

**2016 Annual NCERA-214 Coordinating Committee Meeting
Minutes**

Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center, San Angelo, TX

Monday, June 6

The meeting was called to order by NCERA-214 Chair, Susan Schoenian at 8:30 a.m. at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center, San Angelo, TX. John Walker, Resident Director at San Angelo, welcomed the group and provided an overview of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station. This was followed by a brief update on the status of the U.S. sheep industry.

A round of applause was given to Dan Waldron in appreciation of his hosting the meeting. Introductions of attendees followed.

Following introductions, Schoenian shared some remarks from J. Ernest Minton, Administrative Advisor for the project and Associate Director for Research at Kansas State University, who was unable to be present. These remarks included a reminder that the current project goes through 2019 and that the project re-write should be done by the 2018 committee meeting. This led to a short discussion by Katherine Petersson as to the rationale for immediately re-writing the project as an NC. She reviewed the discussion from last year's meeting relative to transfer from an NCERA to an NC. Participants were reminded that the committee vote last year was to go forward. This led into the next item on the agenda: discussion, planning and committee assignments for the NCERA to NC re-write.

Discussion on conversion from an NCERA to an NC was led by Schoenian. Comments were heard from Petersson, Dave Thomas, Dan Morrical, Ron Lewis, Mike Thonney, Jim Miller, Jeff Held, and Don Ely. Overall, comments were relative to the degree of collaboration between members/stations. It was felt this would be the primary limitation in converting from an NCERA to an NC. Inclusion of members of the former western group was also encouraged. Petersson reminded attendees of the four objectives for the proposed NC-214:

- 1) Develop and evaluate methods to improve reproductive efficiency.
- 2) Develop strategies to improve efficiency of lean lamb growth and meat quality.
- 3) Evaluate genetic resources, nutrient requirements, and production systems for lamb, wool, and milk production.
- 4) Develop profitable and sustainable production systems that address grazing strategies and the health and well-being, and for ecosystem health, biological control of invasive plants and wildfire mitigation.

Questions relative to extension's role in an NC was raised by Held. Ely and Thomas reminded the group of the discussion from last year relative to that question. In addition, Lewis provided an example of objectives from another NC that included outreach. However, he expressed concern that objectives for the proposed NC-214 were too broad. Additional questions were asked relative to the proposed objectives: 1) Who will still be around by 2019, what institutions will contribute, and what are the benefits of an NC to those institutions? Comments were made by Ely, Morrical, and Miller. 2) Where do members of the former western group fit relative to the

proposed objectives? 3) Where does extension fit, what is extension's role in an NC, and how is this stated in the objectives or indicated in the NC? Niki Whitley, Reid Redden, Lewis, John Keele, and Schoenian shared their thoughts. 4) Should the committee conduct an inventory among members relative to future research and collaboration? 5) What does the sheep industry need and what are industry priorities? It was decided participants would work on these questions during breakout groups following dinner.

A short break was taken at 10:15 a.m. and the meeting resumed at 10:30 a.m.

Paul Rogers, Deputy Director of Policy, American Sheep Industry (ASI), thanked the committee for the invitation to ASI personnel to attend the meeting. Then, he gave an update on the U.S. Sheep Industry Research, Development and Education Research Priorities, Executive Summary (draft). The committee was also provided with a copy of the letter to Bret Taylor (USSES) from Burton Pfliger, ASI President, that gave an overview of the ASI study findings with regards to research and education. Rogers noted that priorities were not ranked overall nor nationally. Some additional comments about the summary were made by Susan Shultz, ASI regional director. She also thanked everyone who participated in listening sessions.

Station reports followed, beginning with **Objective 1**.

Objective 1. Develop and Evaluate Methods to Improve Reproductive Efficiency

Dan Waldron, Texas A&M AgriLife Research (Lamb Production from Dorper and Rambouillet Ewes in a Range Operation)

Stephan Wildeus, Virginia State University (Effect of Sire Breed on Pregnancy Rate in Land Race Hair Sheep During Summer Mating)

Marlon Knights, West Virginia University (Effect of Nutrition, Lactation, and Gonadotropin Stimulation on Ram-Induced LH Surge and Subsequent Fertility in Early Post-Partum Ewes During Seasonal Anestrus)

Before breaking for lunch, Benny Cox, ASI executive board member and manager of Producers Livestock Auction, spoke to the group. He gave some history of sheep marketing and discussed some current issues in marketing in Texas in anticipation of the tour on Tuesday.

