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# SVF Rare Heritage Breeds Pasture Walk

On June 17, 2010 SVF was very pleased to host a pasture walk organized by RIRLA. The evening began with a walk through our foot bath and pulling on of plastic booties; biosecurity protocols which everyone good-naturedly endured. In our main office participants watched a short video introducing the program at SVF Foundation (the genetic preservation of rare breeds of livestock), which was followed by a lively discussion of niche and local marketing. We were lucky enough to be joined by Dr. George Saperstein from Tufts University who acts as SVF's chief scientific advisor and had much to say about agriculture, heritage breeds, and our New England processing systems.

After discussions wrapped up the group went on a brief tour of the historic Swiss Village and down to the SVF laboratory. Dr. Dorothy Roof, SVF's Lab Supervisor,

explained her role in the processing and storage of germplasm collected from livestock. The evening concluded with a walk out to the main barn and animal facilities. Some of the rare breeds on-site were pointed out and highlighted, with histories explained. This was a great educational and networking opportunity, we had a blast and hope to see you all again in 2011!

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# NEWS

Summer 2010

Volume 4 Issue 1

## RIRLA Holds First Lamb and Pork Cut Workshop

The RI Raised Livestock Association, in partnership with Westerly Packing, and sponsored by URI Cooperative Extension and USDA, held its second Meat Cuts Workshop – Pork and Lamb on Thursday, May 20<sup>th</sup> at Westerly Packing's facility in Westerly, RI. Approximately ten people attended the event, including RIRLA members and other interested individuals. The workshop gathered rave reviews from the participants, who declared that they found the session very informative.

The workshop began with Medoro Trombino, head meat cutter, providing a review of hog cuts using a poster-sized pork cut chart. Participants asked a few questions and then headed into

the cooler for a review and discussion of the hog, including primal and cuts. The group then moved to the cutting room where Medoro Trombino and Javier methodically cut the half-side into all its component pieces while all the while explaining different facts about the cuts as well as problems and decisions they often face when cutting. The same process was repeated for the lamb carcass.

The RI Raised Livestock Association is hoping to repeat these very informative workshops during the winter of 2010-2011 or possible early spring 2011. Stay tuned for more information on this and other educational events, including the last two pasture walks of the season.



## Final Pasture Walk of the Year

**October 21, Thursday**  
**Grain-Finished Black Angus Beef:**  
**Production & Marketing**

Hosts: Kevin & Ann Marie Bouthillette  
 @ Blackbird Farm

Join Kevin and Ann Marie Bouthillette for a tour of Blackbird Farm and a discussion of production and marketing of grain-finished Black Angus beef. Hear how Blackbird Farm approaches the breeding and raising of their certified Black Angus beef and learn about how Ann Marie and Kevin approach the marketing of their beef and other farm products including turkeys and eggs.

Members free, non-members \$10.

Contact Kim at 401-575-3348 or  
[RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net) for

more info. 5:00 p.m., 122 Limerock Rd.,  
 Smithfield, RI. 401-578-3959



# A Report from the Director of RIRLA, Kim Zieglmayer



Greetings once again to all RI Raised Livestock Association members and all the other folks that have an interest in the work of RIRLA. We are now almost at the end of summer! Unbelievable how fast time flies! I know all of you have been working very hard on the farm. I hope that you have had a chance to enjoy yourselves this summer in some way, shape or form.

First, I must make mention of two very special people.

The Board of Directors of RIRLA, and myself, would like to wish Todd Johnson, owner of TJ Hay & Grain in West Greenwich, much strength and courage, and send our hopes and prayers for a speedy recovery as he battles cancer. Todd has been a wonderful, enthusiastic supporter of RIRLA from the very beginning and we stand ready to assist him and Jeanne in whatever ways we are able.

The Board of Directors of RIRLA, and myself, would like to extend our sincere condolences and sympathies to Stu Nunnery on the loss of his wife Mary Beth. Stu has not only been a force for agriculture in the state over the last several years, and a strong supporter of RIRLA – he was also a source of strength and comfort for his wife over the last 2 and a half years when she was ill.

I wanted to welcome the new (and old) Officers of the Board for the 2010-2011 year. Pat McNiff is President for his second term. Will Wright is now Vice-President. Jane Christopher is the new

Treasurer and Martha Neale is the new Secretary. Many thanks to the “old” team for your service – bye for now to Louie Vinagro and Heather Minto, past VP and Secretary, respectively.

Speaking of the Board, the Board members met in August with a facilitator to begin a discussion about planning for the future of the RI Raised Livestock Association, including a strategic planning process that will take place in 2011. If you have ideas or concerns you want to bring to the Board’s attention please contact Pat McNiff, Board President at [patrickmcniff@hotmail.com](mailto:patrickmcniff@hotmail.com) or 401-413-9770.

I am very happy to share some really great news with all of you – the RI Raised Livestock Association’s website, [www.rirla.org](http://www.rirla.org) is up and running! I would like to invite you all to take the time, if you haven’t already, to check out it out! It is a really good-looking site with great information and resources and lots more to come.

While the website is still a “work in progress” you will find lots of resource there already! Look for the Sales Permit Technical Assistance package online, information about membership, the price list for the Processing Scheduling Service, cut sheets, and past issues of the newsletter, just to name a few. One of the features we will be looking to “develop” is the Classifieds section. We would like this to be a real resource to our members and others to help you find agricultural services, products, livestock, feed and more. Please call or email Kim with your items for sale or wanted.

