



Greeting BBSAI Members!

Spring is here, and lambing season is in full swing. Or perhaps you are already finished! In any case, we wish you a great lambing experience this year, and look forward to receiving registration applications for all the new youngsters! In that vein, Mary Swindell has contributed an article on registration considerations. Susan Smith has contributed an informative article on horn growth. As ever, your newsletter editor is more than grateful for these and all other contributions. We encourage the membership to share tips, advice, photos, and information about your breeding programs. The newsletter is your tool to get in touch with other BBSAI breeders and to let the world know what's going on at YOUR farm! So please don't be shy, send your submissions to newsletter@blackbellysheep.org. Or, if you prefer, mail them to Barb Lee, 18555 S. Lyons Road, Oregon City, OR 97045-8611.

Happy lambing!

Note: If your email program is not set to accept HTML text, you have received a text-only version of this newsletter, which is boring because you can't see graphics and tables. If you would like to see what you've missed, or if you would like to download the newsletter from BBSAI's Web site, go to <http://www.blackbellysheep.org/newsletter/2006Apr/BBSAI2006Apr.htm>

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Barbados Blackbelly Sheep Association International Newsletter
815 Bell Hill Road
Cobden, IL 62920
E-mail: secretary@blackbellysheep.org
The Association's website is:
www.blackbellysheep.org

The Barbados Blackbelly Sheep Association International Newsletter is a benefit of membership in the BBSAI and is published quarterly. BBSAI was established to conserve and promote the Barbados Blackbelly and American Blackbelly sheep breeds. Please send changes of address to BBSAI. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.

The BBSAI Newsletter welcomes articles, photographs, letters, and classified ads that relate to American Blackbelly and Barbados Blackbelly Sheep. Publication of articles or advertisements is not necessarily an endorsement by BBSAI. No part of the BBSAI Newsletter (including photographs) can be reprinted, put on websites, or used in any manner without written permission of the BBSAI President or Secretary. Issue deadlines for articles and ads are:

January - December 15
April - March 15
July - June 15
October - September 15

BBSAI Officers

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President's Corner

The BBSAI has undergone many changes in the past few months and thanks to those few individuals that have stepped forward, most of the problems which we were facing have been resolved or are in the process of being solved. Mary Swindell has done an excellent job in resecuring our registration process and database. Barb Lee has done a wonderful job with the newsletter. The rest of us on the BBSAI board are working on some new items for this year. If we can all continue to work together, and more of our members will step up to help out, we can make 2006 a very exciting year.

I would like to close this by quoting Paul Frischknecht, president of the American Sheep Industry. He said, What have you done lately to bring added value and benefit to the U.S. sheep industry? I realize that stepping out of your comfort zone or challenging yourself to push a little further is often difficult and intimidating, but those are the exact characteristics that the sheep industry needs in its producers. Mr. Frischknecht goes on to say challenge yourself, go the extra mile, step out of your comfort zone and commit yourself to do something extra for the sheep industry this year.

Joshua B. Weimer
president, BBSAI

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New Members

Corinne Adkins, Sahuarita, Arizona
Bill and Shannon Keener, Agua Dulce, California
Scott Strickland, Bayfield, Colorado

We welcome you into our flock!

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Thoughts on Sheep Registration

By Mary Swindell

After talking to one of our BBSAI members recently, it occurred to me that there are several ways for breeders to register sheep that they plan to sell as breeding stock. Here are a few thoughts that may help as you get ready to sell your registerable lambs this spring.

Some breeders sell their sheep unregistered and let the buyers worry about the registration. This gives the buyer optimal leeway in naming their purchased sheep, and in using their own farm prefix (instead of the seller's prefix) on the BBSAI registration number. One drawback to this method is that if the buyer has complete control over selection of the name and farm prefix in the registration number, it is not easy to trace the heritage of the purchased sheep back to the farm of birth, in the event that one wishes to do so. It is also possible that the buyer may not accurately indicate all the available pedigree data on the registration application, which further diminishes the ease of tracing lineages back to sire and dam lines.

Other breeders have the buyer pay them for the registration and then the breeder sends in the registration application on behalf of the buyer. This gives the breeder the option of naming the sheep for the buyer, and allows the breeder to utilize his/her own farm prefix in the registration number, which provides a better connection to ancestral lineages for that sheep.

A third option is that the breeder can register his/her sheep in his/her own name, before they are sold. Then upon sale, the breeder can give the original registration certificate to the buyer along with the sheep. Our BBSAI registration certificate has a place on the back where the breeder can sign over the sheep to the buyer, transferring it to him/her. Later the buyer can send in the original certificate to the BBSAI with a \$5.00 transfer fee, and receive a new registration certificate for the sheep, showing the seller as the breeder, and the buyer as the owner. Even if the buyer does not immediately transfer the registration to his name, he still has a legitimate BBSAI registration certificate for his/her purchased sheep, and can wait as long as he/she likes before processing the transfer into his or her own name as "owner". The BBSAI registration certificate, when handed to the buyer upon sale, also presents a nice image of a quality breeding animal, and can be considered an addition to the value of the purchased sheep.

