THE BLUE NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE BLUEFACED LEICESTER BREEDERS ASSOCIATION VOL.. 5, NO. 4 WINTER 2007

A GLANCE AT 2007

What an amazing year 2007 was for the Bluefaced Leicester.

From the lambing barn to the show ring, from the shearing stand to the fiber artist, from the grassy hills and pastures to the finished lamb, the Bluefaced Leicester is proving just how versatile he really is.

2007 marked another great year of Bluefaced Leicester including a number of 'firsts' for the breed in North America.
On the show front, the Bluefaced Leicester had enough entries to hold its own breed classes at both the Black Sheep Gathering in Oregon, and at the Michigan Fiber Festival. Then in October it was off to Rhinebeck, NY for the NYS S&WF where the Bluefaced Leicester was touted as the featured breed, and held its 1st National Specialty. The first Bluefaced Leicester was also shown at the prestigious North American International Livestock Exposition, this natural colored ram owned by Kelly Mansfield of Spring Breeze Farm in West Virginia went on to win the CH NCLW and Best Fleece.

On the educational front, the power of the pen has reached far and wide. The September issue of The Shepherd magazine featured an article by Graham Phillipson of Littledale Farm in Wisconsin, titled "Replicating the UK 3 Tier Breeding System". This discussed how to utilize a crossbreeding program where the Bluefaced Leicester is at the center of the system to produce grass finished lamb. The Bluefaced Leicester along with the necessary Hill and Upland ewe breeds provide commercial sheep producers the necessary genetics to produce healthy, natural, grass fed lamb. The December issue of Sheep! Magazine had an article submitted by Jared Lloyd from Molina, Colorado titled "True Blue Calling" which was also about utilizing the Bluefaced Leicester in a cross bred breeding program as well as giving an overview of the breed in general.

As for expanding our horizons! From the east to the west coast and beyond our northern border into Canada, the Bluefaced Leicester is on the move. The spring of 2007 saw the border open for USA exports in to Canada, and it didn't take long for Bluefaced Leicesters to start making the trip across the Border. The first ram to cross the border came from New York's Blue Island Farm, he went up along the east coast to Nova Scotia in mid-July followed a day or so later by a load of five Beechtree Farm, Bluefaced Leicester lambs thru Port Huron into

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Ontario. Within weeks there was another trip thru Port Huron, of Beechtree Blues, that were split once across the border, with 2 natural colored ram lambs headed for Alberta, and several adult ewes went to join the previous shipment of lambs already at Bill Stearman's 'Willow Garden Farm' in Ontario. Later in the summer, more exports went out thru Montana to Alberta from a group of west coast breeders, and another one from Ward Farms that headed to Nova Scotia.

The New Year is racing full steam ahead. There have already been articles about the recent exports to Canada in the January 2008 issue of The Shepherd magazine 'The Bluefaced Leicester Returns to Canada' submitted by Kelly Ward. And thanks to the collaborative efforts of Linda Wendelboe from Alberta, and Bill Stearman in Ontario, the winter 2007 issue of the magazine 'Sheep Canada' features the Bluefaced Leicester in an article titled 'The odd couple: Shetland and Bluefaced Leicesters.'

Plans are in the works for more Bluefaced Leicester classes at major shows across the country, and another gathering of Bluefaced Leicester breeders at Estes Park is in the planning stages. There is a growing number of Hill, Upland, and Terminal breed groups involved with the North American Mule Sheep Society and the 3-tier crossing scheme. With regional promotional displays and educational presentations on the grass fed scheme being planned across the mid-west. The first exports of the New Year went thru Port Huron on January 7th, 2008, headed once again to Ontario, and Willow Garden. Several serious enquiries for more exports are slated for this spring and summer, once the Canadian recipients have completed their Canadian Scrapie flock enrollment requirements.

The word is out on the Bluefaced Leicester and it is spreading like wild fire!

