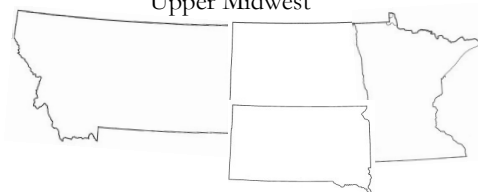




Dakota Lamb Growers Co-op News

Proudly serving producers in the
Upper Midwest



Volume 10, Issue 1

Summer 2021

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Submit calendar events, ads
and article ideas to:
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Website:
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From DLGC President Riley Braaten

Greetings Fellow Shepherds,

Well what a year it's been. From hot and dry weather for us in the Midwest to lamb markets that hit record prices. Some producers have had tough decisions to make on whether they should keep replacement ewe lambs with these high prices or if they should sell them and wait another year by not culling many ewes. Yet cull ewe prices have been so strong that many producers have cleaned house with their flocks and shipped those ewes that are not meeting their standards, and with feed prices being so high that might be the best economical decision. We get many calls about this market and how long it's going to stick around. Visiting with people in the industry, they seem to think that \$2.00 cash lambs may be the new normal. **History has told us different** with a hard crash after such high prices. When we hit that high earlier this summer there was some resistance from the consumers. We have since fallen off of our highs about \$0.30 – 0.35. Seems as though we may have stabilized for now. Only time will tell what will happen.

The DLGC Board contacted Superior Farms when cash prices outpaced our contract. After months of tough negotiations, the Board did agree on a one year contract with Superior Farms which improved the bottom line for our producers. We will start a negotiation process again early this winter with them. We know many producers are not happy with the difference between the cash market and the contract this year. We have finally hit a time, as of right now, where the contract is as high or higher than the cash. We as producers must fulfill our signed contracts with Superior Farms. Please make every effort to deliver the number of lambs you contracted for. The 2021 contract results will impact our 2022 negotiations. Contact Phyllis if you need to know the number of lambs you contracted. We all are hoping we have entered into new times in the sheep industry and our hard work will be blessed with profitable prices.

As another summer comes to an end, we at DLGC are thinking about our members. We hope everyone has enough feed, or has been able to secure additional feed, for the winter. We hope everyone has a safe harvest. And, we all pray that the rains continue into the fall so subsoil moisture can be restored back to normal.

May you find all the tagged ears in your flock alive and well.

Riley Braaten, President

New Members Highlights

Please join the Board of Directors in welcoming the following members:

- ♦ **Daniel & Rita Meseberg**, Watertown, SD. 225 Ile de France/Polypay and Poly/Suffolk breeding ewes. Lambing January - mid May.
- ♦ **Justin & Jill Weatherford**, Florence, SD. 250 Hampshire/Polypay/Targhee breeding ewes. Lambing February - May.
- ♦ **Lisa & Chuck Dennert**, Frederick, SD. 300 Dorset/Suffolk breeding ewes. Lambing February.
- ♦ **Doug Baldwin**, Merrill, IA. 400 Poly/Poly cross breeding ewes. Lambing January - March, September.
- ♦ **Greg Wagner**, Webster, SD. Growing the herd from 37 breeding ewes of SAMM/Ile de France. Lambing April.
- ♦ **Hoiten Polypays**, Montrose, SD. Owned by **Robert & Laura Hoiten** and **Doug & Rose Hoiten**. 175 Polypay breeding ewes. Lambing January - April.
- ♦ **Thomas & Olivia Salentiny**, Fulda, MN. Expanding from 40 breeding Polypay ewes. Lambing February - March.
- ♦ **Matt Brehmer**, White, SD. 150 Rambouillet/Suffolk ewes. Lambing in May.
- ♦ **Randy Gravley**, Russell, MN. 200 crossbred ewes. Lambs year round.

For Sale

FOR SALE: 11 mid-sized round rye straw bales. \$40/bale. Contact Dan Meseberg at 605-880-8859.

FOR SALE: Nice registered Polypay ram lambs. Ready to go to work. Montrose SD. Priced at \$500-550. Contact Robert Hoiten at 605-771-9874

FOR SALE: Ile de France rams and ewe lambs. Visit our website hasbargenlandcattle.com to view current sale offerings.

FOR SALE: Guard Dog and Border Collie Puppies. Contact oneillfamilyfarm54@gmail.com or 507-458-6244.

FOR SALE: DLGC Equity Shares.

Rob Dallmann, 605-994-7398 (active member with extra shares)

Robin Sik, 507-920-6214 (sold herd in 2020)

Stephanie DeJaeghere, 507-828-5754 (sold herd in 2019)

Please send any **Wanted** or **For Sale** ads to Phyllis. They could be added to the weekly carcass market report, posted on the DLGC webpage, and put in the next newsletter.

Dakota Lamb Growers Cooperative 2021 Annual Meeting

December 9, 2021 in Fargo, ND

Please plan to attend the in-person Annual Meeting being planned for Thursday evening, December 9th in Fargo, ND. It will be in conjunction with the North Dakota Lamb & Wool and Minnesota Lamb & Wool Convention on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 10 & 11. More details will be sent later.

