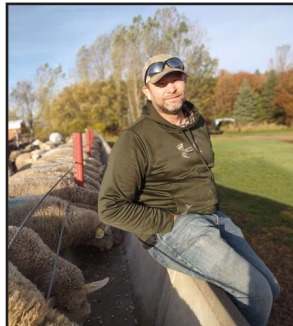


Refshaw Ramblings from the Land of the Rising Sun

Jeremy Refshaw, President

Greetings from our little sheep ranch, Refshaw Ranch located near Waubun in Northern Minnesota, where the grass grows tall, and the snow is deep. Waubun is an Ojibwe word meaning rising sun or early light and dawn. My name is



Jeremy Refshaw, I along with my wife Renita, son John and daughter Josephine own and operate Refshaw Ranch. We have been raising registered Polypay sheep since the spring of 2006. I have been a member of the American Polypay sheep Association since we started, I

have been a board member for a total of eight years. I have served as your vice president for the last two years and now have been elected to be your new president. It is truly an honor and a privilege to serve, in my mind one of the most important and influential sheep breeds in our country.

I would like to thank our past president, Mark Meurer, for all his hard work and dedication to our members and for doing such a great job leading our association. It will be difficult to fill his shoes but luckily, he is still on the board to help if I have any questions.

A little bit about myself, I grew up on a small dairy farm and have an A.A.S. degree in Ag Economics and Business from the University of Minnesota, Crookston. I have pursued many different trades in my life---horse trainer, farrier, sheep shearer, farm and ranch hand, guest ranch wrangler, deck hand and fish processor, commercial building rubber roofer, contract mail carrier and now seed stock sheep producer. I feel that producing good quality breeding stock that people need and want is one of the most rewarding and enjoyable things I have done yet. The people that I get to meet, work with and hear their stories are inspirational and keep me striving to produce good quality breeding stock.

A Big Prairie “Thank You”

Mark Meurer, Past-President

This has been the honor of a lifetime. For the past four years, I have had the incredible opportunity to serve as the president of the American Polypay Sheep Association and I have enjoyed every minute of my time. I can honestly say that the APSA consists of the finest sheep producers in the nation. I have never met a Polypay breeder who I didn't like or respect. That speaks volumes about the quality of people involved in our breed. To be a part of an organization that is committed to the betterment of the commercial sheep industry and serve with board members who understand the purpose of our breed is such a blessing. We have so much to be proud of and the work continues. Our youth outreach is growing, our research commitment continues to yield important information, and we continue to work at improving our image and visibility within the industry. We have a lot to be proud of as an association.

This past summer I informed the board that I firmly believe in term limits and requested that another board member take the presidency of the association. I think it's healthy for an organization to get new ideas



and new vision from its leadership. I'm thankful that Jeremy Refshaw decided to take on the role of APSA president, and I know he'll do an outstanding job. Jeremy is one the most established and successful Polypay breeders in the country and he's the right man for the job. Please welcome Jeremy to the position!

Once again, thank you for allowing me to serve as president for the past four years and for the many

Refshaw Ramblings - Continued from page 1

I feel the future of the American Polypay Sheep Association and the sheep industry in general is very positive. Our association is strong and in a good position to meet the future demands of the sheep industry through cutting edge technology by using Genomically enhanced EBV's. There are also potential emerging markets for wool. This is your association so please feel free to reach out if you have any comments, concerns or suggestions.

Respectfully,
Jeremy Refshaw
APSA President

Big Prairie "Thank you" - Continued from page 1
kind words you have shared with me. I will continue to serve on the board and will do my best to help keep our breed moving in the right direction.

Please have a safe harvest season and a happy and joyous holiday season, as well.

Respectfully,
Mark Meurer
Big Prairie Polypays

NSIP Hires Scales to Direct Organization

By Brenda Reau

David Scales, has been hired as the new Executive Director of the National Sheep Improvement Program (NSIP) and began his position with the organization in early July.

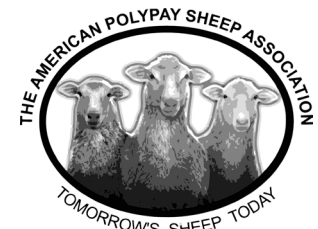


David grew up with sheep and cattle on his home farm in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and currently resides in Charlotte, Mich. He graduated from Michigan State University in 2017 with

a bachelor's degree in animal science and a minor in crop and soil sciences, with an emphasis in agribusiness management.

