**2018 NCERA-214 MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday June 4, 2018**

The meeting was called to order by NCERA-214 Chair Debra Aaron at 8:15 a.m. at the Lodge at Mount Magazine, Paris, AR. Debra Aaron expressed our the group’s appreciation for Joan Burke hosting the meeting, especially at a remote site. Joan Burke then gave an overview of the meeting schedule and objectives. On conclusion of the opening address, station reports began at 8:20 a.m.

**Monday June 4, 2018**

Started: 8:20 a.m.

**Objective 1 (Develop and Evaluate Methods to Improve Reproductive Efficiency):**

1. Louisiana State Univ. Dr. Jim Miller reported on “Efficacy of Compound X (Bedoukian Research) on reducing fecal egg count in lambs.”
2. Michigan State Univ. Richard Ehrhardt reported on “The impact of pre-mating nutrition during optimal and sub-optimal breeding seasons on reproductive outcomes in an accelerated lamb production system.”
3. South Dakota State Univ. Jeff Held reported on “Influence of post-pubertal ram semen quality on ewe conception rates.”
4. South Dakota State Univ. Jeff Held reported on “Evaluate ram semen quality characteristics between subsequent ejaculates.”
5. Virginia State University. Stephan Wildeus reported on “Effect of sire breed on pregnancy rate of Katahdin ewes after liquid semen vaginal AI.”
6. Virginia State University. Stephan Wildeus reported on “Effect of semen dose on pregnancy rate using liquid semen AI in hair sheep.”
7. USDA, ARS, Dale Bumpers Small Farms Research Station. Joan Burke reported on “Effect of endophyte-infected tall fescue toxins on growth performance and the microbial community in the rumen and feces in pregnant ewes.”

**10:15 a.m.**

Ernie Minton (administrator advisor) called into the meeting. NCERA-214 will expire Sept. 30, 2019. Thus, a renewal needs to occur within next few months to get it ready for review and approval (early to mid-2019). Discussion a couple of years ago was related to transitioning from NCERA to NC type project. Part of that proposal is completed and in NIMMS if that is the direction the committee wants to go.

Group discussion related to transitioning to NC. Katherine Peterson has already done a lot of the required work to get information up on NIMMS. Debra asked for Ernie’s thoughts about “Do we have enough cooperative research to be successful with transitioning to NC?”

**Ernie**: He thinks (key issues) that there is enough interdependency work being done to justify a multi-state research committee. However, we must have interaction amongst states, e.g., plan experiments collectively, replicate experiments at 2 or more stations. Need collaborations, especially in units with 1 sheep person, during pre-design stage. Look for ways to leverage having more animals in 1 place and more expertise in the other. This new NC may provide travel funds/operating $ for NC joint projects.

**Katherine**: Asked Ernie if there are any expectation of funding for NC (vs. NCERA) projects?

**Ernie**: That is at the discretion of resident director or above. It is done differently across the centers.

**Michael Thonney**: Are $ required to go to faculty that are involved in multi-state projects?

**Ernie**: The main administration has to use federal funds for (it’s earmarked) NCERA projects. They send that $ to research directors and then it’s up to RD to distribute for salary, or …

**10:55 a.m.**

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

1. Michigan State Univ. Richard Ehrhardt reported on “Pregnancy-associated glycoprotein profile is altered in twin but not singleton pregnancies after pre-conception diet manipulation.”
2. Michigan State Univ. Richard Ehrhardt reported on “Impact of maternal dietary energy excess and deficit prior to mating on size at birth and pre-weaning growth in prolific sheep.”
3. Univ. of Maryland. Susan Schoenian reported on “Comparison of ram, wether, and short-scrotum ram lambs.”
4. Texas A&M AgriLife Research. Travis Whitney reported on “Substituting ground *Juniperus* spp. for ground alfalfa hay in steer feedlot diets: growth performance and blood serum chemistry.”
5. Virginia State University. Stephan Wildeus reported on “Seasonal effects on daily gain and fecal egg counts in purebred and crossbred hair sheep lambs on pasture.”
6. Virginia State University. Stephan Wildeus reported on reported on “Quality and fatty acid composition of fresh lamb from pasture-raised purebred and crossbred hair sheep lambs gradually removed from soy hull supplementation before harvest.”
7. MT State Univ. Tom Murphy reported on “Evaluating the effect of South African Meat Merino breeding on pre- and post-weaning growth, feedlot performance, carcass traits, and wool characteristics in an extensive production setting.”