The website is an important step for RIRLA, not only to provide a resource for our members (which is primary) but also to provide a place for the public to learn about RIRLA and its farmer members, and give people information about why they should support RIRLA and its members. This website will help educate the public about the benefits of locally raised meat and why they should purchase it, and it will also help bring customers to you, our members. A list of

RIRLA farmer members who direct market their meat to the public is available on the website, and has also been distributed to the general public at various outreach events. Please contact Kim at 401-575-3348 or [RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net) if you would like to have your farm listed.

As you may know, another exciting event is coming up, the RI Raised Livestock Association’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Farm Supper! The Fundraising Committee has been working hard to put together a excellent event that will feature RIRLA member meats and lots of other delicious local food. The Supper will be taking place in mid-October or early November. Look for the invitation in the mail and get ready for another great time!

RIRLA has had a lot of educational events take place since the last time we sent out the newsletter in the spring! This is one of the great benefits of being a member of RIRLA. Pasture walks are free for members, and members are given a discounted rate for other events like tours and workshops. Here is the list of what’s been going on: the tour of the Processing Scheduling Service on April 10; the Pork & Lamb Cuts Workshop on May 20; the Rare Heritage Breeds Conservation pasture walk on June 17; and the Multi-Species Rotational Grazing and Mobile Poultry Processing Unit on July 15 and the Grass-fed Beef: Production and Marketing at Aquidneck Farm on August 19.

There are two more pasture walks scheduled for this year: Working with NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) on September 16; and Grain-Finished Black Angus Beef: Production and Marketing on October 21. (See the Calendar section on page 13 for more details on these events). We are working in collaboration with URI Cooperative Extension and are supported by the USDA and RI Rural Development Council to bring you these wonderful educational opportunities.

Speaking of collaboration, RIRLA continues to meet with the Large Animal Veterinary Working Group. This group, as you may know, was “gathered” together



by one of our local Ag heroes, Dr. Scott Marshall, State Veterinarian. The group is working to find solutions to the chronic shortage of livestock veterinarian services that plague some areas of the state. The group met recently and continues to move forward and make progress. See the brief update on the Large Animal Veterinary Working Group on pg. 9 for more details.

Speaking of more collaboration, I met recently with Hannah of Farm Fresh RI to talk more about how we can get more local meat to Rhode Island's restaurants. There are many chefs that want to support local agriculture and buy local. Unfortunately, distribution is one of the weak links in the chain, and a place where Farm Fresh is looking to step up and help. Stay tuned for more details. Contact Kim if you would like more information on the work in progress.

The Processing Scheduling Service has been very busy this summer, and dates are just about filled up for the rest of the year for beef, though there are plenty of slots available for hogs, lambs, goats and veal. Please contact Kim as far in advance as possible to schedule your animals to ensure you are able to reserve the dates that are convenient for you.

Some great news from Westerly Packing! Their new double-chambered

cryovac machine is up and running! (see the picture on this page) This means better seals and less breakage for you. Also in the works is a steam chamber to shrink wrap with the cryovac, increasing the quality still more. More improvements are on the way including more freezer space, all of which will help Westerly Packing better serve you, our members.

While we are on the subject of processing, another update for you. RIRLA met with Horizon Bradco (manufacturers and servicers of RIRLA's scale/label machine) in March to discuss equipment upgrades that would make it possible for Westerly Packing to provide inventory reports and customized labels with farm logos. Unfortunately, due to logistical and business difficulties, the new parts were delayed for quite awhile. The good news is that the upgrades should be installed and up and running by fall. I know a lot of you have been waiting anxiously for the inventory reports. It

won't be long now. I will let everyone know when everything's ready in an upcoming Email Blast.

Well, that is about it for now. I would like to extend a huge thank you, once again, to all of the dedicated volunteers who make this organization work for RI's livestock farmers. Big thanks to Jane Christopher and Chris Ulrich for all their hard work putting together this



newsletter. Please don't hesitate to contact me at 401-575-3348 or [RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net) to schedule your animals, discuss an idea or voice any concerns you may have.



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## Got Worms???

### New 3 Year Multi-State Project Receives Funding

University of Rhode Island Professor Katherine Petersson is inviting all small ruminant producers to be a part of improving small ruminant parasite control in New England. Gastrointestinal nematodes, particularly the barber pole worm, are serious problems for small ruminant producers. Dr. Petersson has recently received a USDA SARE grant to help producers reduce or eliminate reliance on chemical dewormers in favor of more sustainable solutions, to research the efficacy of condensed tannins in cranberries and the effect of vitamin E, and to improve on-farm practices through



education and farm visits. If you want to learn more about alternative parasite management techniques (FAMACHA, body scoring, and fecal egg counts for detecting infection), and pasture management practices that minimize the transmission of parasites (mixed-species grazing, pasture rotation, and breeding for resistance), this project is for YOU. Contact Katherine Petersson TODAY at 401-874-2951 or [kpetersson@uri.edu](mailto:kpetersson@uri.edu) (preferred)

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*RIRLA wishes to thank our funder, The Rhode Island Rural Development Council for its support.*

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# Veterinarians in Demand; Help Protect Our Food Supply

by Nathan Smith

Imagine you're a rancher. It's 2 a.m. and a cow giving birth needs professional medical attention. The only problem is that the nearest veterinarian is 100 miles away. For a growing number of livestock producers across the country, this emergency scenario is a harsh reality. America faces a farm animal vet shortage like never before, leaving many farmers and ranchers wondering who they will call the next time their livestock needs emergency care.

A total of 1,300 U.S. counties have less than one food animal vet per 25,000 farm animals. Approximately 500 counties with more than 5,000 farm animals have no large animal vet at all. The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a 33 percent increase in demand for large animal vets by 2016. That equates to roughly an additional 22,000 jobs to fill. Many in the industry are understandably concerned about the future availability of veterinarian services.

