

2026 CSBA President's Report

Good morning, CSBA members, directors, and guests.

It is my privilege to present the 2026 President's Report for the Canadian Sheep Breeders' Association.

I would like to begin by thanking our General Manager, our board of directors, and our junior director for the tremendous commitment they bring to this organization. Serving on a national board involves far more than simply attending meetings. It requires preparation, thoughtful discussion, committee work, difficult decision-making, and many volunteer hours given on behalf of sheep breeders across Canada. That commitment often happens quietly and behind the scenes, and I sincerely thank each of you for your dedication, time, and leadership.

Please accept my sincere regrets for being unable to attend the entirety of this AGM, as I must leave to attend a funeral.

Over the past year, CSBA has continued to operate in a challenging environment. The trend of declining memberships, registrations, and transfers continued in 2025, and this has created ongoing financial pressure on the Association. At the same time, CSBA benefited from a very successful 2025 All Canada Classic in Manitoba. The success of that event was extremely important and has allowed the Association to maintain the current basic registration and transfer fees for 2026.

I would also like to note that the board has decided to absorb the latest CLRC price increase for registrations and transfers, meaning those basic costs will once again remain the same for breeders in 2026, while CSBA has absorbed a 9% fee increase in just two years. The success of the 2025 All Canada Classic was a key reason this was possible. There will be some specific small fee adjustments to ensure CSBA does not lose money on certain CLRC transactions. Longer term, however, CSBA is addressing the need for a plan to manage continued CLRC fee increases. The board remains very aware that repeatedly increasing registration fees risks further reducing the number of registrations being completed.

In light of declining registration and transfer income, the board made the decision once again to host a virtual AGM. While this was the most practical and financially responsible decision, it is still unfortunate. In-person meetings offer value that cannot be fully replicated through Zoom. They allow members and directors to build stronger relationships, encourage informal conversations that often lead to better ideas, and create space for more meaningful discussion than is sometimes possible in a series of online business meetings.

A major focus for the board this past year was strategic planning. Building on the 2025 Business Plan workshop, the board used four March meetings to review priorities, refine goals, and finalize a new business plan. We now have a strong and ambitious plan in place, with clear goals and measurable priorities to help guide the work of the Association in the years ahead.

We also have strong committees in place to help carry out the goals of that plan. The board is excited to have this structure in place as we continue to strengthen how CSBA serves its members and supports the future of the purebred sheep industry in Canada.

Registered sheep continue to play a vital role in the broader sheep industry. The purebred sector is the foundation for genetic improvement, breed integrity, performance tracking, and long-term flock development. Purebred registered sheep provide commercial producers with confidence in pedigree, breed composition, and the quality of the breeding stock they are purchasing. Strong purebred flocks help strengthen commercial flocks, and that benefits the industry as a whole.

For that reason, part of our March meetings also focused on the promotion of registered stock, both from the breeder's side and from the buyer's side. We need to continue encouraging breeders to promote the value of their **registered** animals, while also encouraging buyers to ask for the registration certificates of the sheep they purchase. This supports not only registrations and transfers, but also the long-term viability and value of registered stock.

Our March meetings also continued to focus on increasing producer involvement in CSBA committees and on growing corporate sponsorship opportunities. Both of these areas are important as we work to strengthen CSBA and expand the capacity to meet the goals set out in our business plan.

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to the Manitoba team for hosting a fantastic 2025 All Canada Classic. Their hard work and hospitality contributed greatly to the event's success. We now look forward to the 2026 Classic in Nova Scotia.

As this marks the end of my term, I would also like to say that it has been an honour to serve on the CSBA board and as CSBA Chair. I will miss being involved at this level and working alongside such dedicated people from across the country. I am grateful for the opportunity to have contributed to the work of this organization, and I leave encouraged by the commitment of this board and by the direction CSBA is taking. My hope is that the Association continues to build on the momentum of this past year and continues progressing toward the goals laid out in the new business plan.

Thank you for your support of CSBA and of the Canadian purebred sheep industry.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernadette Nikkel
President, Canadian Sheep Breeders' Association