**2:20 p.m.**

**Objective 3 (Evaluate genetic resources, nutrient requirements and production systems for lamb and milk production)**

1. Iowa State University. Curt Youngs reported on “Effect of postpartum meloxicam administration on ewe milk production, ewe metabolic status, and markers of inflammation.”
2. Cornell University. Nikko Kochendoerfer reported on “Management and nutrition of milking sheep in short and frequent lactations.”

**3:00 p.m.**

**Objective 4 (Develop profitable and sustainable production systems that address grazing strategies and the health and well-being of sheep.)**

1. USDA, ARS, Dale Bumpers Small Farms Research Station. Joan Burke reported on “Complete anthelmintic resistance prevalent in U.S. meat goats.”
2. Univ. of Rhode Island. Katherine Petersson reported on “The discovery that plant secondary compounds, including proanthocyanidins (PAC), suppress gastrointestinal nematode (GIN) infections has provided promise for alternative methods of GIN control in small ruminants.”
3. MT State Univ. Tom Murphy. “Factors affecting ewe somatic cell count and its relationship with total litter weaning weight in extensively managed flocks.”
4. USMARC. John Keele reported on “Status of evaluation of three maternal lines under pasture lambing experiment at USMARC.”

**4:30 p.m.**

**Objective 5. Disseminate research results and information to the industry.)**

1. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. Reid Redden reported on “.”

**Tuesday June 5, 2018**

7:00 a.m.: The NCERA-214 group traveled to USDA, ARS (Boonville), arriving at 8:15 for a tour.

8:30 a.m.: The Business Meeting was called to order by Debra Aaron.

3:30 p.m.: The group traveled to Widerkehr Winery (Altus, AR) for a tour and dinner.

**Wed. June 6, 2018**

7:00 a.m.: The NCERA-214 group traveled to the Heifer Ranch (Perryville), arriving at 8:30 for a tour.

12 p.m.: Meeting was concluded.

**Nominations:**

Jeff stated that the nomination committee has nominated Travis Whitney as Chair, Richard Ehrhardt as vice-chair, and Tom Murphy as Secretary. All three were voted into their roles by unanimous decision.

Mike Thonney presented a rough draft of the resolutions, which the group then amended. The motion to approve the resolutions was moved by Richard E. and seconded by Susan.

**NCERA-214 Committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production**

**2018 Resolutions**

1. Be it resolved, members of the NCERA-214 Committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express thanks to Dr. Joan Burke, Jackie Cherry, Jennifer Keatts, Karen Chapman, Phillip Owens, Dan Pote, USDA-ARS, Booneville, AR, for organizing a productive and enjoyable meeting, in a wonderful location, with delicious food for the NCERA-214 sheep research and committee. (To be sent to Phillip Owens, Research Leader, 6883 S. State Hwy. 23, Booneville, AR 72927 and to Archie Tucker, Area Director, Area Director, 141 Experiment Station Rd, JWDSRC, Stoneville, MS 38776.)
2. Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 Committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express thanks to staff of *The Lodge at Mount Magazine* for providing a relaxing, well-run venue for our stay and meeting in Arkansas. (To be sent to Heidi H. Ryan, CTIS, Director of Sales and Marketing, The Lodge at Mount Magazine, 577 Lodge Drive, Paris, AR 72855.)
3. 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 Susan Shultz at the NCERA-214 meetings. (To be sent to Peter Orwick, Executive Director of ASI, 9785 Maroon Circle, Suite 360, Englewood, CO 80112-2692 and Mike Corn, President of ASI, ASI President, 212 E. Fourth St, Roswell, NM 88201).
4. Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 Committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express their appreciation to Wiederkehr Winery, Altus, AR for hosting a tour and dinner. (To be sent to Al Wiederkehr, 3324 Swiss Family Drive, Wiederkehr Village, AR 72821.)
5. Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 Committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express their appreciation to Heifer International’s Heifer Ranch in Perryville, AR for hosting a tour of the ranch. (To be sent to Donna Kilpatrick, 55 Ranch Road, Perryville, AR 72126.)
6. Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 Committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express their appreciation to Paul Rodgers for his many years of effective service to the sheep industry and to this committee. Be it further resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 Committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production wish Paul well on his retirement. (To be sent to Paul Rodgers, 2866 Hokes Mill Rd, Ronceverte, WV 24970; Peter Orwick, and Mike Corn.)
7. Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 Committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express their thanks to USDA-Meat Animal Research Center for the progress toward recruitment of a sheep geneticist to continue the important fundamental work on applied sheep genetics that has been a mission of the Center since its inception. (To be sent to Mark Boggess, Director, US Meat Animal Research Center, State Spur 18D, Clay Center, NE 68933-0000.)
8. Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 Committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express their appreciation of Dan Morrical and strongly encourage ISU to fill that position with a tenure-leading sheep scientist. (To be sent to Dr. Joe Colletti, Interim Dean of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Iowa State University, 138 Curtiss Hall, Ames, IA 50011-1050 and to Dr. Donald Beermann, Chair of the Department of Animal Science, 1221 Kildee Hall, Iowa State University Ames, Iowa 50011-3150.)
9. Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 Committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express their appreciation of Dan Waldron, who just retired from Texas A&M AgriLife Research in San Angelo, and strongly encourage Texas A&M University to fill that position with a sheep-focused research scientist. (To be sent to Dr. Patrick Stover, Dean of Agriculture & Life Science, Texas A&M University, Agriculture and Life Sciences Building, 600 John Kimbrough Boulevard, Suite 510, 2142 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843)
10. Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 Committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express their thanks to ASI’s Let’s Grow Program for providing critical funding for research and extension programs carried out by land grant universities, usually in partnership with state and regional sheep associations. (To be sent to Peter Orwick, Executive Director of ASI and to Mike Corn, President of ASI.)
11. 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 in Dubois, ID. Researchers at this station have been an integral part of our committee and a critical resource for the sheep industry for many years. We request that all vacant scientist positions be filled as quickly as possible. (To be sent to Dr. Bret Taylor, 19 Office Loop, Dubois, ID 83423-5032.)