If this troubling trend continues, farmers and ranchers won't be the only ones feeling the pressure. Veterinarians are the front-line defense against animal disease. According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, the growing shortage of food-animal vets could weaken long-established protocols for identifying and eradicating animal diseases, some of which could be transmitted to humans.

Admission to veterinary schools is highly competitive. While universities see the need for more students, some educators and officials have said they prefer not to increase class sizes, in order to maintain educational quality. Further compounding the issue, most veterinary school graduates prefer to pursue a

companion-animal practice and live in a metropolitan area. Approximately 2,500 students graduate each year from the 28 accredited veterinary medicine programs across the country.

A single veterinary student incurs on average \$106,000 in school loan debt over the course of his or her studies. Naturally, after completing their education, many seek to find the best income source possible. Many students who might otherwise pursue a large-animal practice choose to work in larger urban areas in order to pay back loans sooner.

Thankfully, this crisis is not occurring without notice from industry and congressional eyes. In recent years, legislation has been proposed that would provide incentives to students who start practices and work as food-animal veterinarians. Two programs are currently in place that aim to entice students to consider working as food-animal vets.

The AVMA and its charitable organization, the American Veterinary Medical Association, have developed the Food Animal Veterinarian Recruitment and Retention Program. This debt forgiveness program is available to students who commit to four years of employment working with food animals. This program is projected to support 50 large-animal veterinarians over a five-year period.

A government program sponsored by the Agriculture Department, the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program, will pay \$25,000 per year for qualified loans to eligible students. Students must agree to work for the National Institute of Food and Agriculture for three years in areas with a significant shortage of food-animal veterinarians.

Unfortunately, under this program, government dollars awarded to vet students are currently subject to federal income tax. The American Farm Bureau Federation is working to change that by supporting legislation that exempts federal and state funds received under such programs from being taxed. If the VMLRP were tax-exempt, one additional student for every three could be supported and additional funding would not be required. The proposal is not without precedent, as VMLRP's counterpart for human medicine, National Health Service Corps, allocates tax-free loans for students in the medical, dental and mental health fields.

Regardless of your involvement in animal agriculture, whether it's at the ranch or the restaurant, the security and productivity of America's food supply depends heavily upon food-animal vets. They provide essential services around the clock and the calendar. When you have the opportunity to talk with young people about career choices, don't forget to mention a rewarding career in veterinary medicine.

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*A Texas native and recent graduate of Tarleton State University, Nathan Smith was the public relations intern this summer for the American Farm Bureau Federation.*

*Reprinted with permission.*



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# Slaughterhouse Options Shrink for Small Farmers

By Karen Miltner, Rochester (N.Y.) Democrat and Chronicle

ROCHESTER, N.Y. — In some respects, John Bermon says, his livelihood as a small-scale livestock farmer is out of his direct control.

The owner of Aberdeen Hill Farm produces pasture-raised pork, lamb and beef in Gorham, N.Y. Before he can sell his meat at nearby farmers markets or deliver it to customers in the Rochester area during winter months, he drives his animals more than 80 miles to the Leona Meat Plant in Troy, Pa., where they are slaughtered and processed in a small, family-owned facility that is inspected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. If the plant gave up doing USDA inspections or went out of business — as many of its size have — Bermon says his business model would collapse, as would those of a lot of other livestock farmers who rely on small-scale USDA-inspected slaughterhouses to move their meats from pasture to plate.

Without the USDA stamp of inspection, Bermon and other livestock farmers could not legally sell their meats at the retail or wholesale level. For now, Bermon's business is safe. Mike DeBach, owner of the Leona plant, says he has no plans to close. He says he would like to give up USDA inspection because it is so onerous, but he wouldn't because so many of his customers rely on it.

Concerns that it might close have legitimate basis in recent history. In the early 1980s, there were about 150 slaughterhouses throughout New York that were USDA-inspected. Now there are fewer than 40, says Marty Broccoli, agriculture development specialist at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oneida County.

The shortage is not unique to New York, though its severity varies from state to state, says Lauren Gwin of Oregon State University, co-coordinator of the Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network. Some states, such as Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, have "a wealth of great processing resources" for niche meat

producers, while others, such as Vermont and California, do not, she says.

According to a 2009 report by the consumer rights advocacy group Food & Water Watch, the number of state and federally inspected facilities nationwide shrank 20% from 2002 through 2007. The decline of small-scale USDA-inspected slaughterhouses comes as the demand for pasture-raised niche meats is soaring, thanks in large part to the local foods movement, the concern over food-borne outbreaks and media focus such as the Oscar-nominated documentary *Food, Inc.*, says Jim Ochterski, agriculture economic development specialist at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County, N.Y.

There are many small livestock farmers, such as Bermon, ready to meet that demand. "The bottleneck in the process is the lack of USDA slaughter facilities," Ochterski says.

Reasons for the decline vary, according to the Food & Water Watch report. Consolidation is a major factor. As of 2005, nearly 85% of U.S. beef was being processed by the four top companies — Cargill, Tyson, Swift and National Beef Packing.

## Families in the business

Another factor is younger family members not wanting to continue the business, Broccoli says. Slaughterhouse work is hard and dirty, the hours are long and the profit margin is extremely slim, he says. As owners approached retirement age, family members or other interested parties have not stepped up to take over the business, Broccoli says. And unlike the mega assembly line slaughterhouses of the Midwest, smaller facilities need more highly trained workers who understand the process from start to finish, Broccoli says. In recent years both skilled workers and training to develop them have diminished, he says.

New safety requirements mandated by the USDA have also played a role.

Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points (HACCP), a management plan to address hygiene and food-safety risks, became mandatory in 1998, and difficult for small-scale facilities.

"It's hard for the little businesses to comply with all the paperwork," says John Pagliuso, owner of Joe's Meat Market in Ontario, N.Y.

HACCP record-keeping requires so many steps to be recorded that Pagliuso says he has to pull administrative staff from their desks to monitor and verify what workers on the kill floor are doing, which slows down work flow considerably, he says. To make matters even more challenging, this spring the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service proposed rules that would require extra in-plant testing and documentation to be part of HACCP plans. The cost would be especially prohibitive for small processors who typically have a more diversified product line (and therefore, more HACCP plans to follow), says Gwin.

Meat-processing trade organizations such as the American Association of Meat Processors say it's unclear what exactly the new rules would dictate processors to do. "We are not even sure if this approach is valid scientifically," says Gwin.

Small-scale livestock farmers have other selling options, but they are not always convenient for the average household. One is to sell a live animal directly to the consumer, who then, as the animal's owner, takes responsibility for arranging slaughtering and processing. The practice is commonly known as the freezer meat trade; consumers usually can purchase half or quarter as well as the whole animal.

As long as the meat is to be consumed exclusively by the owners and will not be resold, it can be processed at a USDA custom-exempt slaughterhouse, which operates with fewer requirements than a USDA-licensed facility.

A USDA custom-exempt facility must be inspected on a regular basis, but



each meat order is not, according to “A Resource Guide to Direct Marketing Livestock and Poultry” by Martha Goodsell, Tatiana Stanton and Jim McLaughlin.

## Good News

Not all the news is bad, says Kathleen Harris, processing and marketing coordinator of the Northeast Livestock Processing Service in Sprakers, N.Y. In Washington County, N.Y., a custom-exempt slaughterhouse recently transitioned to USDA inspection. Meanwhile, in Oneida County, a temporarily closed USDA-inspected plant will soon open under new ownership, and things look hopeful for a full-service organic slaughterhouse to open in the near future as well, notes Broccoli. The Glynwood Center, a farmland preservation organization in Cold Spring, N.Y., is overseeing the state’s first mobile slaughterhouse that serves livestock farmers in the lower Hudson Valley. The unit just received its final USDA certification and is now operating, says spokeswoman GERALYN GRAHAM. Similar red-meat mobile processing units are already being used in a handful of states, including California, Washington and South Dakota.

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## USDA Announces Availability of Compliance Guide for Mobile Slaughter Units

Contact:

USDA Office of Communications  
(202) 720-4623

WASHINGTON, May 24, 2010

- As part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) ‘Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food’ initiative, USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) today announced the availability of the compliance guide for mobile slaughter units. This document presents recommendations and is not a regulatory requirement. FSIS will post this compliance guide on its Significant Guidance Documents Web page at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Significant\\_Guidance/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Significant_Guidance/index.asp).

“USDA is excited to offer this help to small producers and encourages establishments who own or manage mobile slaughter units to use this guidance document to help meet food safety regulatory requirements,” said Deputy Under Secretary for Food Safety Jerold R. Mande. “Food must be safe, regardless of where it is produced, and FSIS has worked with mobile unit operators to develop inspection procedures tailored to their needs.” A mobile slaughter unit is a self-contained slaughter facility that can travel from site to site. Mobile slaughter units can help producers meet consumer demand for locally grown and specialty products and can serve multiple small producers in areas where slaughter services might be unaffordable or otherwise unavailable. Therefore, mobile slaughter units can help small producers expand their businesses and create wealth in rural communities. Currently, there are five FSIS-inspected red meat mobile slaughter units in the United States.

The Mobile Slaughter Use Compliance Guide is intended for owners and managers of a new or existing red

meat or poultry mobile slaughter unit who want their establishment to come under Federal inspection and continue operations in accordance with Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) regulations. Mobile slaughter unit operators are subject to the same regulatory requirements that apply to a fixed (“brick and mortar”) facility. The guide also includes the procedures necessary to receive a Federal grant of inspection, unique concerns that may arise with mobile slaughter units, and links to regulatory requirements and resources.

FSIS is seeking comments for this compliance guide and will consider carefully all comments received. Comments will be accepted from May 25, 2010 through July 26, 2010 and submitted to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) (follow the online instructions at that site for submitting comments) or by mail, including floppy disks or CD-ROMS, and hand- or courier-delivered items to: Docket Clerk, USDA, FSIS, Room 2-2127, George Washington Carver Center, 5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Mailstop 5474, Beltsville, MD 20705-5474. All items submitted by mail or electronic mail must include the Agency name and docket number FSIS-2010-0004. Comments received in response to this guide will be made available for public inspection and posted without change, including any personal information, to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov).

For further information about mobile slaughter units, contact Mark Cutrufelli by telephone at (770) 304-8919 or by e-mail at [Mark.Cutrufelli@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:Mark.Cutrufelli@fsis.usda.gov). FSIS is committed to working with small and very small plants to help them improve their food safety systems. Inquiries can be made to the Small Plant Help-Desk by toll-free telephone or by e-mail. The Help-Desk is open from 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays. To speak to a staff specialist during this time, call 1-877-FSISHelp (1-877-374-7435). Customers may also contact the help-desk by e-mail at [InfoSource@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:InfoSource@fsis.usda.gov).

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# Large Animal Veterinarian Working Group *UPDATE*

As some of you may know, a Large Animal Veterinarian Working Group was formed in 2009 by Dr. Scott Marshall, State Veterinarian. Working Group participants represent organizations include RIRLA, the RI Division of Agriculture, the Veterinarian Tech Association, Tufts University veterinarians, the Farm Bureau, and individuals who are practicing veterinarians and livestock farmers.

