

Division of Marketing  
Agricultural Development and Diversification (ADD) Program  
1995 Grant Final Report

Grant Number 10079

**Grant Title**     Market Enhancement of Sheep Dairy Products (Phase 2)

**Amount Awarded**     \$9,000.00

**Name**             Greg and Diane Kaufmann

**Organization**     Wisconsin Meadows Inc.  
                           Chippewa Falls

**E-Mail**

**WEB**

Department Contact: DATCP - Marketing - ADD Grants  
PO Box 8911     Madison, WI 53708-8911  
Tel: (608)224-5136  
<http://datcp.state.wi.us>

**MARKET ENHANCEMENT OF SHEEP DAIRY PRODUCTS**  
**FINAL REPORT**  
**December 31, 1995**

**PROGRAM SUMMARY**

A. *Brief Description of project*

The intent of this project was to expand markets for sheep milk cheese, to increase production of both milk and cheese manufacturing, and to increase marketing avenues for other farmers interested in sheep dairying. Because this grant is the second phase portion the goals and objectives have remained the same as the original project

B. *Project created or achieved: Expansion of Dairy Sheep Milking Industry*

Interest in sheep dairying has remained steady over the past year. In the remainder of 1995 Wisconsin Meadows continued to purchase milk from 10 patrons, with milk being produced through October. At this point in time it is believed that Wisconsin Meadows is the only purchaser of sheep milk in the state. It is also believed that Wisconsin is the leading sheep dairy producer state in terms of number of families milking. It is anticipated that an increase in sheep dairy farms will continue.

C. *Evaluation of results and benefits of project*

Ten patrons were inspected and licensed by DATCP and Wisconsin Meadows for production of sheep milk. This inspection process is time-consuming for a small plant when patrons are scattered through-out the state. The regulatory requirements for monthly reporting of quality were taxing on a tight time and resource base of a small company. Patron milk handling (storage and delivery), although consistent during the year, poses future difficulty as volume increases. Storage of frozen milk makes quality assurances more difficult to anticipate and verify. Possible help in this area might be found by linking with an independent quality control resource such as DHIA.

**More work needs to be accomplished in the marketing area. The grant recipients have discovered that time marches on - the demands of milking and farming, working with patrons, understanding and keeping ahead of government paperwork leave precious little time for the development of marketing programs and development of marketing skills. This is probably a common problem for all farmers who are trying to add value to their own products and is a concern that should be addressed by the Department of Agriculture.**

In the last half of 1995 marketing efforts were directed towards our holiday mail order business and food shows. Our greatest success was at the Best of the Midwest at Ravinia in terms of consumer reaction and exposure. However, our direct mail efforts at this time seem to have the greatest return. Restaurant inroads have been made but this effort has

been limited by time. Broker contacts have been pursued but no firm relationships have been developed. Deli's in the Minneapolis area have become customers, but without taste tests sales are slowed by the large cheese cases, mainly due to the nature of our high-priced, low-volume product. On-farm sales at WillowBrook Farms and SunDance Hill Farm (the farms of the grant recipients) have continued to develop and grow and efforts have been made to increase that venue of sales.

*D. Description of information or educational materials developed*

In August Wisconsin Meadows attended the American Cheese Society meeting in Green Bay with a booth and entries in the cheese contest. Exposure to so many cheese industry people was an important step in accessing markets and in educating ourselves to the workings of the industry and in continuing to educate the industry to sheep milk products.

Wisconsin Meadows became a participant in the "Something Special from Wisconsin" program in September and this has enhanced our marketing efforts, especially the holiday gift boxes.

Again, in 1996, Wisconsin Meadows is participating in the planning of the second Dairy Sheep Symposium, to be held in Madison in conjunction with the Wisconsin Sheep Conference. One full day will be devoted to Sheep Dairying. A session at the Upper Midwest Organic Conference to be held in early March will be devoted to Sheep Dairying with Diane Kaufmann presenting. Amery Farm City Days will be hosted by the Koller family with 3000 people anticipated, also to be held in March. During the past six months we have continued to individually talk with people interested in sheep dairying.

*E. Future projections resulting from receipt of grant funds*

We expect to see further growth in sheep dairy numbers based on interest expressed so far. We expect to see consumer interest in sheep dairying products continue to increase with more exposure to news regarding new sheep dairy farmers and as more nutritional information regarding the benefits of sheep milk products is made available.

At this point in time, given the limited financial resources of Wisconsin Meadows, it is anticipated that pursuance of a producer coop may be a logical next step for the future success of both Wisconsin Meadows and a sheep dairy industry in Wisconsin.

*F. Financial background utilized to achieve original objective*

Personal funds of grant recipients and sales of cheese have been used to achieve objectives in addition to grant funds.