**Host of 2019 Meeting:**

* Richard Ehrhardt stated that Harvey Blackburn (USDA-ARS), and Tom Murphy stated that Whit Stewart (Univ. of WY), volunteered to co-host the 2019 NCERA-214 meeting.
* A motion was moved by Richard to approve a joint meeting between Univ. of WY and USDA-ARS (NAGP). Motion was seconded by Curt Youngs.
* Amendment: Meeting date: sometime during the first week of June. Unanimous approval.

**Susan: ASI report**

\* Paul Rodgers. July 6 retirement. Raises Katahdins.

\* ASI has hired 2 temp. people. Erica XXX working in economics. Amy Hendrickson (WY) working on PERC and

\* Dr. Dave Thomas recognized “Camp Tender” award.

\* Discussed Sheep Production Handbook; vol. 8 (flash drive).

\* Discussed revised sheep care guide edited by Paul Rodgers. Free.

\* ASI Lets Grow funding: gave over $1 mill to industry. Al McCullum has put together XXX; can be found at landresourcecenter.com

\* Funded 57 projects and 37 completed.

\* Erica and Amy working on secure lamb and wool project; to get a “plan” for a health

**Reid Redden**

Chair of NSIP. Told the group that this is his last yr as chair. Thanked our group for those who have helped with getting NSIP info. out

120 flocks 425 now enrolled. Support from Lamb board, lets grow… increased awareness of NSIP.

**Debra Aaron**

* Re-write. going to an NC vs. NCERA-214.
* Sept. 30, 2019: our project expires.
* If we transition to NC, a lot of it is already on NIMSS. Missing is POW and Lit Cited. If let expire, we’ll need a termination request.
* Need cooperative programs/research to do a NC.
* Invites: send out to potentials to be part of our group.
* Need a writing committee for re-write or new NC: Katherine started on NC write.
* Don: gave a history of NCERA. Initially, his director gave $ not only for travel, but also research funds. He initially was upset because NCERA was just an information exchange group. It hurt his program. However, there were others that were not getting any funds from Res. Dir. and they didn’t care. In Don’s case, there were earmarked dollars for educational and res. (maybe 1 pot). Don has always hoped that we could go back to “research” group vs. just traveling to a meeting and exchanging info. It appears that it is at the discretion of the state’s director if $ trickles down.
* Mike T. made motion to terminate NCERA-214 and create NC-214
  + motion was unan. approved.

**Propose new objectives:**

1. Develop and evaluate methods to improve reproductive efficiency.

2. Develop strategies to improve animal health and well-being, 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 to address grazing strategies for animal health and well-being, and for ecosystem health, biological control of invasive plants, and wildlife mitigation.