



“To grow healthy sheep and successful shepherds...”

Welcome Fall!

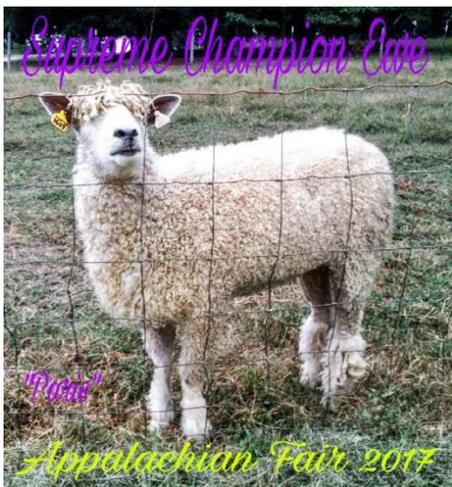
Time for fairs, flushing and breeding for future growth! Plus, fluffy guardians from a new associate member...

Agricultural fairs have long been an important part of farm life in America. People gathered to showcase their best: best livestock, best vegetables, best quilts, best jams and pies...



Before interstate highways and the internet, fairs were the most efficient way to showcase livestock. Want to increase the value of your sheep? Go to a fair and win blue ribbons. Want to add new genetics to your flock? Go to a fair and see the options!

Fairs and livestock shows are a great place to meet friends, new and old. I had never been to a sheep show before going to the Gwinnett Fair and did not know what to expect.



Shepherds young and old showed a variety of sheep breeds, and exhibited an easy-going friendliness that I've come to expect among shepherds. The fair is now on my annual calendar!

The Gwinnett Fair (<http://gwinnettcountyfair.com/>) hosts the **Georgia Sheep Wool Show and an Open Class Sheep Show**. Judging of the fleeces and open sheep show is Wednesday, September 20th.

Fleeces are judged based on weight, length, luster, handle, quality, etc., according to the standards of their class. Sheep are judged according to the standards of their breed. Winners receive ribbons, prize money and bragging rights. Fairgoers are often surprised by the variety of sheep and wool. Many who attend have never seen a live sheep nor a fleece.



The Sunbelt Expo Oct. 17-19, 2017 <http://sunbeltexpo.com/> is another major agriculture event in Georgia, with 80,000 visitors. We are talking with organizers about hosting a Georgia Sheep Association booth in the future.

Fort Valley State University will offer sheep / small ruminant education at the Expo: details to follow. The Expo also hosts the Grand Finals Stock Dog Trials.



Love is in the air...

Fall is prime breeding season. www.sheep201.com explains why:

Estrous cycles are usually affected by the seasons. The number of hours daily that light enters the eye of the animal affects the brain, which governs the release of certain precursors and hormones.



Most sheep ...will begin to exhibit estrus when length of day begins decreasing. They will come into heat every 16 to 17 days until they are bred or return to anestrus. **Thus, the most natural time for sheep to breed in the U.S. and Canada is the fall (Oct-Nov).** Some sheep breeds are less seasonal. They breed almost year-round or have an extended breeding season. The less seasonal breeds include Dorset, Rambouillet, Merino, Finnsheep, Romanov, Karakul, and hair sheep (Katahdin, Dorper, Blackbelly Barbados)... <http://www.sheep101.info/201/ewerepro.html>

Do you flush your flock?

Many sheep producers practice "flushing"-increasing the amount and quality of nutrition a few weeks prior to breeding. Studies show that increased nutrition can increase the ewe's eggs, which can lead

to increased twinning. Here's more information from www.sheep201.com (an excellent resource):

... Flushing may increase lambing percentage by increasing the number of eggs that the ewes ovulate. Flushing works best on thin ewes. Ewes that are already in good body condition usually do not respond well to flushing. ...Mature ewes respond better to flushing than yearlings.

You can flush ewes by feeding them 0.5 to 1 lb. of grain per day or by moving them to a better pasture. If flushing is continued through the breeding season, it may enhance embryo survival during early pregnancy.

What's the opposite of flushing? Breeding on legumes!

Plant estrogens: Ewes should not be bred on pastures that contain a high percentage of legumes. Clovers (especially red clover), alfalfa, and birdsfoot trefoil may delay estrus. Fescue grasses... barley and oat grain also contain compounds with estrogenic activity. Estrogenic compounds are present in varying concentrations in most all legume plants during the entire growing season, though not when the plants are mature and dry. (sheep201)

Welcome new associate member, Casually Cockeyed Farms!



I recently spoke with Kim Nettuno, co-owner of Casually Cockeyed Farms and a new Associate Member of the Georgia Sheep and Wool Growers Association. My first question: where did the name come from?

"A babysitter first used the term 'casually cockeyed' to describe my decorating style. I realized it describes my approach to life: relaxed, joyful and a little off the beaten path."

Kim explained her interest in nutrition, health and herbs. She is completing her Animal Naturopathy certification and partnered with the University of Georgia to quantify the nutritional value of her natural feed mixtures. Casually Cockeyed Farms offers certified organic feed supplements for poultry, equines, swine and ruminants.

They also offer Maremma Sheepdogs. Evelina and Ennio were purchased in 2016 from a multi-generational breeder near Tuscany, Italy. This fall, they have livestock guardian pups for sale. For more information about their feed and dogs, go to <https://casuallycockeyedfarms.com/>



The Georgia Sheep and Wool Growers Association is a 521 (a) Farmers' Cooperative.

Members receive free passes to the annual spring meeting, a monthly magazine from ASI (American Sheep Industry www.sheepusa.org), and listings in the Membership Market Directory and Classified Ads. Members also receive free or reduced fees for educational and networking events plus assistance with scheduling sheep shearers.

Annual members include people, families or farms engaged in raising sheep. **Associate members** are people or businesses engaged in supporting sheep, livestock or agriculture. **Junior and student memberships** are also available.

To join, go to <https://gasheepandwool.org/join-us> or call Dr. Tom Huber, 706-614-0826.



We proudly promote wool and hair sheep!



The Georgia Sheep and Wool Growers Facebook Page is open to members and non-members. Our focus on Facebook is the same as the website and association: **growing healthy sheep and successful shepherds.**

What do you do to promote healthy sheep and successful shepherds? Send me a message on FB or email: georgiasheep@gmail.com. I'd be delighted to share your photos and stories.

Photos:
1962 4H Winner Georgia Stevens
Prize Winning "Paris" out of Piney Woods Farm
Julia Lyons and Mona Huber at Ga Sheep Wool Display
Max Sheepdoggin' by Starlight Rhapsody
I Love Ewe by tscyarns
Website photo and Maremmas by Casually Cockeyed Farms
Dorper lamb out of Rockin' C Farm