

# ***North Central Extension and Research Activity Coordinating Committee – 190 (NCERA – 190; Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production)***

***2007 joint annual meeting with Western Extension, Research and Academic Coordinating Committee – 039 (WERA – 039; Coordination of Sheep and Goat Research and Education Programs for the Western States)***

## ***2007 NCERA – 190 Annual Meeting Minutes***

**Animal Sciences Department  
Oregon State University  
Corvallis, OR  
4 – 6 June 2007**

### **Monday 4 June 2007**

Howard Meyer, host of the meeting, introduced Dr. Jim Males, Head of Animal Sciences at Oregon State University. Dr. Males provided a warm welcome to the committees and summarized the importance of the livestock industries to Oregon agriculture.

Following Dr. Male's welcome, the participants introduced themselves. Howard then outlined the plans for the flow of station reports and breaks for the next two days. Reports alternated between objectives for the two committees. These minutes describe the order of the reports for the NCERA-190 committee.

Stephan Wildeus chaired the morning presentation of station reports for Objective 1 (Develop and evaluate methods to improve ewe reproductive efficiency) by Cornell University (Mike Thonney), North Dakota State University (Justin Luther), USDA Sheep Experiment Station (Greg Lewis), Utah State University (Tom Bunch), University of the Virgin Islands (Rosemary Driscoll), Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Dave Notter), and Virginia State University (Stephan Wildeus).

Joan Burke chaired the afternoon presentation of station reports for Objective 2 (Develop genetic and environmental strategies to improve efficiency and consumer acceptability of lean tissue accretion in lamb) by North Dakota State University (Justin Luther), USDA Sheep Experiment Station (Greg Lewis), USDA U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (Kreg Leymaster).

Joan continued as chair for the report by Dave Thomas of the University of Wisconsin on Objective 3 (Evaluate genetic resources, nutrient requirements, and production systems for milk production).

After the station reports for the afternoon were completed, Howard and Vicki Meyer graciously hosted the attendees for a lamb dinner at their home.

## **Tuesday 5 June 2007**

Following reports by stations from the WERA-039 Committee, Dr. Peter Burfening reported on the USDA, CSREES. Pete reported on changes in staffing and provided current deadlines for upcoming NRI proposals. He indicated that “letters of intent” will be required for some of the competitive programs. Pete provided a brief analysis of the effects of the continuing resolution for the federal budget on funding. No “special programs” were funded by congress, but the funds were allocated as Hatch funds to the experiment stations. The new farm bill is likely to include special initiatives on biofuels (with a consequent increase in residual feed ingredients for animal use from the use of crops for biofuels), obesity, and specialty crops.

Our administrative advisor, Dr. Dan Schaefer of the University of Wisconsin gave a brief report. He indicated that our annual report is needed in the next 60 days and that the NCERA-190 project must be rewritten by summer of 2008. Each member of the committee should be made aware of the web site address. Dan indicated that the mid-term review on the activities of the committee were favorable, that the committee is healthy but there was constructive criticism (discussed under the business meeting portion of these minutes). The reviewers suggested that funding that has been attracted by individual stations as a result of the collaborative committee should be mentioned and that examples of how we transfer technology should be given. Dan indicated that inactive members Anita Oberbauer (California) and Keith Bryant (Pennsylvania) had voluntarily been removed from the committee and there was a question about whether Jon Wheaton (Minnesota) was participating. The annual report should indicate which members not attending the annual meeting had provided valid reasons for not attending.

Following Dr. Schaefer, Paul Rodgers from the American Sheep Industry Association provided a brief summary of legislative and other issues being addressed by ASI. Jim Morgan, President of the National Sheep Improvement Program, summarized activities of NSIP and urged those of us involved in experiment stations or universities with registered sheep to enroll those sheep in the program.

### ***Business meeting***

1. The business meeting was called to order by Chair Stephan Wildeus. It was announced that both Dan Morriscal (Iowa) and Bob Godfrey (Virgin Islands) could not attend this year’s annual meeting because they were committed to other travel. However, Bob submitted a station report and sent a representative of UVI. Jeff Held (South Dakota) put together an extensive station report, but he was not able to attend due to too many other commitments; he hopes that South Dakota has a new sheep person in place by next year to participate in NCERA-190.
2. Kreg Leymaster moved and Dan Waldron seconded a motion to approve the minutes from the 2006 meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.
3. Dan Schaefer asked for further discussion about the recommendation of the administrative committee that our committee consider the issue of marketing lamb as related to the low 1-

pound per person annual consumption of lamb in the United States. Dave Notter pointed out that we have included Paul Rodgers of ASI and that ASI traditionally has responsibility for enhancing commodity marketing through the American Lamb Board. Dan Schaefer suggested that the administrative committee was concerned that our NCERA-190 committee was not committed enough to the meat science aspects of lamb marketing and that meats aspects might need addressing to increase the consumption of lamb in the United States.