The group held its first meeting in November 2009 and has continued to meet regularly to discuss issues and work on potential solutions related to the chronic shortage of large animal vets in some areas of Rhode Island. Led by Dr. Marshall, activities have included a survey of all veterinarians in Rhode Island and an application to the USDA to establish Rhode Island as area eligible for a veterinarian loan forgiveness program.

Here is an update on some of the topics the group has been working on:

**Continuing Education** - for livestock farmers as well as for veterinarians willing

to work with livestock but that feel they need refresher. An educational program at URI for farmers and veterinarians is one possibility. The RI Veterinary Medical Association may also consider sponsoring continuing education for vets.

**USDA designation** – the USDA, through NIFA has defined RI as a shortage area for large animal veterinarians, meaning that a newly graduated veterinarian is eligible for veterinary loan repayment, pending funding, through the Veterinary Medical Loan Repayment Plan. This is good news but there are still technical issues that need to be resolved before this program can be implemented.

Veterinary Technician program at URI - URI has been talking about a veterinary technicians program for some time. Students will graduate from that program as veterinary technicians that are either certified or eligible for certification. The vision is that private veterinarians could serve on the URI faculty to instruct these students. The

students could then treat animals under the supervision of that veterinarian. This would maximize efficiency of working large herds and would lend itself to establishment of a treatment clinic, possibly at URI.

There has also been discussion of the RI Raised Livestock Association facilitating and scheduling herd health visits to farms in areas of the state with a chronic vet shortage. One possibility would be that the vet would be “in town” for the day and go from one farm to the next performing routine health maintenance activities. Kim Z will keep RIRLA members posted on this opportunity if and when this comes on line.

All in all, great news and great progress on the large animal vet issue. Many thanks to Ken Ayars and Dr. Marshall for facilitating this group, and to all the other participants in the Large Animal Veterinary Working Group for all your hard work! Let's keep it up!

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## Sheep prefer Leafy Spurge and Knapweed to Grass

### Staff Report

BOZEMAN, Montana: Research at Montana State University Sheep Institute indicates that sheep actually prefer leafy spurge and knapweed to grass.

Leafy spurge and knapweed are invasive weeds in cattle-only grazed pastures.

In the Montana studies with sheep, there was a 60 to 70% utilization of leafy spurge and a 30 to 40% utilization of grass.

In similar studies looking at knapweed, there was a 50 to 60% utilization of knapweed and a 30 to 40% utilization of grass and a 10% utilization of forbs.

Nutritionally the two noxious weeds were found to be similar to alfalfa.

Apparently, sheep largely avoid toxins

in the weeds by only eating the leaves and flowers of the plant and ignoring the stem.

They also dilute the toxins by eating some grass and forbs. In pastures grazed by sheep for at least two years, the leafy spurge composition decreased about nine percent per year, while the grass component increased by 10 percent.

The research suggests that grazing sheep on cattle-only ranches can positively impact ranch profitability.

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Stockman Grass Farmer*



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SVF Foundation is a non-profit collaborating with Tufts veterinarians to cryogenically preserve unique genetic traits of endangered breeds. If you are interested in providing us with or acquiring livestock please call (401) 848-7229.

**A Bridge to the Future for Heritage Breeds**  
Preserving embryos and semen of rare and endangered breeds of livestock

152 Harrison Avenue, Newport, RI 02840

## Taking A Personal Interest



The mainstay of Farm Family has always been the personal service we provide to our clients. Our knowledge and experience have given us a unique perspective in the agriculture and business communities. We have always been committed to bringing quality products and service to you, your business and your family — and that commitment won't change.

For more information contact:

### John T. Howard Agency

780 Victory Highway - Suite 1

West Greenwich, RI 02817

Phone: (401) 397-1050

**Farm Family**  
Life Insurance Company  
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# Storage & Disposal of Farm Veterinary Supplies

By Jan Ludington

We have all seen pictures on the news about hypodermic needles showing up on beaches or other public locations, posing a health risk from punctures, diseases or sickness. We also hear growing evidence that new resistant strains of disease and illness are the result of improper use or disposal of medicines. What about the handling of veterinary and farm waste generated from your animal operation? Do you give your own vaccinations or inject antibiotics, or doctor occasional wounds? These practices all generate some form of waste and all must be handled in specific ways. Proper storage and disposal of farm veterinary supplies should start at the beginning with the purchase of any supply or product to be used in farm animal operations.

## Purchasing Medicines and Vaccines

Medicines and vaccines should only be purchased through a veterinarian or licensed livestock medical outlet. Check the expiration dates and methods of storage and transport on the labels. Only purchase medicines that are approved for the use for which they are intended. Do not purchase medicines for non-extra label use OR mix combinations of medicines without the advice of a veterinarian. Purchase only enough product that can be used by the expiration date.

## Control

Keep an inventory of all medicines and a medicine usage record book in a readily accessible place. Review usage with your vet from time to time; and record dosage amounts, reason for used, animal i.d., reactions or other pertinent information. Note administration and withdrawal times no later than 72 hours after administration. Create a reference binder or file of labels for all products you use. Keep records as to where each medicine is stored and the expiration dates.

## Storage

All medicines and medical equipment should be stored in a secure place out of the reach of children. Establish a designated place to store medical supplies and store according to label guidelines. Proper storage improves effectiveness and reduces treatment errors. Different classes of products should be stored on separate, labeled shelves. Small dorm size refrigerators work well for products which need refrigeration. Keep the storage area neat and clean. Never store food in the medicine storage areas. Always clean the tops of partially-used bottles with alcohol before re-storing.