Objective 1 reports concluded after lunch. These were immediately followed by reports for **Objective 2**

Objective 1 (continued)

Joan Burke, Dale Bumper Small Farms Research Center, USDA, ARS, Booneville, AR (Effect of Semen Extender and Storage Temperature on Ram Sperm Motility over Time)

Objective 2: Develop Strategies to Improve and Predict Efficiency of Lean Growth, Carcass Quality, and Meat Palatability

Jeff Held, South Dakota State University (Evaluate Pre-Marketing Management Practices of Lambs in the Upper Midwest)

Jessica Reiners, South Dakota State University (Dry Matter Intake, Feed Efficiency, and Lamb Growth Response to Different Particle Size and Protein Sources in Lamb Finishing Diets)

Stephan Wildeus, Virginia State University (1. Use of Agro-Byproducts to Supplement Hair and Wool x Hair Crossbred Lambs Grazing Fescue Pasture in Spring; 2. The Influence of Breed and Supplementation on Consumer Ratings of Meat Quality Attributes of Pasture-Raised Ground Lamb Meat)

Marlon Knights, West Virginia University (Adjustment Factors for Loin Eye Area and Loin Depth in Replacement Ewe Lambs)

The group took a break at 3:00 p.m. and Station Reports resumed at 3:15 p.m. with **Objectives 3 and 4.**

Objective 3: Evaluate Genetic Resources, Nutrient Requirements, and Systems for Milk Production

Tom Murphy, University of Wisconsin (1. Breed, Heterosis, and Non-Genetic Effects Influencing Lamb and Ewe Performance in a Crossbred Population of Dairy Sheep; 2. Estimates of Genetic Parameters and Trends in a Crossbred Population of Dairy Sheep)
Dave Thomas also gave an update on the future of sheep research and the sale of the dairy flock at Wisconsin.

Objective 4: Develop Profitable and Sustainable Production Systems, Including Parasite Control and Other Health Issues

Mike Thonney, Cornell University (1. Incidence of *Parelaphostrongylus tenuis* in the Cornell Sheep Flock from 2002 to 2014; 2. Effect of Ivermectin on Recovery of Sheep and Goats Infected with *Parelaphostrongylus tenuis*; 3. The Effect of Birdsfoot Trefoil Forage on Barber Pole Worm in Sheep and Goats in Northern NY)

Jim Miller, Louisiana State University (In Vitro Efficacy of Three Novel Compounds on Development and Survival of Gastrointestinal Nematode Larvae in Feces of Sheep)
Miller also gave an update on product availability for parasite control.

Marlon Knights, West Virginia University (1. Parasite-Resistance of Texel Crossbred Sheep: Improvement of Carcass Merit while Maintaining Parasite Resistance in Katahdin

Crossbred Lambs; 2. Effect of Rumen By-Pass Protein Supplementation on Growth of Parasitized Lambs)

Katherine Petersson, University of Rhode Island (1. Scanning and Transmission Electron Microscopy of *Haemonchus contortus* Exposed to Cranberry Vine *in vivo*; 2. *In vitro* Screening of Anthelmintic Efficacy of Commercial Varieties and Cultivars of Birdsfoot Trefoil against *Haemonchus contortus*)

In addition, Petersson updated the group relative to development of online materials in integrated parasite control leading to certification in FAMACHA scoring through video assessment.

Dinner was served at 5:30 pm. After dinner the group reconvened to discuss NC rewrite. Breakout groups were based on objectives:

- 1) Improve ewe lifetime productivity
- 2) Increase yield of lean lamb and improve product acceptability
- 3) Develop alternative methods of managing parasite
- 4) Improve grazing strategies and predator control

Thomas volunteered to work on governance and Schoenian, Whitley, and O'Brien volunteered to work on an outreach plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Tuesday, June 7, 2016

Following morning tours of Bollman Industries, Producers Livestock Auction, and the Texas A&M Wool Lab and lunch, the meeting was called to order by Chair, Susan Schoenian at 1:00 p.m.