Paul Rodgers was asked to join the meeting to comment. He reminded us that there is a sheep quality assurance certification program available through Colorado State University and Dave Notter suggested that we should invite one of the people involved in the program at CSU to participate on the NCERA-190 committee. It was pointed out that American lamb production can not even provide half of the 1 pound of lamb per person consumed in the United States. Paul Rodgers reminded us that lamb is the only meat for which we have an open border, yet New Zealand and Australia can not provide any more lamb to meet the demand.

Mike Thonney moved and Greg Lewis seconded a motion to invite people at CSU involved in the lamb quality audit program to attend the 2008 meeting. There was discussion about funding their travel and it was agreed that we could provide some funding with slightly higher registration fees for the next meeting, if necessary. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Dr. Raluca Mateescu from Oklahoma State University was invited to attend the meeting as an observer with the possibility of joining the committee. She was asked to discuss her sheep-related research, which consists of analyzing DNA from a backcross experiment started several years ago at Cornell University with the advice of Dave Notter (Virginia). Cornell Dorset ewes selected for aseasuality were crossed with East Friesian rams from Old Chatham Shepherding Company (a large sheep dairy). The F1 ewes were returned to the sheep dairy to produce backcrosses to East Friesian rams and milk production records are being collected from both the F1 ewes and their backcross offspring. F1 rams were bred back to Cornell Dorsets and the resulting backcross ewes have been evaluated as yearlings for their ability to breed in the spring and lamb in the fall. Raluca is analyzing DNA from the experiment to test candidate genes as markers and an array of markers across the genome related to milk production and out-of-season breeding and lambing.

Dave Notter (Virginia) pointed out that Raluca may find DNA from his selected aseasual ewes to be useful in this project to confirm any markers that she finds from the Cornell backcross experiment.

Dave Thomas moved and Dave Notter seconded a motion to invite Raluca to become a member of the committee. The motion was approved unanimously.

5. There was discussion of inactive members and Dan Schaefer agreed to check on their status. Dan Waldron suggested removing Dr. Frank Craddock (Texas) from the committee because, although Dan had been the one to suggest that Frank be a member originally, Dr. Craddock had not been able to attend and it didn't appear that he would be able to attend in the foreseeable future. Don Ely (Kentucky) submitted a station report but he was unable to

attend. It was suggested that we should encourage him to attend next year's meeting because in the past he was an active participant of the committee.

6. It was asked about whether Mike Thonney (secretary) could make an electronic version of the 2007 proceedings available to members of the committee. Mike indicated that a PDF of the proceedings was placed on a non-linked server for the purpose of review by officers and the host of the meeting and for downloading for printing, but he reminded the committee that the proceedings are intended for use only by committee members and administrative leaders so it would not be a good idea to place them on a web site. It was agreed that Mike would provide the link to the PDF to the members via email, but that the PDF would be removed about a week later.
7. There was discussion about developing a private list serve for communication among members. Dan Schaefer demonstrated that all the members can be contacted via the NIMSS web site. To do this:
  - a. Register (if not already registered) yourself on the NIMSS login homepage [http://lgu.umd.edu/lgu\\_v2/pages/login.cfm](http://lgu.umd.edu/lgu_v2/pages/login.cfm)
  - b. Migrate to the NCERA190 project at [http://lgu.umd.edu/lgu\\_v2/pages/showInfo.cfm?trackID=3851](http://lgu.umd.edu/lgu_v2/pages/showInfo.cfm?trackID=3851)
  - c. Access the list of email addresses via: Directory->Contact an Expert/Contact a Participant.
8. On behalf of the resolutions committee (Justin Luther and Dave Thomas), Justin Luther presented the following resolutions, which – after discussion and some minor modifications – were all approved unanimously:

**Resolution 1:** Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-190 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express thanks to Howard Meyer, Vicki Meyer, and other faculty/staff members and students at Oregon State University for their gracious hospitality and organization of a successful annual joint meeting of the NCERA-190 and WERA-039 sheep research and extension committees. (To be sent to Jim Males and Howard Meyer, Department of Animal Science and Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station, Oregon State University)

**Resolution 2:** Be it resolved, the members of NCERA-190 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production wish to express appreciation to the American Sheep Industry Association for the presence of Paul Rodgers and the National Sheep Improvement Program for the presence of Jim Morgan at the annual NCERA-190 meeting. (To be sent to Peter Orwick and the President of ASI and President of the Board of NSIP)

**Resolution 3:** Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-190 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production encourage all universities and USDA/ARS stations with registered flocks of sheep to enroll in the National Sheep Improvement Program. (To be sent to all Animal Science Department Heads at Land Grant Universities and Directors of USDA/ARS stations with sheep programs)

**Resolution 4:** Whereas the NCERA-190 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production is composed of sheep scientists from 15 U.S. agricultural universities and three USDA Agricultural Research Service stations, who conduct a large portion of the public sheep research in the U.S.; and whereas the committee members review each other's research and cooperate on joint research projects for the benefit of the U.S. Sheep Industry; be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-190 committee urge the American Lamb Board to direct a portion of their producer check-off funds to the support of sheep production research to improve the competitiveness of U.S. sheep producers. (To be sent to the Executive Director and the President of the Board of the ALB)