David's first experience with NSIP was in a genetics course where the students played Cyber Sheep. David worked at the MSU sheep barn and was active in the day-to-day operation, which included data collection for NSIP. While at MSU, David was treasurer of Block and Bridle, served as a teaching assistant for Intro to Dairy Management, and coauthored two articles on neonatal pig supplements published in the Journal of Animal Science. After graduation, David was the Assistant Farm Manager at Reproduction Specialty Group, working on the cutting edge of reproductive technologies in sheep and managing 200 donor and 1200 recipient ewes. For the past six years, he has been the Flock Manager at Wheaton Hampshires, an operation with 100 purebred Hampshire ewes and 120 recipient ewes.

Brenda Reau, is the Chair of the NSIP Board of Directors and chaired the search committee to replace outgoing director, Rusty Burgett. "We interviewed applicants from across the country for this important role. The search committee was looking for a self-starter with excellent communication skills, a customer service mindset, and an understanding of NSIP and the sheep industry," Reau said. "We wanted someone who can educate and promote, and who has the intellectual capacity to work with abstract concepts and collaborate with our research partners. We feel David has all these attributes. With his work ethic and passion for the sheep industry we feel he will be a good fit to take NSIP to the next level."



Fall PolyPay Newsletter

Hoof Health Guidelines

Richard Ehrhardt

*Senior Extension Specialist,
Michigan State University*

Introduction

This has been a challenging summer for hoof health in the upper Midwest due to humidity, heat and general wet conditions. All pathogens that create hoof disease tend to thrive under these conditions. Hoof health is influenced by climatic conditions and the specific disease conditions are dependent on the pathogens present in sheep hooves and the soil. Genetics may also play a role in the degree to which hoof disease is expressed based on field observations due to the physical properties of the hoof and possibly also immunological factors.

Climatic Conditions

Wet soil softens the hoof and makes it more susceptible to puncture injury with inoculation of pathogens in the process. Nearly all hoof diseases are more severe under wet and warm conditions. Under these conditions, the outer horn of the hoof tends to delaminate from the softer keratin by the action of bacteria and fungi present in the soil. This condition is known to some as shelly hoof. The bacteria that causes hoof rot, *Dichelobacter nodosus*, will also hasten delamination if present, but it is not required for this process to occur (photo 1). Delamination itself is not necessarily a problem unless it leads to tearing of the soft keratin and introduction of pathogens into the soft keratin. A simple hoof trimming to remove the loose and hard outer horn material will usually prevent further injury. When trimming hooves (more on that later), try to remove enough horn to bring air to any pockets of dirt/manure that occurred because of delamination of the outer horn. This minimizes the risk of further injury and conditions that can favor the growth of anaerobic bacteria.

Soil Pathogens

There are many soil born pathogens that can cause hoof health problems. Some result in hoof abscesses and others may produce interdigital dermatitis, which amounts to infection of the skin in between the hoof claws. Ovine interdigital dermatitis (OID) is common in wet conditions and is often caused by *Fusobacterium necrophorum* and less commonly by *Arcanobacterium pyogenes* (photo 2). Some call OID foot scald but this is not always accurate as foot scald refers to the condition of interdigital dermatitis and not to a specific pathogen. Benign strains of foot rot caused by *Dichelobacter nodosus* also exhibit similar symptoms, where most of the damage is in the

interdigital zone with only a slight penetration of the infection into the hoof heal. In cases of OID or benign foot rot, it is common for multiple feet on the same animal to be infected. In the case of foot abscess, infections are usually only on a single hoof and the infection is nearly always caused by some type of anaerobic pathogen. Foot abscesses are confined to the soft keratin of the hoof and are not associated with inflammation of the skin in the interdigital zone. Drying agents such as zinc sulfate are very effective in treating OID and foot rot. Treatment of foot abscess on the other hand, requires exposure of the pocket of infection to air which can be accomplished by hoof trimming. Healing may also be facilitated by systemic antibiotic treatment. Consult your veterinarian for a treatment protocol for this condition.

Sheep Pathogens

The major sheep born pathogen of concern is *Dichelobacter nodosus*. This bacterium varies in invasiveness of infection into soft keratin as regulated by its protease action. Benign foot rot has mild protease action and low penetration whereas virulent foot rot has much more aggressive protease action and invasiveness into hoof keratin. Both strains enter the soft keratin in the interdigital area, invade the hoof heal, then move into the toes. Benign foot rot rarely invades further than the hoof heel. Both strains can be killed by drying of the hoof using a saturated solution of zinc sulfate and both also respond to antibiotic therapy. Consult your veterinarian for an antibiotic treatment protocol for this pathogen. Foot bathing with a saturated solution of zinc sulfate works best when a detergent is added to the bath to add in penetration and is much more effective if the sheep are allowed to soak their hooves for several minutes in the foot bath solution (10 minutes soaking is suggested).