The first order of business was to thank Dan Waldron for a great set of tours followed by a great lunch.

Next, ASI personnel addressed the committee. Paul Rogers spoke first and gave an ASI update. He addressed the following in his remarks:

- 1) H2A labor (herders). Increased wage rates 50%. Most efficient operators can handle. All state not federal.
- 2) Wildlife interactions with livestock – bear, wolves, big horn sheep, grouse – on public and private lands.
- 3) Mandatory price reporting. Consolidation in lamb market. Insurance.
- 4) USSEA lawsuit (grazing conflicts with grizzly bear). Comments due June 16
- 5) National cost of production and revenue budget.
- 6) Sheep Production Handbook. Available in approximately 2 weeks. Goal to make available electronically in future.
- 7) Importance of Sheep and Goat Research Journal

Rogers was followed by Susan Shultz, who noted:

- 1) Importance of NCERA-214 and its collaborations.
- 2) Adoption of quantitative genetics within the sheep industry.
- 3) Importance of ARS stations to sheep industry.
- 4) "Let's Grow" Committee. \$600,000 invested in industry through grants (\$2.9 million applied).

In closing, she encouraged the committee to keep up the good work.

Lastly, Rusty Burgett, NSIP Program Director, shared the following:

- 1) Approximately 77,000 animals in NSIP with EBVs.
- 2) Katahdin leads in number of flocks.
- 3) Targhee leads in total number of animals.
- 4) Importance of connectedness.
- 5) Maintenance of genetic progress.
- 6) Collaboration within industry.
- 7) ASI Let's Grow - Ram Search Engine.
- 8) Commercial sector starting to trust data.

Station Reports (continued) with **Objectives 4** and **5**.

Objective 4 (continued)

Richard Ehrhardt, Michigan State University (Development of a PCR-Based Method to Detect and Differentiate Between Benign and Virulent Strains of *Dichelobacter nodosus*, the Causative Agent of Foot Rot in Sheep)

Objective 5: Wide Dissemination of Research Results and Information to Universities, Regulatory Agencies, and Producers

Mike Thonney, Cornell University
Susan Schoenian, University of Maryland
Katherine Petersson, University of Rhode Island
Jeff Held, South Dakota State University
Dahlia O'Brien, Virginia State University

The group took a short break 3:00 p.m. and reconvened at 3:15 p.m. with a continuation of **Objective 5**.

Objective 5 (continued)

Reid Redden, Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension
Travis Whitney, Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension (Guest)

At the conclusion of the station reports, Susan Schoenian called the business meeting to order at 3:51 p.m. A move to approve the minutes as written was made by Dan Morrival and seconded by Dave Thomas. Motion passed.

Next up for discussion was location for the 2017 meeting. Michigan State University (Richard Ehrhardt) offered an invitation for the group to meet in East Lansing. Projected dates would be June 12-13 with optional tours on the 14th. Katherine Petersson moved to approve. Motion was seconded by Mike Thoney. Motion passed.

Schoenian reminded attendees that proceedings are not for public knowledge.

The Nominating Committee (Dave Thomas and Dan Morrival) presented the following slate of officers: Juan Villaba (Utah) for Chair, Debra Aaron (Kentucky) for Vice Chair, and Marlon Knights (West Virginia) for Secretary. Moved by Dave Thomas and seconded by Jim Miller. Motion passed.

