

Minutes of the First Meeting of the
North American Wensleydale Association

November 18, 1999 - Louisville KY

Present: Martin Dally, Deb Gourley, Jane Caulfield, Kim Caulfield, Kevin Brackney

This meeting was held for the purpose of forming an association of sheep breeders whose goal is to establish and promote the Wensleydale breed of sheep in the North America.

Board and Officers

The group agreed that all persons present, with the addition of Sherry Carlson from California and Sandi Hanson from Washington, shall comprise the Board of Directors. Temporary officers appointed for the Association were: Martin Dally, President; Deb Gourley, Vice-President; Sherry Carlson, Secretary/Treasurer; and Kevin Brackney, Recorder/Statistics.

The dues for membership was set at \$20.00 per calendar year, payable on January 1st. Charter members will pay \$50.00 for three years' membership. Members must be current on their dues in order to have voting privileges at any meeting. All current members will be listed on the Association's web site.

Web Presence

Sherry Carlson has purchased the domain name WensleydaleSheep.org which shall be the website of the Association. This cost was \$70 for the first two years, renewable at \$35 per year thereafter. Initial setup for the website and hosting was \$135, with a hosting fee of \$84/year. Design and maintenance of the site will be done by WhiRL Design of San Diego CA.

Records

The Board agreed that Deb Gourley would receive the Member/Flock number 1.

Kevin Brackney requested that Deb furnish a 5-generation pedigree of the three Wensleydale rams that have been collected from the U.K. In addition, he asked that Kim Caulfield send him the pedigrees of the Cotswold donor ewes used in any breeding to date.

Sherry is working on a draft of the by laws which will be reviewed at the next meeting.

Deb announced that she has brochures, articles and pictures from various sources that she would be happy to send to members as requested.

Foundation Animals

The group reviewed the breeds of foundation ewes that were selected to begin the up-grading process. It was agreed that three longwool breeds most closely related to and/or resembling Wensleydales would be the only breeds of sheep recognized in the program. The breeds are: white or black Lincolns, white or black Cotswolds, and white or black Leicester Longwools, also known as English Leicesters.

Exceptions to Foundation breeds

There was discussion regarding Wensleydale-cross lambs that have already been born to other breeds of sheep or unregistered ewes, specifically in the flocks of Barbara Burrows and Myrtle Dow. The Board agreed to make a one-time exception in these two cases, stating that if these producers choose to participate in the up-grading

program, their existing cross lambs would be accepted, however there must be an additional generation of Wensleydale breeding from these animals to qualify for purebred registration in this Association.

The board was not aware of any other crossbred or unregistered animals having been born to date, nor had any Board member been contacted by any other breeder regarding this issue. No other exceptions to the foundation breeds were agreed to at the meeting.

Scrapie and Codon 171

It is printed in the literature of the Wensleydale Longwool Sheep Breeders Association (U.K.) that "The Wensleydale has the highest genetic resistance to scrapie of all recognized sheep breeds in the United Kingdom with PrP tests revealing a 92% codon 171 R/R genotype in the breed". The Board felt that this is a strong attribute of the breed and that it should be perpetuated in the breeding program in North America. Therefore, it was agreed that only rams testing R/R shall be acceptable to participate in the breeding program. It was pointed out that there is one ram already collected and used in the U.S. that tests Q/R and it shall be the only exception to this decision. This animal is Upper Mill Cracker, a colored ram, and use of this ram will only be acceptable on the first generation cross.

There was discussion regarding the eventual testing of rams born after two or more generations of Wensleydale breeding. As this will not be applicable to any animals born this year, the subject was postponed until the next meeting.

Dominant Black Gene

Kim Caulfield informed the board that she was aware of a dominant black gene in some bloodlines of Cotswold sheep. All agreed that although this is not a desirable gene to be present in North American Wensleydale sheep, if it exists, it shall be disclosed on all paperwork issued on the animal. It was further determined that should an animal be discovered to have the gene after it is registered - the animal's records, and that of its offspring, shall be amended to carry the disclosure. Kim agreed to write some background and guidelines to deal with this issue.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the North American Wensleydale Association will be held the first weekend in May 2000 at the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival.

Minutes submitted by Deb Gourley & Martin Dally