It's Time to Renew!
BFLBA 2008 Annual Dues Renewal Notice

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$ 10 Associate Membership
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Please make checks payable to: Brenda Lelli –'BFLBA'
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Coopersville, MI 49404

*** For New and Renewing Members, a printable membership application is available on the BFLBA.com website under 'Membership'**

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PENNSYLVANIA FARM SHOW

Sheep to Shawl contest

January 2008

Report by: Rachel Goodpaster

Art and I were on the 4-H sheep to shawl team, our team name was The Lovely Lambs and ornery rams of Lebanon. We all had to wear sheep hair clips, Art was the only guy and he was having fun goofing off with the clips. He was the carder and I was captain of the team and the spinner. We were the only youth team out of 7 teams' total. We were the 1st off the loom but we were also 20 inches below the minimum length that the shawl had to be. Despite the length issues, we still were able to place 4th overall. We were soooooooo excited to place that high even though we competed against professionals and we were that short. After the competition is over each team auctions off their shawl, the proceeds from our shawl are used to purchase equipment for our 4-H club.

Our shawl had to have a theme which for us was a military theme. Our shawl was bright red and yellow with a dark navy blue, definitely the most vivid colored shawl in the competition. The shawl warp was BFL blended with Mohair. The roving came from Rhinebeck, so not from one of mine or Art's sheep. The weft was Corriedale. The BFL warp definitely made it softer because last year we used Jacob and there is no comparison.
We decided against using a Blueface sheep for competition because we felt that the fleece was going
to be too difficult to card. I am thinking about coating my Blueface to use for next year.

Kathy was a judge and she gave us a ton of credit for using the fine fleece and encouraged us to use all BFL next year. Art is going to ask her to come to show our group the best way to prepare the fleece for spinning in the grease. Kathy has challenged us both to produce a total BFL shawl for next January's competition. It should all work out, between my flock and Art's sheep and hopefully a lamb for him soon, we should have plenty of fiber.

Judges comments:

I had a good day with Rachel Goodpaster and Art Lester at the PA farm show yesterday. They were contestants in a sheep to shawl, using BFL for the warp. I reprimanded them (with a wink) for not using it in the weft too but they had a good excuse. I told them I'd let them use one of my sheep next year for the competition. I was judging so I couldn't be biased. Their shawl came out too short but they won 4th place. The BFL warp made it feel wonderful. Great kids!

Kathy Davidson

Our complete team with our display
Our shawl had to have a theme which for us was a military theme

Tying the knots on the shawl
We are the first team off the loom!!!!!

The Lovely Lambs and Ornery Rams of Lebanon team and the buyer of our shawl

Editors Note:

BFLBA Members and Youth Conservationist Award recipients:
Art Lester - Awarded the Potosi BFL in 2007
Rachel Goodpaster - Awarded the Beechtree BFL in 2006

WHY SFCP?

MY PERSPECTIVE

Mark Lelli, DVM

Recent changes in USDA rules that regulate importation of ovine semen from countries other than AU and NZ, allow producers to import and use imported semen in any flock that's listed in the scrapie national database (i.e. the "mandatory" program). These rules also require that records of any sale of F1 progeny including buyer information be kept for 5 years and made available to an APHIS representative on request. Rules pertaining to scrapie surveillance of the exporting country and the donor animals remain unchanged. For the most part these countries use OIE(*1) guidelines for their animal health regulations and often meet or exceed our importation requirements. In June of 2007, USDA - APHIS revamped the standards for flocks enrolled in its voluntary scrapie surveillance program, (SFCP). These rule changes put additional burdens on enrolled producers. Most notably, all animals over 14 months of age found dead must be reported. For complete monitored flocks the producer may or may not be required to arrange for fallen stock to be processed and evaluated for scrapie as designated in appendix 1 of the SFCP standards. For export monitored flocks, all fallen stock over 14 months of age or that has lambed in the flock must be processed in such a manner in addition to other more stringent requirements. So what is the point of all this?

For some time now USDA has prohibited the importation of live animals and embryos of certain species, mostly because there has been no effective mechanism in place to contain and monitor these animals and their progeny for specific diseases. This responsibility is not just from a need to maintain the health of the national flock/herd and food supply, but also to address the concerns of the constituency to which the USDA answers; the American consumer. For sheep, the revamped SFCP rules will help move the surveillance of scrapie in enrolled US flocks to a level equal to that of the international community. I see this as the mechanism needed to begin a process that could open the door for exportation of live animals and other sources of germplasm, (embryos), to Canada and other countries and possibly also facilitate importation. Although new import requirements have not been proposed yet; the current inclination is to move closer to the OIE guidelines(*2). SFCP export certification does just that. In the end, I suspect flocks wishing to import such will be required to be export certified. So how hard is that?