**Resolution 5:** Be it resolved, the members of NCERA-190 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production urge the [American Sheep and Goat Center](#) to continue funding of sheep and goat research as was done by the former National Sheep Industry Improvement Center. (To be sent to the Director and Chairman of the Board, [American Sheep and Goat Center](#))

**Resolution 6.** Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-190 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production, composed of scientists from 15 agricultural universities and three USDA, Agricultural Research Service stations who conduct a large portion of the public funded sheep research in the U.S., support the petition to the National Organic Program by the Southern Consortium for Small Ruminant Parasite Control to accept copper oxide wire particles (COWP, Copasure, Butler, Columbus, OH) as a control aid for the gastrointestinal parasite, *Haemonchus contortus*. This nematode causes anemia and is one of the limiting factors of organic sheep production in warm, humid climates. We have published several research articles documenting the efficacy of COWP to control *Haemonchus contortus*. There are currently no acceptable measures of control in lambs that would retain their marketability for organic production. COWP can be packaged into organic capsules and can be selectively administered to lambs at 0.5 to 1.0 grams per dose. (To be included in the official minutes of the 2007 Annual NCERA-190 meeting and available to the submitter of the petition to National Organic Program)

**Resolution 7:** Whereas a peer-reviewed manuscript resulting from a cooperative project conducted by members of the NCERA-190 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production has shown a significant increase in the incidence of rectal prolapse resulting from ultra-short docking of lambs (Thomas et al. 2003. J. Anim. Sci. 81:2725-2732), be it resolved, members of the NCERA-190 committee encourage all universities and USDA/ARS stations to dock lamb tails no shorter than at the end of the caudal fold. Be it further resolved, that members of the NCERA-190 committee encourage the Federation of Animal Science Societies (FASS) to include in the next revision of the [Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching](#) that "tails of all lambs should be docked no shorter than at the end of the caudal fold". (To be sent to all Animal Science Department Heads, Directors of Extension Programs, Directors of USDA/ARS stations with sheep programs and to the FASS)

9. On behalf of the nominations committee, Kreg Leymaster presented the following proposed slate of officers for 2007-2008:

Chair: Joan Burke (Arkansas)  
Vice-chair: Mike Thonney (New York)  
Secretary: Henry Zerby (Ohio)

The proposed slate of officers was elected unanimously.

10. It was announced that the 2008 meeting will be at the USDA Sheep Experiment Station at Dubois, ID during the second or third week of June; tentatively it is scheduled for the week of 8 June.

11. It was moved and seconded that the business meeting be adjourned and the motion was passed unanimously.

(End of business meeting minutes)

After lunch, Henry Zerby chaired the presentation of station reports for Objective 4 (Evaluate and further develop hair sheep genetic resources in easy-care production systems) by Louisiana State University (Jim Miller), Oregon State University (Joel Haas), Texas A&M University System Agricultural Experiment Station (Dan Waldron), USDA Dale Bumpers Small Farms Research Center (Joan Burke), USDA U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (Kreg Leymaster), and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Dave Notter).

After station reports from the WERA-039 committee, Dr. Woody Lane, a livestock consultant in the Willamette Valley and writer of a column on nutrition for *The Shepherd* magazine, presented information about private livestock discussion groups that he facilitates in Oregon. These groups meet monthly and delve into management and economic issues associated with the farms of members within the groups, providing the opportunity to suggest and discuss specific options to improve farm management and profitability.

The attendees then went by van to the Oregon State University sheep teaching and research farm outside of Corvallis where they were hosted by Tom Nichols, the farm manager. Several stops were made along the way to see the encroachment of false brome into natural and pasture areas. At the farm, Tom outlined the management of the OSU flock and provided a tour of the barn and the impressive New Zealand-style shearing platform he built to accommodate the many students who wish to learn how to shear sheep.

After the tour of the sheep farm, participants dispersed for dinner with a large number staying for a tour of sheep operations in the Willamette valley the next day.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michael L. Thonney,  
Secretary  
21 June 2007

Appendix 1, list of 2007 attendees, follows on page 7.

## Appendix 1. List of 2007 attendees.

Last name	First name	Location
Rodgers	Paul	ASI
Thonney	Michael	New York
Luther	Justin	North Dakota
Morgan	James	NSIP
Zerbey	Henry	Ohio
Kuber	Paul	Ohio
Mateescu	Raluca	Oklahoma
Lane	Woody	Oregon
Thompson	Jim	Oregon
Meyer	Howard	Oregon
Waldron	Dan	Texas A&M
Burke	Joan	USDA-Arkansas
Burfening	Peter	USDA-CREES
Lewis	Gregory	USDA-Dubois
Leymaster	Kreg	USDA-MARC
Bunch	Thomas	Utah
Driscoll	Rosemary	Virgin Islands
Wildeus	Stephan	Virginia State
Notter	David	Virginia Tech
Schaefer	Daniel	Wisconsin
Thomas	David	Wisconsin