The Resolutions Committee (Stephan Wildeus and Joan Burke) presented the following:

- 1) Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express thanks to Dr. Dan Waldron, Dr. Reid Redden, Dr. Travis Whitney, Dr. Ron Pope, Dr. John Walker, Mr. Faron Pfeiffer, Jodi Huybers, and Myra Marsh for their hospitality in organizing and presenting a productive and enjoyable meeting, and wonderful food for the NCERA-214 sheep research and extension committee. (To be sent to Director of Texas A&M AgriLife Research, John Walker, and Animal Science Associate Department Head, Ron Gill.)
- 2) Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express their appreciation to the American Sheep Industry Association for the presence of Paul Rodgers, Susan Shultz, and Benny Cox at the NCERA-214 meetings. (To be sent to Peter Orwick, Executive Director of ASI and Burton Pfliger, President of ASI.)
- 3) Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express their appreciation to the National Sheep Improvement Program for the presence of Rusty Burgett at the NCERA-214 meetings. (To be sent to the Board of NSIP and Reid Redden.)
- 4) Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express their appreciation to Ladd Hughes for hosting a tour of Bollman Industries. (To be sent to Bollman Industries, San Angelo, TX.)
- 5) Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express their appreciation to Benny Cox for hosting a tour of Producers Livestock Auction. (To be sent to Producers Livestock Auction, San Angelo, TX.)
- 6) Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express their appreciation to Butch Taylor, former superintendent of the Texas A&M AgriLife Research Station, Sonora for hosting a tour of the Station. (To be sent to Butch Taylor, TX.)

- 7) Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production strongly support the continuation of the USDA ARS sheep research and filling vacant positions at the stations at Booneville, AR, Dubois, ID, and Clay Center, NE. Researchers at these stations have been an integral part of our committee and a critical resource for the sheep industry. To be sent to:

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A move to accept these resolutions was made by Jeff Held and seconded by Dan Morrival. Motion passed.

Discussion on having a 2017 producer symposium was led by Richard Ehrhardt. Thoughts were that it was not feasible to have a symposium next year. A symposium in conjunction with an eastern NSIP sale in 2018 might be possible. A short history of this committee hosting symposiums was provided by Morrival, Wildeus, and Rodgers. Instead of a symposium, Morrival suggested doing some webinars on research activities by this committee. A different approach might be successful. Ehrhardt volunteered to look into this with Jay Parson, Optimal Ag Consulting, Inc. Redden offered the opinion that face-to-face meeting would be better than video. Held indicated that we needed to use the method/tool most appropriate for the industry. All agreed the most important part is the association of this group with whatever method chosen. Morrival suggested 2018 would be the target date. Thomas and Held suggested the topic be ewe productivity topic. Morrival made the motion that a committee of Ehrhardt, Whit Stewart, Reed and Melanie Barkley be appointed and that a location be selected in collaboration with Allen Culham, Let's Grow coordinator, and the Let's Grow Committee. Reed seconded. Motion passed.

Finally, the committee thanked Dave Thomas for his contributions over the years. We will miss you and industry will miss you upon your retirement. His first meeting was in 1974 and he has only missed two since 1974.

Held moved to adjourn. Morrival seconded. Motion passed.

2016 Annual NCERA-214 Meeting Attendees

Member

Aaron, Debra	University of Kentucky
Burke, Joan	USDA, ARS, Arkansas
Ehrhardt, Richard	Michigan State University
Ely, Don	University of Kentucky
Held, Jeff	South Dakota State University
Knights, Marlon	West Virginia University
Miller, Jim	Louisiana State University
Morrical, Dan	Iowa State University
Petersson, Katherine	University of Rhode Island
Schoenian, Susan	University of Maryland
Thomas, Dave	University of Wisconsin-Madison
Thonney, Michael	Cornell University
Waldron, Dan	Texas A&M Agrilife at San Angelo
Wildeuw, Stephan	Virginia State University

Industry Participants

Burgett, Rusty	NSIP
Rodgers, Paul	ASI
Shultz, Susan	ASI

Other Participants (Nonmember)

Bennett, Gary	MARC
Keele, John	MARC
Lewis, Ronald	University of Nebraska-Lincoln, NSIP
Murphy, Tom	University of Wisconsin-Madison
O'Brien, Dahlia	Virginia State University
Redden, Reid	Texas A&M Agrilife at San Angelo
Reiners, Jessica	South Dakota State University
Walker, John	Texas A&M Agrilife at San Angelo
Whitley, Niki	Fort Valley State University