Hoof Growth and Hoof Trimming

Do you need to trim the hooves on your sheep? The answer depends on the genetics and management of your flock. Breeds that exhibit less hoof growth tend to be the hill breeds from the United Kingdom. Fine wool breeds tend to exhibit faster hoof growth. There is a popular thought that hoof color may also relate to both hoof hardness and hoof growth. We have learned that black hoof material is more penetration resistant than white material (Makela et al. unpublished), however it is not known to what extent this makes black hoof material less prone to disease. There are physical differences in the strength of hoof material that may be related to abrasion resistance as well. Nutrition also impacts hoof growth although this has not been well studied. Both energy and protein content of the diet can promote hoof growth. Feeding grain to ewes will increase hoof growth apprecia-

bly. One study showed that increasing the digestible dry matter of a ration 50% increase hoof growth by 30%. Generally, sheep on a high plane of nutrition will have correspondingly faster hoof growth. The need to trim hooves of excess growth depends on the extent of abrasive wear on the hooves during their daily activity and their rate of hoof growth. In many grazing-based flocks, the need for hoof trimming is far less and there may only be need to trim an occasional sheep that has bad pasterns or some other factor that impacts how the hoof wears. In many pasture-based flocks, the major trimming effort is to just trim the hooves of rams a few weeks before breeding as they are often raised in conditions with far less hoof wear. Hoof trimming may reduce the incidence of hoof disease to a degree; however, the incidence of hoof disease is influenced much more by the pathogens present in soil and in sheep hooves as well as climatic conditions.

Summary

Hoof health is challenged by warm and wet conditions as hoof keratin is softer and more prone to injury and since hoof pathogens are more active and aggressive. When OID and hoof rot are present, it is important to control them by foot soaking in zinc sulfate, as these diseases are both debilitating to the flock. Warm and wet conditions can also increase the incidence of hoof abscesses markedly but the treatment for this condition is much different, relying principally on exposure of the infection to air via careful hoof trimming. Hoof trimming in general is needed when hoof growth greatly exceeds hoof wear, however it is possible to manage a flock in a manner to provide ample wear to minimize the need for hoof trimming.



Photo 1. The outer horn of the hoof has delaminated from the soft keratin tissue it covers.



Photo 2. A clear case on interdigital infection. This could be either ovine interdigital dermatitis or benign foot rot. The infection is confined entirely to the interdigital zone and has not penetrated the soft keratin of the heel.

**OHIO SHOWCASE
SHOW AND SALE
MAY 8-10, 2025
Darke County Fairgrounds
Greenville, Ohio**

ADVERTISE
Advertising rates in the APSA:
FULL PAGE: \$85
7.5" w x 10" h
HALF PAGE: \$45
7.5" w x 5" h
QUARTER PAGE: \$25
7.5" w x 2.5" h
3.75" w x 5" h
Ads for the Spring Newsletter should be sent to
BEV BERENS uphillfarm494@yahoo.com

NSIP Online PolyPay Sale

11 rams averaged \$652
11 ewes averaged \$400

2024 Center of the Nation Sale

Official Sale Report

July 27, 2024

	# Head	Average
Dorset Rams	13	\$885
Polypay Rams	39	\$1,095
Polypay Ewes	45	\$461
Suffolk Rams	30	\$943
Suffolk Ewes	6	\$467
Hamp Rams	13	\$831
Hamp Ewes	4	\$406
Texel Ram	1	\$3,400
Texel Ewes	2	\$2,400
Katahdin Rams	5	\$860
Katahdin Ewes	3	\$733
SAMM Ram	1	\$1,500
	102 Rams	\$1,005
	60 Ewes	\$536
	162 Head Total	\$831
	Sale Gross	\$134,675

High Selling Rams

Lot 501 - Portland Prairie - Texel - \$3400 to Don Heller, MN
 Lot 129 - University of Kentucky - Polypay - \$3100 to Hurley Farms & Meinders Stock Farms, IA
 Lot 303 - Reau Suffolks - Suffolk - \$2400 to Linzy Jones, IA
 Lot 144 - Taylor Made Polypays - Polypay - \$2100 to Ben Hollman, IA
 Lot 152 - Klaseen Polypays - Polypay - \$2100 to Adam Roney, ND
 Lot 7 - Virginia Tech - Dorset - \$2000 to Chris Fogarty, WI
 Lot 121 - Big Prairie Polypays - Polypay - \$2000 to Ben Stroh, ND
 Lot 330 - Dry Sandy Suffolks - Suffolk - \$1900 to Ben Kockeler, OR

