

2014 Newsletter

It certainly feels like spring is taking its time getting here this year. But even though it's still quite cold and even a little snowy as I write this newsletter, we all know that the show and sale season is quickly approaching.

2013 was a good year for Oxfords; registrations were at 1,068 (about on target with 2012's 1,114), 624 transfers (up from 489 in 2012), and we had 222 dues paying members (up from 204 in 2012). I feel that the opportunities for Oxfords in the future are endless. However, we must continue to strive to produce the most complete sheep that we possibly can produce. We need to have our sights set not only on show-ring performance but, also on performance in the lambing barn, in the feedlot, on the rail, and on the dinner plate. If we work to promote Oxfords as a complete sheep and then deliver on those promises to purebred folks, commercial operations and the consumer then we will retain the breed motto of "Oxfords, Truly the World's Best".

NAILE

The 2013 Oxford shows at the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) were beyond compare. Exhibitors in both the open and junior divisions showed the camaraderie that we have all come to expect with Oxford folk. I truly hope that our Junior members will make the decision to come to Louisville and show at the NAILE in 2014, especially now that the fourth show ring has been added. This addition certainly got the junior breeding sheep show concluded at a more respectable hour than in recent years past. For a complete list of NAILE Show results, you can go to the website www.livestockexpo.org

Communications

As I said in last spring's newsletter, it is about impossible to cover everything of interest to everyone in a single printed newsletter. Also, mailing costs continue to climb which does limit the number of mailings made annually. In an effort to be sure that we are spending the Association's funds prudently, the Board of Directors and I have worked to get the Association's mailing list into a workable form that only includes folks who have had membership activity in the past 4 years. That means that if you paid Association annual dues just once in the past 4 years (including 2014), you are on the mailing list. The plan is to keep this same procedure in place in future years to assure that we are getting the communications into the hands of those who are really interested.

We do want to remind everyone that the Association does have a website where you will find a wealth of information including Oxford history, contact information for senior and junior members, special program instructions and forms and even a classified ad section that is available to Association members. Please visit the website and let us know what you think; we're open to suggestions for improvement:

www.americanoxfords.org

Membership

Communication is a 2-way street and we would like to update the Association's records with current email addresses for all our members. If you haven't sent in your 2014 annual membership dues, take a moment now to complete the membership form found at the Association's website and send it in to the office with your dues payment. If you have already sent your 2014 dues but didn't complete one of the membership forms, complete a form and send it in with your next mailing of office work (just put "information update" on the top of the form). By having your current email address, we will be able to communicate with you on a more frequent and timely basis.

Application Deadlines

-Oxford Foundation Flock Award --- The Foundation Flock Award is presented annually at the National Oxford Show and Sale in an effort to help establish one new Oxford flock every year. The award consists of young brood ewes and/or ewe lambs and a ram donated by various established Oxford breeders. The deadline to apply for this award has been changed to **May 8, 2014**. If you know of a person or family who would like to get a start with Oxfords, encourage them to apply.

-Oxford Hall of Fame Award --- The Hall of Fame Award was initiated in 2000 to recognize those people who have made significant contributions as supporters and promoters of the AOSA. A list of past honorees can be found on the Association's website. The application/nomination deadline for this award is **May 15, 2014**.

-National Oxford Queen --- The AOSA has an annual queen contest for youth who are between the ages of 16 and 21 as of December 31st in the year of application. This past year, Augusta Sandoval of IL represented our Association at many shows and other events and she did a super job. If you have questions about the expectations of this position, I'm sure Augusta would be happy to discuss them with you. The application deadline for the 2014 National Oxford Queen contest is **May 15, 2014**. The queen candidates will be interviewed at the National Show and Sale and the winner will be crowned at AOSA Annual Membership Meeting on June 20.

Application information for all three of these programs, as well as, the application forms can be found at the Association's website or printed copies of the information and forms can be mailed to interested persons by contacting the Association office.

Ewe Lamb Futurity Program

This will be our 6th year to provide a futurity program for ewe lambs purchased in one of three sale around the country. Last year, breeders consigned a record number of ewe lambs that they paid an additional fee to nominate into this program. It is these nomination fees that paid out (100%) to juniors who purchase these ewe lambs and participate in the futurity program. The juniors pay no fees to participate other than the regular show entry fees they would be paying regardless of their animal being a futurity nominated lamb. I encourage junior members to check-out the Association's website for participation requirements and I encourage breeders to continue to nominate their sale ewe lambs; nomination forms are also on the website or we can mail you a hard copy along with the rules. This is a great program and good opportunity to promote your breeding and for juniors to get a little more recognition for their sharp eye at the sales.