Store the following products in a refrigerator between 2-8° C:

1. All vaccines. Ones containing modified live organisms will not be near as effective if stored at room temperature
2. Hormones, e.g. oxytocin
3. Iron
4. Some antibiotics, e.g. penicillin

Store in a dark cool (8-25°C) storage cabinet to prevent product decomposition due to heat and light sensitivity

1. Some antibiotics
2. Sedatives
3. Stimulants
4. Vitamins and minerals
5. Disinfectants
6. De-wormers

## Disposal

Guidelines are set forth by each state on how to properly dispose of medical and veterinary waste. In Rhode Island check with Scott Marshall, State Veterinarian at 401-222-2781 x. 4503 or the Department of Environmental Management. You may be able to identify a local vet, hospital, pharmacy, physician, or dentist office that will accept farm or household generated medical wastes. Check with them regarding what they accept and charges involved.

## Sharps

Sharps are classified as any items that are capable of causing cuts or punctures thus posing a threat by reaction, infection, illness or injury. They include needles, syringes, scalpels, lances, blades, glass slides, pipettes or broken glass bottles or vials. Sharps should be collected in a sharps container. These can be purchased from various places. Or you can use an empty bleach or detergent bottle made of heavy plastic. Glass bottles, thin walled containers like milk jugs, coffee cans, soda cans or bottles are not acceptable. The container should be clearly labeled as a sharps receptacle and when full should be sealed with a piece of duct tape.

## Drug and Vaccine Containers

These are any container that contains or has contained any medication or vaccine including: mastitis tubes, topical sprays, de-wormers, ointment tubes or jars, vitamin or mineral bottles, or any container holding any agents that could contaminate the environment with chemical or infectious materials. Read the label information for guidance on disposal.

Unused products should never be dumped down the drain, toilet or on the ground. Discarding them carelessly may cause harm to humans, wildlife and fish. Live or modified live viruses can be rendered non-infectious by adding bleach to the medicine container.

Disposal should be in a rigid hard plastic container like a bucket or a rigid cardboard box lined with a heavy-duty plastic bag & clearly labeled. Check with your local landfill about acceptance of these materials.

## Miscellaneous Medical Waste

Other medical wastes that may be generated on livestock farms may include gloves and bandages. These items should be placed in securely fastened leak-proof

bags and disposed of with the regular trash.

Other waste can include pesticides and rodent control products. Read the labels for disposal advice for these products. Contact the RI Department of Environmental Management or RI Resource Recovery Corporation (RIRRC) at 401-942-1430 for more information on how to properly dispose of these materials.

Last but not least, contact Brenda Titus at New England Med Waste Services (401-385-9997) or [Brenda@nemedwaste.net](mailto:Brenda@nemedwaste.net) for more information, or visit [www.nemedwaste.net](http://www.nemedwaste.net).

## Brooklyn Canterbury Large Animal Clinic Adds Associate Veterinarian

After two years of working alone, Dr. Alice Ennis, DVM is delighted to announce that Dr. Cara Kneser, DVM, has joined her clinic as an associate veterinarian.

Cara has accompanied Dr. Ennis on her rounds for the last two years while completing her degree at Tufts University. She brings to the practice a combination of maturity, life experience and an excellent education. Cara has worked with large animals since high school, working on horse farms, beef and dairy operations. She and her husband also operated their own dairy farm in upstate New York for 10 years before moving their family to Bozrah where she was employed by Blue Slope Farm until she began attending veterinary school. Prior to attending vet school, Cara was an active 4-H volunteer, as each of her 4 children have been members of 4-H.

B/C Large Animal Clinic is committed to providing a range of services, whether you have a backyard horse or a riding stable, a flock of sheep, goats, or camelids, a dairy farm or family cow. They strive to formulate a treatment plan individualized for your herd or animal, keeping your philosophy and desires in mind.

Drs. Ennis and Kneser look forward to providing you with quality veterinary care for years to come. New clients are welcome. They currently provide services to clients in Connecticut and Rhode Island, and hope to expand the geographical area they cover as soon as their workload allows. Call Pauli Haggis, office manager, to schedule an appointment. If you have an emergency after business hours, our answering service will take your information and the veterinarian on call will contact you as soon as possible.

Telephone: 860-546-6998

BCLAC is located at 143 Depot Road, Canterbury, CT 06331

## Processing Schedule

At this time of year and into the fall/autumn the Processing Scheduling Service becomes VERY busy and books up quickly. Appointments, for BEEF in particular, may not be available for 4-6 weeks or more. Availability of appointments is on a first come, first served basis. You can request to be put on a waiting list for a particular date. The farther out you are able to schedule your appointments the more likely you are to get the dates you want. Below, in the Calendar section, are listed all the available appointments through December 2010. Contact Kim to schedule your animals: 401-575-3348 or [RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net)

## Calendar

### September 17-October 3

Eastern States Exposition "The Big E"  
1305 Memorial Ave., West Springfield,  
MA 01089

Go to [www.thebige.com](http://www.thebige.com) for schedule, tickets and more information.

### September 27, Monday

Board Meeting –  
RI Raised Livestock Association  
Gregg's Restaurant, Rt. 2, North  
Kingstown, RI 6:30 p.m.  
Join the RI Raised Livestock Association  
Board of Directors in their monthly Board  
meeting and give the Board your input on

the Association. Contact Kim to suggest  
agenda items 401-575-3348 or [RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net)

### September 28, Tuesday

Processing Scheduling Service –  
RI Raised Livestock Association  
Closed for BEEF.

Contact Kim to schedule your animals:  
401-575-3348 or [RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net)

October 5, Tuesday

Processing Scheduling Service –  
RI Raised Livestock Association  
Closed for BEEF.