Becoming SFCP export certified shouldn't be that difficult for most small purebred flocks as long as;

1) Those flocks are maintained in such a manner that they do not experience high adult losses from endemic infectious diseases or poor management.

2) It is economically feasible to codon test all animals in the flock and live animal test all animals in the flock that are considered 'genetically susceptible animals' as defined in the SFCP program standards.

3) USDA -APHIS approves rectal biopsy as a live animal test for the purpose of monitoring export monitored SFCP enrolled flocks. (APHIS has completed an evaluation of the test and USAHA passed a resolution requesting that USDA approve the test)

In my view, I see no reason to discontinue enrollment in the SFCP at this point in time. While the new program standards could result in higher producer costs in some circumstances, it also increases the overall value of those flocks that are able to comply with the requirements leading to certification in the complete monitored or export monitored categories.

(*1) The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)

(*2) OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code (2007) CHAPTER 1.4.1.

http://www.oie.int/eng/normes/mcode/en_chapitre_1.4.1.htm

THE HEALTHY BLUE

Ask the Veterinarian

Send your sheep health questions and article suggestions to:

BFLBA@aol.com Attention: The Healthy Blue column

Be sure to read future issues of ***The Blue News*** for a response.

BLUES IN THE NEWS

Lebanon County Fair, PA
July 2007

Ram lamb	1st Goodpaster, PA
Aged ewe	1st Goodpaster, PA
Yrlng Ewe	1st Goodpaster, PA
Ewe lamb	1st Lester, PA
CH BFL	Goodpaster, PA
Res CH BFL	Lester, PA

Howard County Fair, WV
August 2007

Other Meat Breeds

Yrlg Ewe	3rd Mansfield, WV
	5th Mansfield, WV
Ewe lambs	
	4th Mansfield, WV
	6th Mansfield, WV
Res CH	Mansfield, WV

Emmet County Fair, MI
August 2007

Lamb husbandry	
Res. CH	Talcott, MI
Wool class	
1st place	Talcott, MI
Best in Show	Talcott, MI

Jenna Talcott
w/ Beckonhills 'York'

Shenandoah Valley Sheep Festival
October 2007

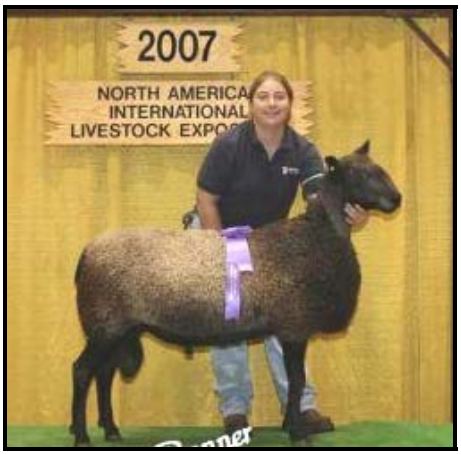
Res. Sup. CH Mansfield, WV

Kelly Mansfield
w/ Beechtrees 'Titanium'

N.A.I.L.E., KY
November 2007

Natural colored Longwool Show

Yrlg ram	1st Mansfield, WV
CH Ram	Mansfield, WV
Best Fleece	Mansfield, WV



Kelly Mansfield
w/ Beechtrees 'Titanium'

New York State
Sheep & Wool Festival
October 2007

White Longwool show

Yr. Ram	4th Lelli, MI
Pr. Ram lamb	5th Lelli, MI
Yr. Ewe	3rd Lelli, MI
	5th Lelli, MI
Exhibitors flock	
	4th Lelli, MI

Natural Colored Longwool Show

Yr. Ram	1st Lelli, MI
Ram lambs	5th Lelli, MI
	5th Lelli, MI
Pr ram lambs	2nd Lelli, MI
Yr. Ewe	2nd Lelli, MI
Pr. Yrlg Ewe	4th Lelli, MI
Exhibitors flock	
	4th Lelli, MI
Pen of 3	5th Lelli, MI

Beechtrees 'Drambuie'
1st Place NCLW Yr. Ram

Beechtrees 'Rhone'
2nd Place NCLW Yr. Ewe

THE BLUE GOURMET

Lamb Loin with Apricot Stuffing

2.5 – 3 lbs butterflied boneless loin of lamb
(trim off outer covering and fat)
Rub:
2 teasp. ground cumin
¼ teasp. Sea salt
¼ teasp. pepper
Mix cumin, salt and pepper together, and use ½ of it as a rub, the other ½ for the stuffing.