Attend and Support These Oxford Related Events

Illini All-Breeds Spring Sale, Bloomington, IL – March 28-29

Deadline for making entries in the National Oxford Show and Sale – April 15

Ohio Oxford Showcase and Big Ohio Sale Weekend, Eaton, OH – May 8-10

Great Lakes All-Breeds Sheep Show & Sale, Wooster, OH – May 24-25

National Oxford Show and Sale, Springfield, IL – June 20-21 (**AOSA Annual Membership Meeting – June 20**)

Office Work

Check your records and make sure your registrations and transfers are up-to-date and current. Do you have all those 2013-born lambs that you plan to retain registered? What about sheep that you sold to other folks; have you sent in transfers so the new owners are now the registered owners?

We are still making an effort to “clean-up” registration/ownership records. If you have any questions about animal ownership within your family flock, just contact the AOSA Office. Sometimes there may be animals that were in a junior member’s name but never transferred to the family name once that junior ended their show interests. We can provide you with lists of animals registered to each membership of a family; then you can determine if transfers are needed.

All-American Junior Show

The All-American Junior Show will be held at the Kansas State Fairgrounds, July 3-6, 2014. This will be the furthest west that this annual show has ever been held. This is the big summer junior sheep show that exhibitors from all over the U.S. attend and enjoy. Entries are due June 1. Show information will be posted at the website, www.countrylovin.com/AAJSS or mailed to past exhibitors very soon. Like other Junior shows, this one relies on donations and sponsorships to make it all possible. The AOSA was one of the originating breeds of this show and has been a charter sponsor since the show began over 20 years ago. Our association hosts an auction of donated items at the Association’s Annual Meeting and one of our breeders has graciously donated a ewe lamb to be sold at the National Sale each year; both of these fund raisers help secure support funds for Oxford youth to participate in this show. If you would like to donate auction items for the Annual Meeting or the ewe lamb for an upcoming National Sale, please contact the AOSA Office or one of the Directors.

Another way you can help support the All-American Junior Show is to purchase raffle tickets. Enclosed in each of the Senior member’s newsletters are 5 raffle tickets for your opportunity to be a supporter. Junior members were already mailed tickets from the AAJSS Office. If you decide to purchase the tickets, just complete your contact information on the stubs and return them along with payment to the AOSA Office (make checks payable to AAJSS). Stubs will be placed in the drawing at the show, you don’t have to be present at the show to win. And if you would like more tickets, just let us know.

Check out the AOSA website for listings and information on other shows. We list information about shows on the website if you send them into the Office.

National Show and Sale

Enclosed with this newsletter is the entry form for the 2014 National Oxford Show and Sale. This year it will be extremely important that all entries are received by the deadline (April 15, 2014). There will be four (4) breeds selling during the weekend that we are in Springfield, IL. We all will be sharing one barn and we will put together just one sale catalog with animal entries for all 4 sales. If you have questions, please contact the AOSA Office.

The American Oxford Sheep Association will hold its Annual Membership Meeting on Friday, June 20, 2014 at approximately 6:00 PM at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 2801 West Street, Springfield, IL 62707. Be sure to notify the AOSA Office at 2 weeks ahead if you plan to attend the annual meeting, tickets will be available at the fairgrounds and at the door. However, an advance indication that you plan to attend will help us make meal plans.

Association Contacts

Officers and Directors of the American Oxford Association

President – Duane Grimme – Ohio – District 5 – 937.839.5422 – cedarlanefarms1@yahoo.com

Vice President – Jay Franzen – Iowa – District 2 – 515.961.8804 – jay@iowadrafthouse.com

Frank Silva – California – District 1 – 909.762.7324 – frank@silvasranch.com

Laura Meyers – Wisconsin – District 3 – 920.206.8445 – tractorgirl76@hotmail.com

Lisa Mott – Illinois – District 4 – 217.768.3816 – jandlfarms@barbeckbb.com

Ed Bowman – Tennessee – District 6 – 423.282.1844 – ecbsheep@embarqmail.com

Keith Stumbo – New York – District 7 – 585.367.2775 – sheepkath@aol.com

Big Ohio Sale Weekend

Oxfords breeders who make entries in the Big Ohio Sale can get a little extra publicity on social media. Jennifer Fimbel has once again offered to put together another electronic photo album if breeders will send photos of their entries to her at jenniferfimbel@gmail.com

So we encourage everyone to take advantage of this unique marketing opportunity and offer.

Junior Member Barn Fire

The AOSA Office was recently notified by Kelly Wright that Katie King, a junior AOSA member in MA recently lost her entire Oxford flock (with the exception of 2 yearlings) and her supplies/equipment in a barn fire this winter. To assist this junior member, we are putting out this information to the entire AOSA membership; if you would like to donate funds, equipment/supplies (new or used) and/or sheep you can do so either through the Association or through Kelly Wright. Kelly has offered to transport donations of equipment, supplies, and sheep back to Katie from the Big Ohio Sheep Sale Weekend in May. However, donations will be accepted through the National Sale as well. If you have questions you can contact Kelly at mkwright.sheep@gmail.com or 603-835-2829.