Contact Kim to schedule your animals:  
401-575-3348 or [RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net)

### October 10, Sunday

Fall Lambing Clinic –  
RI Sheep Cooperative  
Hopkins Southdown Farm,  
1125 Danielson Pike, N. Scituate, RI  
10:00 a.m.

Join Don and Deb Hopkins, who have  
been raising and showing Southdown  
sheep for many years, for a fall lambing  
clinic. Nancy Minitor will be doing  
an embryo scanning demo, and Deb  
Hopkins will discuss what they use for  
estrus synchronization. Beginning at 10  
a.m. and featuring a pot luck lunch with  
various members providing different  
lamb dishes. Attending coop members  
and friends are asked to bring a large dish  
to share for lunch. Contact Polly Hopkins  
at 401-949-4619 or [khop4811@aol.com](mailto:khop4811@aol.com)  
for more information.

### October 16 & 17, 2010

**New York Sheep & Wool Festival**  
will be held on at the Dutchess County  
Fairgrounds, Rhinebeck, New York.

### October 18, Monday

Board Meeting –  
RI Raised Livestock Association  
Gregg's Restaurant, Rt. 2, North  
Kingstown, RI 6:30 p.m.  
Join the RI Raised Livestock Association  
Board of Directors in their monthly Board  
meeting and give the Board your input on  
the Association. Contact Kim to suggest  
agenda items 401-575-3348 or [RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net)

### October 19, Tuesday

Processing Scheduling Service –  
RI Raised Livestock Association  
Four slots available for BEEF  
Contact Kim to schedule your animals:  
401-575-3348 or [RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net)

### October 21, Thursday

Grain-Finished Black Angus Beef:  
Production and Marketing  
Blackbird Farm, 122 Limerock Rd.,  
Smithfield, RI 5:00 p.m  
Join Kevin and Ann Marie Bouthillette for  
a tour of Blackbird Farm and a discussion  
of production and marketing of grain-  
finished Black Angus beef. Hear how  
Blackbird Farm approaches the breeding  
and raising of their certified Black Angus  
beef and learn about how Ann Marie and  
Kevin approach the marketing of their  
beef and other farm products including  
turkeys and eggs. RIRLA members free,  
non-members \$10. Contact Kim to  
reserve your space 401-575-3348 or  
[RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net)

### October 23, Saturday

RI Sheep Cooperative Fall Meeting  
So. Foster Fire Station, Rt. 94, Foster, RI  
5:00 p.m.  
Pot luck dinner served at 6:00 p.m.  
Program to follow. Contact Polly Hopkins  
at 401-949-4619 or [khop4811@aol.com](mailto:khop4811@aol.com)  
for more information.

### October 26, Tuesday

Processing Scheduling Service –  
RI Raised Livestock Association  
Four slots available for BEEF  
Contact Kim to schedule your animals:  
401-575-3348 or [RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net)

November 9, Tuesday  
Processing Scheduling Service – RI Raised  
Livestock Association  
Eight slots available for BEEF  
Contact Kim to schedule your animals:  
401-575-3348 or [RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net)

### November 6 & 7, 2010

**DON'T FORGET** the first **Fiber Festival  
of New England** to be held at the Big E  
Fairgrounds in West Springfield. Many  
of your friends will be there buying their  
fiber for winter projects .... don't miss  
out!

### November 16, Tuesday

Processing Scheduling Service –  
RI Raised Livestock Association  
Seven slots available for BEEF  
Contact Kim to schedule your animals:  
401-575-3348 or [RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net)

### November 23, Tuesday

Processing Scheduling Service – RI Raised  
Livestock Association  
Closed for BEEF  
Contact Kim to schedule your animals:  
401-575-3348 or [RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net)

### December 28, Tuesday

Processing Scheduling Service –  
RI Raised Livestock Association  
Eight slots available for BEEF  
Contact Kim to schedule your animals:  
401-575-3348 or [RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net)

## Opportunities

### Got Equipment, Animals or Hay to Sell? Services to Offer?

As part of its effort to become a true  
resource for farmers, RIRLA is looking  
to develop the "Classified" section of the  
RIRLA website, but we can't do it without  
your help! We need listings for For Sale,  
Services and Wanted. Listing is FREE!!  
Contact Kim at 401-575-3348 or  
[RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net) to list  
your item, service or need.

### Got Worms?

#### URI Cooperative Extension

Are you a sheep or goat producer  
interested in improving parasite control  
on your farm this year? A new, three-  
year, multi-state project will help you  
increase your knowledge of parasite  
control strategies; learn about your farm's  
parasite profile; reduce your de-wormer  
use and improve your animal health.  
Contact Katherine Petersson at  
401-874-2951 or [kpetersson@uri.edu](mailto:kpetersson@uri.edu)  
or Kristen Castrataro at 401-256-7393.

### USDA Animal Disease Outbreak Plan – comments requested

The USDA National Center for Animal

Health Emergency Management  
(NCAHEM) has published three draft  
documents to serve as protocols for a  
response to a Foreign Animal Disease  
(FAD). FADs are diseases that in  
addition to being "foreign" to this  
country, have the potential of causing  
severe financial losses, losses of large  
numbers of animals, and depending  
on the disease, severe interstate and  
international trade restrictions.