Stuffing:
5 oz. dried apricots, finely chopped
¼ cup toasted pinenuts or/ sunflower seeds
2 slices bread, finely cubed
1 TBSP olive oil
1 TBSP water
Stir above ingredients together along with the remaining ½ of the cumin, salt & pepper mix.

* Optional ¼ cup dried cranberries 'craisins'

Working on a flat surface lay out 5 – 8 pieces of butcher's string (approx. 10" long). Lay the lamb, opened out like a butterfly on top of the strings. Season the lamb with ½ the cumin rub and pile the stuffing in a neat row along the center length of the lamb. Fold the sides of the lamb over the stuffing to make a roll, and tie together at about 1" intervals.
Sear rolled lamb in olive oil, 3-4 minutes on each side, until browned. Then position seam side down in a roasting pan, and bake at 350 degrees F, for 40–50 minutes, or until desired doneness. Baste the lamb halfway through cooking with the juices.

* I used a bottled 'Apricot & Ginger Grilling Sauce' for the basting juice.
Let rest for 10–15 minutes, then slice thickly and serve with the pan juices.

Approx. 6 servings

This recipe is an adapted version from Gordon Ramsay's 'The f-word' television show.
His complete recipe for: Saddle of lamb with apricot and cumin stuffing can be found at: http://www.channel4.com/life/microsites/F/fword/saddle.html

Lamb loin with Apricot and Cumin stuffing

Cranberry & Walnut Salad
With mixed spring greens

Mixed baby spring greens
Slices of Pear
Golden Raisins
Dried cranberries 'Craisins'
Toasted Walnuts
Crumbled Blue Cheese
Poppy seed dressing

Cranberry & Walnut Salad
With mixed spring greens

Gourmet Corner

What is your favorite savory and delicious way to use grass fed lamb?

Send to: BFLBA@aol.com

THE BLUE NEWS

Advertising

Camera-ready display ads:

	Per issue	Annual
full page	$40	$110
half page	$25	$70
¼ page	$15	$40
Business card size	$10	$30

Classified ads: Flat rate $10 per issue (40 words or less)
Payment: All ads are prepay. Make check payable to Brenda Lelli, 'BFLBA' and mail with your advert to the Editor.

Correspondence to:	Deadline for Newsletter:
Brenda Lelli, Editor	March 15 – Spring issue
17496 88th Ave.	July 15 – Summer issue
Coopersville, MI 49404	Nov. 15 – Winter issue
616-837-1872	

MEMBERSHIP

- Annual BFLBA Membership: $15 (includes subscription to *The Blue News*)
- *The Blue News* – 1 year subscription: $10
- Make checks payable to Brenda Lelli, 'BFLBA'. Send to Secretary: Brenda Lelli, 17496 88th Ave., Coopersville, MI 49404. (616) 837-1872, BFLBA@aol.com.

EVENTS CALENDAR

May 3-4, 2008 – Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival
Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD
www.sheepandwool.org

June 2008 – Heart of America Fiber Festival
Missouri State Fair, Sedalia, MO
www.moncwga.com

June 14-15, 2008 – Estes Park
Estes Park, CO
www.estesnet.com

June 20-22. 2008 – Black Sheep Gathering
Lane County Fairgrounds, Eugene, OR
www.blacksheepgathering.org

For more information on BFL's
Visit: www.BFLBA.com
Or join:
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BluefacedLeicesters

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For Sale: Clun Mules, and North Country Cheviot Mules. Also available Terminal sires of NZ x UK Suffolk genetics, and grass fed lamb. For details contact: Muleflock@aol.com, or visit www.Muleflock.com

For Sale: Registered Bluefaced Leicester breeding stock, imported and domestic bloodlines available. White and natural colored ewes and rams for sale individually or in groups (discount given for multiple purchases). For more information, please contact Nancy Cox Starkey at NCStarkey@aol.com , or www.TrialandErrorAcres.com

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