Breed High Selling Rams

Lot 220 - Iowa State University - Hampshire - \$1600 to Merle Hoskins, KS
 Lot 401 - Grandpa's Farm - Katahdin - \$1200 to JR Howard, TX
 Lot 601 - Kitzan - SAMM - \$1500 to Robin Fisher, IL

High Selling Ewes

Lot 503 - Portland Prairie - Texel - \$2500 to Don Heller, MN
 Lot 504 - Portland Prairie - Texel - \$2300 to Don Heller, MN

Sale Management: Production Livestock Auctions, Plauctions.live

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Wright Chosen for Starter Flock Grant

Congratulations to this year's Starter Flock Grant winner, Owen Wright from New Market, Iowa. The board reviewed several excellent candidates for the grant and ultimately chose Owen as the recipient of this year's grant. Congratulations again to Owen and welcome to the Polypay breed!



From left Jeremy Refshaw, Owen Wright, Mark Meurer.

**American Polypay Sheep Association
Starter Flock Grant Program
2025**

Purpose:

To promote the growth and usefulness of the Polypay Breed, and to encourage youth involvement and education in the breed.

Who may apply?

Any American Citizen ages 13-18 whose family does not raise Polypay Sheep.

The starter flock Grant will consist of:

A one-time \$2000 grant from APSA to be used for the purchase of registered Polypay ewes or ewe lambs from a current APSA member of their choice. A purchase agreement between the APSA member and the grant recipient must be submitted to the APSA board of directors for approval by June 1, 2025. Funds will be distributed to the owner of the flock that is chosen upon transfer of registration.

Promotion:

The APSA Starter Flock Program will be listed on the APSA website and advertised in various magazines and outlets. Promotion by current members will be strongly encouraged.

Policy and protocol:

1. A completed application with supporting materials must be submitted to the APSA by April 1, 2025.
 - a. **Essay:** The applicant must write a short paper on why they think they should be awarded the grant.
 - b. **Video / Pictures:** The applicant must show video or pictures that show basic facilities and feed sources that will be provided for the starter flock.
 - c. **Signed Letters:** The applicant will need to provide two signed letters:
 - I. A letter from the applicant's parents stating their approval of the application and their responsibilities.
 - II. A signed letter of recommendation from a 4H or FFA adviser or from a current APSA member.
2. Completed applications with other materials needed will be reviewed by the APSA board of directors and the top 3 applicants will be chosen.
3. Of the top 3 applicants, 1 winner will be chosen by the board of directors and notified by the current president of the APSA.
4. The winning applicant will be notified in writing by July 1, 2025, and will be awarded the starter flock at the annual APSA meeting in Spencer, Iowa.
5. **Attendance at the annual meeting will be mandatory.**
6. The winner will be awarded a one-year membership to the APSA.
7. The grant recipient will be assigned an APSA member mentor in close proximity. The mentor will provide advice and support to the recipient and will be required to check on the animals' welfare.
8. Basic needs of the animals must be provided at all times. If the basic needs of the animals are not met as determined by the mentor, the recipient must return all the animals to the original flock owner at the cost of the recipient.

**American Polypay Sheep Association
2025 Starter Flock Grant
Application**

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Parent or Guardians Name: _____

Does your family currently raise livestock? _____ If yes what kind/breed? _____

If awarded the flock you must attend the 2025 APSA Annual Meeting at Spencer, Iowa can you be there?

Obtain all signatures required and attach the following to this application:

1. A short paper on why you think you should be awarded the flock.
2. A video or pictures that show your facilities and feed sources that will be used to take care of the flock.
3. A signed letter of recommendation from a 4H or FFA adviser or from a current APSA member.
4. A signed letter from your parents or guardian stating their approval of your application and acknowledging all the responsibilities that will be required of you if awarded the grant.

Mail or email completed application to :

American Polypay Sheep Association
ATTN : Jeremy Refshaw
1339 290th St.
Waubun, MN 56589
refshawranch@yahoo.com

By signing below, we affirm that we have read all requirements and procedures and agree to abide by them if chosen to be the recipient of the APSA Starter Flock grant:

Applicant's Signature

Parent / Guardians Signature

Date: _____

APSA Starter Flock Grant application questions.

1. What kind of experience do you have in the livestock industry if any?

2. What do you know about the Polypay Breed?

3. What are your plans or goals that you want to accomplish with a starter flock of Polypay Sheep?
 - A. Short term goals?

 - B. Long term goals?

4. What do you know about the National Sheep Improvement Program?

5. Describe the facilities and feed sources that you will be using to care for your sheep?

6. Are you involved in any organizations such as 4H or FFA?

7. What are some of the advantages to raising Polypay Sheep and describe their unique qualities that sets them apart from other breeds?

8. What or how will you contribute to or give back to the APSA?