To review the Animal and Plant Health  
Inspection Service (APHIS) overall  
Framework for Foreign Animal Disease  
Preparedness and Response go to:  
<https://fadprep.lmi.org>. (New users will  
need to follow link - "need access?" - to  
establish their user name and password).  
Deadline for comment is September 30,  
2010. Send questions or comments to:  
[FAD.PREP.Comment@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:FAD.PREP.Comment@aphis.usda.gov).  
To review the Swine Industry and  
Dairy Industry manuals go to:<https://fadprep.lmi.org>. (New users will need  
to follow link - "need access?" -  
to establish their user name and  
password). Deadline for comment is  
August 15, 2010. Send questions or  
comments to: [cfsph@iastate.edu](mailto:cfsph@iastate.edu), subject  
line "Swine Industry Manual Comments"  
or "Dairy Industry Manual Comments,"  
respectively.

To learn more about and provide input  
into the New England FAD plan for the  
Dairy Industry contact Rich Horwitz at  
[rhorwitz@cox.net](mailto:rhorwitz@cox.net) or 401-289-0198 or  
401-497-3991.

### List Your Farm

As a marketing service to its members  
the RI Raised Livestock Association  
is developing a list of farms that sell  
their locally-raised meat to the public.  
You must be a MEMBER of RIRLA to  
participate. This list is distributed to the  
public at outreach events, restaurants  
that request it, RIRLA's new consumer  
members as part of their membership  
package, as well as being available on  
RIRLA's website. Contact Kim at  
[RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net) or  
401-575-3348 to have a form emailed  
or faxed to you.



## **\$1.3 Million Available RI Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Office**

The RI Farm Service Agency has \$1,393,000 available to lend beginning farmers to purchase a farm or to make improvements to an existing farm. Call 1-800-551-5144 or 401-828-3120 for more information.

## **Large Animal Veterinary Services**

Dr. Barbara Korry, DVM is available to provide rabies vaccinations for livestock. Appointments will be available on Monday and Tuesday mornings and Saturday afternoons, please call 401-732-4050 to schedule. Rabies certificates will be provided. Please note that if you are planning to show your animals the rabies vaccination must be administered at least 30 days before the show unless it is a booster.

Dr. Dan Hochman, DVM of New Canaan, CT is offering veterinary services for livestock. Please call 203-972-7387 for more information and availability.

## **Wholesale Opportunity With Farm Fresh RI's Market Mobile**

Farm Fresh RI Market Mobile is a wholesale local food distribution program. We work with over two dozen local food producers and distribute to 50-60 restaurants across the state each week. In the past 20 months, we've done over \$500,000 in sales and continue to grow each week. We are looking for a few more livestock farmer to join the program, especially those with beef. Market Mobile works through an online ordering system, and orders are delivered every Thursday morning to our warehouse in Pawtucket. Farmers set their own prices. There is a 15% delivery/service associated with the program. If you are interested, please fill out an **application** or contact Hannah by email at [hannah@farmfreshri.org](mailto:hannah@farmfreshri.org) or by phone at 401 447 9984

## **Events**

### **RIRLA Fundraiser**

Look for more details on this upcoming event, taking place in mid October or early November! Featuring RI Raised Livestock Association member meat and other delicious local food, a silent auction, live music and more! Look for the invitation in the mail.

## **Classifieds**

### **Ram Lambs For Sale**

Jane Christopher and Chris Ulrich have three ram lambs ready to go. All have the same Texel sire. One Texel/Dorper cross, one Texel/Katahdin cross/ one Texel/Border/Leicester-Cheviot Cross. All born 2/2010. Should make good meat sires. Two additional Texel/Katahdin rams born 7/2010, ready to go mid-October. Call for prices/photos. 401-647-3292, [vgcese@verizon.net](mailto:vgcese@verizon.net)



### **Welsummer Pullets, Red Devon Cows For Sale**

Don and Heather Minto have Welsummer pullets, ready to lay. \$10.00 each.

A nice selection of Devon cows also available, call for further information. 401-423-0005

### **Rhode Island Raised Livestock Association**

P.O. Box 640, N. Scituate, RI 02857

[RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net](mailto:RIRaisedLivestock@verizon.net)

Editors: Chris Ulrich  
Jane Christopher  
[vgcese@verizon.net](mailto:vgcese@verizon.net)

RIRLA News is published quarterly by the Rhode Island Raised Livestock Association. RIRLA's mission is "to promote the preservation of our agricultural lands, our rural economy, and our agrarian way of life by creating an organization that will secure a viable infrastructure and provide for the efficient and sustainable production, processing, and marketing of quality, value added, locally produced meats in the state of Rhode Island".

Annual membership begins at \$40 per RI farm, includes the newsletter and free classifieds on our website – **RIRLA.org**. We also accept unsolicited donations. RIRLA News welcomes articles, photographs, letters and classified advertising for possible publication. Publication of articles or advertisements is not necessarily an endorsement by RIRLA. Articles from this newsletter may not be reprinted without permission. ©RIRLA 2010

### **RIRLA Executive Board**

Patrick McNiff, President, 413-9770  
Will Wright, Vice President, 392-3469  
Jane Christopher, Treasurer, 647-3292  
Martha Neale, Secretary,  
Don Minto, Past President Ex Officio  
423-0005

## **RIRLA Sponsorship and Advertising Information**

### **Sponsorship**

Cost: \$250/issue

Ad size: Full page plus special acknowledgement

Distribution: Over 225 RI, MA and CT farms and farm related businesses

Published: Quarterly - January, April, July, October

### **Advertisements**

(Dimensions: width x height)

**Business card – 3-1/2" x 2"**

Cost: One time rate: \$25  
4X rate: \$85 (4 issues)

**1/4 page ad – 3-1/2" x 4-3/4"**

Cost: One time rate: \$50  
4X rate: \$175 (4 issues)

**1/2 page ad – 7-1/2" x 5"**

Cost: One time rate: \$75  
4X rate: \$250 (4 issues)

**Classifieds:** 25¢/word