chat that \$10.00 per head would not be out of line. Dylan motioned to increase the ewe fee by \$1.00 per head and the ram fee to \$10.00 per head to take effect on June 1st 2024. Kristin seconded. Motion carried.

Committee Reports

Juniors - Logan gave an update their next meeting will be February 18th at 7 pm CST. They are currently working on designing the t-shirt.

2024 National Show and Sale - Scott gave updates on lodging, judges and the auctioneer. Dates are July 18-20 in Redfield SD. Jackie explained the new motions that the board passed regarding entry feed must be paid by check in or sheep will not be shown and all sheep must be paid for at the conclusion of the National Show and Sale. This will make the accounting side of things clean. Todd Taylor brought up the University of Wisconsin will not be able to participate Susie said we can work something out. Dylan brought up the new website having a credit card option. Todd stated he can use a card but they don't like fees but he can work around that.

Starter Flock - Scott gave an update that the committee is looking for donations and the form will go out with the February Targhee Talk.

Promotions - Julia gave an update on the website and Targhee Talk.

NSIP - Dylan went over a slide on updates for this year and paying for your first 25 samples.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m. CST motion was made by Scott and seconded by Wendell. Motion passed.

TASTY TARGHEE

Want a new way to eat your delicious lamb? Try the recipe below and enjoy!

Marinated Pan-seared French Lamb Chops

Marinade:

- 2 cups soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon minced ginger
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 1/4 cup Madeira
- 4 tablespoons Italian dried herbs
- 4 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon onion salt
- 1/2 cup water
- 4 lamb racks (4-5 ribs each)
- Salt and pepper to taste



Whisk marinade ingredients together. Add chops and massage until well coated and let rest for 30-45 minutes. Remove chops from marinade. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Heat saute pan until very hot. Add chops and brown on all sides. Place chops in ovenproof pan and place in oven for 5-10 minutes, or until meat is medium rare. (135 degrees). Let chops rest for 5 minutes before carving and serve. (Serves 4 servings)

Taken from Great Ranch Cookbook



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