Superior Farms

Jaylene Scott, jaylene.scott@superiorfarms.com; 303.749.5281

(this article was written early in 2021)

Hello Dakota Lamb Growers,

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Jaylene Scott and I am the new buyer for the Dakota Lamb Group. I have been with Superior Farms for the last 8 years and come from a ranching background in Northern California where my family raises sheep and cattle. I started buying for the Dakota group back in July and look forward to continuing to work with each one of you moving into the future.

This last year has been an unprecedented time for the Sheep Industry. We have seen a significant change in how lamb is being bought and consumed. COVID-19's effect on our industry has created a significant decline in foodservice business and an explosion of business on the retail side. Consumers are staying home and trying new things in the kitchen which has been a positive for the lamb industry because it is bringing new consumers to the table. We have adjusted our operation to meet these changes in demand and hope to continue seeing new consumers of American lamb.

Moving into 2021, Colorado feedlot inventory on February 1st is up 8,982 head from 2020 but down 18,757 head from the five-year average. Demand for nontraditional lambs continues to take light lambs out of the system and keep the industry in short supply. With inventory weights being current and a tight supply, the market is strong and looks favorable to stay strong through Easter and into the summer months. Light lambs (100lbs and down) are in high demand and continue to see significantly higher prices. The pelt market has seen some improvement which will benefit the live market as well.

As mentioned above, we are seeing some positive trends in the pelt market for 2021. We are seeing an increase in prices and demand for better unshorn and shorn pelts. They still need to be over 8.5 square feet with a larger demand for 10 square feet or better. Clean pelts are seeing better pricing than muddy pelts or pelts with heavy tag. We have been assisted in the market due to a decreased market presence in China from Australia. The tanners believe that with the new US administration in place that tariffs and trade concerns will wane. We continue to discard lower quality skins and we are hopeful that this will change soon.

As a company, dirty lambs are something we struggle with during the winter months. It slows down our chain speed and is extremely hard on equipment and the kill floor team. Dirty lambs create contamination issues and can create problems with the USDA. Clean lambs are crucial to our ability to run efficiently. Producers taking proactive steps to shear, kill strip or bed heavier during inclement weather greatly helps with our ability to process lambs through the system during the winter. *[cont. pg 4]*

Superior Farms (continued)

{cont from pg 3} I'm sure many of you are curious about the current status of the camera grading system in Denver. COVID-19 has created unforeseen delays on this project and pushed it into 2021. Superior Farms had every intention that the Denver Camera would be providing feedback to our producers in 2020. As with many other things in our lives, 2020 had a different plan. Pieces of equipment needing to be shipped to the plant, as well as the technical support for the camera company could not physically get to our plant. During the delay we continued to work on the producer portal side to ensure as soon as data was being collected, we would be able to send it to our individual producers. Every producer is in the system with a specified username and password and as soon as we get the green light from USDA, we will plan on having a Q&A training session so that each Dakota Lamb Growers member understands the data coming back to them on their lamb's performance. We are even more anxious than you to provide this and I assure you we are moving as quickly as possible to get it validated by USDA.

Thanks to feedback from producers, Flock 54's version 3 will be coming out in March. Flock54 will have 50 new markers to help provide more relevant results on your flock. Flock54 is truly in its infancy and with each new version of the panel producers will find new disease and production traits identified to help understand your flock's genetic makeup and areas of improvement. We take constructive criticism of the panel and suggestions for new traits very seriously. As producers, you know the traits that need to be tested for better than anyone. Flock54 is meant to be a tool to improve an operation's bottom line through improvements to production. A few of the new markers on version 3 will be to improve the accuracy of results for parentage as we added in even more parentage markers as well as Haplotype 4 for an improved Ovine Progressive Pneumonia (OPP) score. To find out more on Version 3, start a genetic improvement plan for your flock, or discuss traits that you would like Flock54 to test for please feel free to reach out to Karissa Isaacs, karissa.isaacs@superiorfarms.com, or call 970.629.1539. Don't be late to the game, get your 2021 replacement ewe lambs tested as they are born so you can have a better understanding going into the next breeding season.

Superior Farms greatly appreciates our continued partnership with the Dakota Lamb Growers. We would not be able to supply a quality product to American Lamb consumers without your help as producer partners. We are optimistic for 2021 and the future of the American Lamb Industry. Thank you for everything you do and we hope that 2021 is a successful, prosperous year for DLGC and the American Lamb Industry.

Bulk Items

Milk Replacer: The January 2021 group order of Shepherd's Choice Milk Replacer (Premier1) for DLGC members was over 11,000 lbs. We hope those who participated had good results with the milk replacer. Feed back is always welcome. We'll try to continue doing this in the future.

Dog Food: Let Phyllis know if you would be interested in the idea of a group order of Dog Food. If there is enough interest, we would check into options.

Other Items of interest: Are there other things we could purchase as a group to keep costs down?