

## President Letter to Members -- June

Dear DSANA Members and Friends

It's been a few months since I've corresponded with you. Most of us have finished lambing for the season and hopefully have most of the ewes adjusted to milking and filling the buckets or bulk tank. The DSANA board has several efforts going which I'll briefly highlight.

We applied for an American Sheep Industry (ASI) *Let's Grow Grant* to assist with the semen importation which was not funded. The grant application process and feedback received caused me to think about the relationship that the sheep dairy industry has with the larger sheep industry in the United States. One of the comments for not funding our proposal was that the grant readers didn't see the importation of dairy sheep semen as having a significant impact on a large enough segment of the industry. Now, I may well have not made a strong enough case in the grant application as to how this will have far-reaching impact not only on the sheep dairy industry, but also the impact that using dairy rams has on improving milk production in commercial flocks. However, I'm wondering if a bigger issue isn't that many of us have been so immersed in trying to start the dairy segment and consequently, have not been involved in the larger industry. We may well be viewed as a very small and not very significant component of the larger sheep industry for the simple reason of being under the radar.

I know there are many of you who have remained involved with ASI and state associations and I thank you for that. However, it is overdue time for DSANA to become a player in the larger sheep industry. DSANA is in the process of applying to become an organizational member of ASI. The Board will be discussing options to make our presence stronger.

A newsletter is in the process of being assembled. Please let Terry Felda ([cewritf@gmail.com](mailto:cewritf@gmail.com)) know if you prefer to receive a hard copy in the mail. Also, be sure to put the DSANA website into your "Favorites" list. The DSANA Facebook page is available to use for conversations and posting photos of your farms and operations. If you know of sheep dairy people who don't have access to the internet, please let us know so we can send out hard copies of our information. The board hopes you will enthusiastically share DSANA information and happenings.

Finally, a gentle reminder – if you have not paid your annual dues, the Board hopes you will do so. We are working to improve the value of DSANA to members and the industry. Your dues help us do this.

Regards

Laurel

## News Items

### ***Lacaune Semen Importation***

Arrangements are being finalized to import 500 straws of semen from French agency GENELEX, available for artificial insemination this fall. Semen will be available only to DSANA members. ***An information brief and agreement are attached to this email.*** Thank you to the Semen Importation Committee, Tom

Clark (NY), Yves Berger (WI) and Bill Halligan (NE) for their work in getting this to happen. Please be sure to contact Tom ([clark@dubinclark.com](mailto:clark@dubinclark.com)) before **July 1** to let him know of your interest and how many straws you want.

### ***2016 DSANA Symposium***

Dr Michael Thonney, Cornell University is serving as chair of the 2016 Symposium Committee. The Committee has revised the symposium dates to better accommodate the facilities. Please plan on traveling to Cornell University, Ithaca NY starting with an informal reception on Thursday, December 1 with the symposium starting first thing Friday morning December 2 and going through December 4. The symposia are a great way to meet new people and improve industry practices. Thank you to committee members Bee Tolman, David Galton, Nancy Clark, Bill Halligan, Marie-Chantal Houde, and Veronica Pedraza. Detailed information will be out soon.

### ***Industry Survey***

Several members of the DSANA board are working on an industry survey in an attempt to determine a baseline of where we are at as an industry. Questions like *how many ewes are you milking, what is your average production, what do you use the milk for*, etc. will be included. When the survey arrives, please be sure to complete and return it.

### ***Progeny Genetic Improvement***

A Board committee is working on identifying computer programs that would provide uniform assessment of genetic improvements. If you have information that would be of value, please contact Tom Clark ([clark@dubinclark.com](mailto:clark@dubinclark.com)).