The last option is also nice because it maintains the farm prefix of the breeder in the BBSAI registration number. Additionally, it can easily maintain the sheep's registered name as the breeder had originally indicated. The breeder will also sometimes prefer to use his/her farm name as a part of the sheep's name (i.e., all sheep from Longview Farms would be named "Longview Greta", "Longview Annie", etc.). This kind of continuity is helpful in tracing lineage of stock in pedigrees. For instance, all sheep with an LSF prefix in their registration number (or the word Longview in their name) would most likely have been born at Longview Sheep Farm.

Again, there are many options for breeders to use when thinking about registering sheep. One option might be best in a certain set of circumstances, while it would not work ideally in another situation. The good thing is that we as seller/breeders can choose how to handle the situation in each case.

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Highlights of the BBSAI Monthly Board Meeting – March 14, 2006

Submitted by Mary Swindell

The monthly BBSAI Board meeting was held on March 14, 2006 by telephone conference. The meeting was conducted by BBSAI president Josh Weimer. Our Board of Directors transacted the following business:

1. Due to time constraints, the routine treasurer's report, membership report, fundraising report, newsletter planning report, website report, and registry report were not made this evening.
2. Review of Director Responsibilities. The Board reviewed the requirements for everyday e-mail activity and responsiveness, attendance at all periodic telephone conference call Board meetings, and appropriate support of the AB and BB breeds, which apply to all Board members. These requirements are stated in the BBSAI Bylaws, under Article VI, Directors
3. BBSAI Budget. The 2006 BBSAI operating budget was approved. The budget shows estimated income of \$2,215.00, and budgeted expenses of \$1,316.00. The resulting 2006 addition to our cash reserves will be \$899.00.
4. Advertising and Memberships. A list of advertisements and memberships for 2006 was approved by the Board. During 2006, the BBSAI will advertise in the Hobby Farmer magazine and the Record Stockman magazine. Also, the BBSAI will become a member of the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy for 2006.
5. Publishing of Registry. Several alternative methods of publishing the BBSAI sheep registry were discussed, including 1) an electronic version with various search/sort features, 2) a locally printed paper version, done at a local copy shop, 3) a CafePress printed version, available for sale through their online store, and not requiring us to commit to a certain number of printed copies. The published registry, like a stud book, could be a tool for locating breeding animals from certain bloodlines, to examine and track pedigrees, etc. It could be sorted by registration number, or by breeder. Discussion about format, cost of the document, etc. will continue during a future meeting.
6. New Board Member Appointments. Due to the foreseen need for additional Board members, two new Board members have been appointed from our BBSAI membership to serve during the remainder of the 2006 one-year term. They are Elaine Haas, a BB breeder from Missouri, and Mike Lannon, a BB breeder from Texas. The Board enthusiastically welcomes our two new Directors!

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Horn Growth

By Susan Smith
Sandoah Achers
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The horns, its all in the horns! Well of course that is a ridiculous statement, yet it is what endeared me to the American Blackbelly breed of sheep. When my sheep raising went from what I thought was to be meat sheep to trophy rams, I began to do a study on horns genetics. If I may, I would like to share with all of you in a short series what I learned about horns.

Horn growth is an important part of raising trophy rams. The two biggest factors between horns and trophy size horns are genetics and nutrition In my opinion these two factors need to be used in equal proportions to create that gold, silver and bronze class trophy ram.



Horn growth begins from a bony core. Around the core of bone, keratin, which is a material similar to human fingernails and is found in hooves, creates the actual horn growth. Over the years, the keratin completely covers and extends beyond the bony core. The bone core ensures the growth of the horn, and as the years pass, the core develops a multitude of honey combed looking chambers. This provides places for the blood vessels and nerves. Then the vessels and nerves support, maintain and provide the means for additional horn growth.

I found it interesting that in cold climates heat loss through the horn surface causes substantial slowing in horn growth. So let's say people raising horned stock in California, having the same genetics I have in my sheep here in Michigan, stand a better chance at year around horn growth than I do.

Rams do not shed their horns like an elk, moose or a deer does. Their horns continue to grow all of their lives and can become much of the ram's stature within a herd by his capacity to produce large horns.

The growth of the horns depends on a variety of factors, including diet. Throughout life, horn development depends on the minerals and protein received along with genetics. It took over a year to seek out and put into action what I felt for me were the best genetics I could find and afford. Then it took another 6 months of close work with a nutritionist to help me get the correct grain mixture with the correct protein and mineral content for horn growth.

Some of my lambs being born this year have horns popping out of their cute little heads before they are 24 hours old. This may be the norm for many trophy ram breeders, but for me, I was surprised and pleased.

I hope this was interesting and maybe helpful for you. I look forward to sharing more about horns with you in the next BBSAI newsletter.

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[Calendar of Blackbelly Events](#)

If you know of any upcoming events in which American or Barbados Blackbelly Sheep are participating, please notify the editor at newsletter@blackbellysheep.org

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Thank you for being a loyal BBSAI member. We value your membership and will continue to strive to be a good resource for you. Please let us know how we are doing and share with us any ideas you may have about what the BBSAI can do for you.

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