

November 16, 2011

Dear Purebred Sheep Breeders:

I would like to welcome all members of the BC Purebred Sheep Breeders' Association and extend a special invitation to all breeders of registered sheep to join our association.

Let me begin by telling you a little about myself. I got my start with sheep at the age of nine, was shearing by 13 and actively showing in the open classes with the help of Mrs. Cadsand. Though I raise registered Suffolk and Charollais sheep, I enjoy learning by observing and experimenting with different breeds to see what they can contribute to the commercial business. Over the many years shearing for people across Canada I have observed many different management tips and seen the success people are having on their farms with the sheep they choose to raise.

BC Purebred Sheep Breeders' Association is a group of people united in the promotion and development of quality registered sheep. Our members are listed and may advertise their sheep or services on our website www.bcsheep.com. Our website offers links to sheep and farming services, sheep health, education and marketing, as well as other associations provincially and nationally. This site offers updated links on changes in government regulations and upcoming events related to the industry.

The sheep industry is experiencing very good growth across all sectors. Flock sizes and numbers are increasing; lamb and wool prices have greatly improved and the need for quality foundation stock is at an all time high.

I invite sheep breeders of every breed to consider what their breed has to offer the industry. In a commercial flock, purebred sheep help in developing good F1 or F2 cross animals that suit a specific farm plan in terms of lamb size, wool market and/or management type.

BC Purebred Sheep Breeders' Association has a genotyping program for testing animals for scrapie resistance. We currently reimburse members \$20 per head tested. This program is due to end in June of 2012, but we have some funds allocated for this program and may be able to extend our program. Information and the required forms are available on our website. Caisley ear tags make it easy to obtain a sample yourself for DNA genotyping. The purpose of testing our sheep is to improve our flocks by selecting animals that are genetically resistant to scrapie. In order for Canada to be a player in the world market we need to move ahead with scrapie resistance genotyping.

The Grasslands Classic of 2011 held in Drake, Saskatchewan was very exciting for the industry and successful for buyers, sellers and sponsors. We are excited to be giving BC sheep producers the opportunity to share in that success in 2013. We in BC look forward to hosting the Classic in 2013. Keep in mind the All Canada Sheep Classic of 2012 will be held in Truro, Nova Scotia, June 15 to 17.

We would like to have your comments on the website or the Classic 2013. Any members who have ideas or suggestions to do with our association are welcome to forward them to me or another director. We welcome your updates for the website; please send your photos or include your website make sure your information posted there is correct.

Membership dues for 2012 are now due; please download the form and send it along with payment to Jan Carter, our treasurer.

Sincerely,

Lorea Tomsin

President, BC Purebred Sheep Breeders Association