*G. Other appropriate information.*

In mid-fall, New York sheep producer Hollow Road Farms visited several sheep dairy

farms throughout the state and discussions were held with producers and interested parties within the University of Wisconsin system about the possibility of cooperative marketing efforts. No further details are available at this time. It is anticipated that the University of Wisconsin-Spooner Research Station will be beginning their sheep dairy research in their new milking facility this spring. This should give sheep dairying in Wisconsin and the country a solid boost.

## EXHIBITS

### Advertising:

Christmas, 1995 Brochure

Ad appearing in "The Shepherd", Oct., 1995.

Ad appearing in "The Shepherd", Nov., 1995.

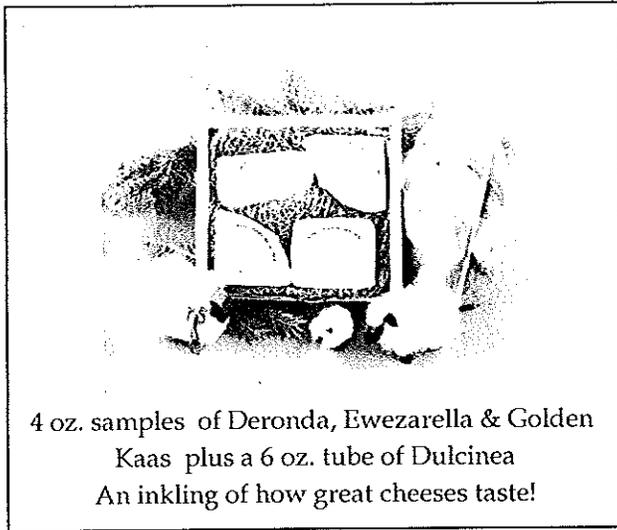
Ad appearing in "The Wisconsin Shepherd", Fall, 1995.

### Articles

*Newsweek*, July 3, 1995, "Say Good Night, Goats".

## “Sheep Delights”

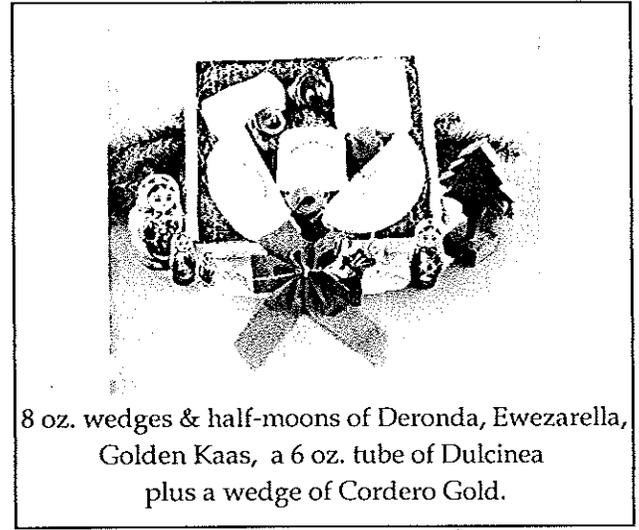
### Gift Box A



4 oz. samples of Deronda, Ewezarella & Golden Kaas plus a 6 oz. tube of Dulcinea  
An inkling of how great cheeses taste!

## “Sheep Thrills”

### Gift Box B



8 oz. wedges & half-moons of Deronda, Ewezarella, Golden Kaas, a 6 oz. tube of Dulcinea plus a wedge of Cordero Gold.

### WISCONSIN MEADOWS

Wisconsin Meadows, Inc. are family owned and operated sheep dairies located in scenic rural Wisconsin. These family artisans pride themselves in farming in harmony with nature. Their love and care of their animals is reflected in their flocks' gentleness and contentment and ultimately in their sheep producing fine milk for cheeses. Our gourmet cheeses are hand-crafted from pure sheep milk by a master cheese maker and delightfully presented.

### SHEEP MILK

Sheep milk is said to be a life extender. Sheep milk is very nutritional and easily digestible due to its high content of complete proteins, vitamins and minerals (1/3 more calcium than cow's milk and four times the amount of B12), and is a great substitute for those with cow milk intolerance. Sheep milk is higher in polyunsaturated fats thus making it lower in cholesterol than cow's milk. Most importantly, sheep milk offers a unique, mellow flavor and pleasant aroma.

### ABOUT OUR CHEESES

**DERONDA** - Our original award winning cheese. Made in the tradition of Spain's most famous sheep milk cheese, Manchego.

**DULCINEA** - Your quest for the perfect soft cheese is over!

**EWEZARELLA** - A semisoft cheese, great as a snack - and even better as a cooking cheese.

**GOLDEN KAAS** - A delicious golden blend of Ewezarella and Colby (100% sheep milk). Another award winning cheese. Semi-hard.

**CORDERO GOLD** - A mellow & creamy hand-crafted aged cheddar.

## ❄ Here's my Holiday Order! ❄

**Unless you tell us differently, gift boxes will arrive in time for the holidays.**

	Number		Total
Gift A - Sheep Delights	_____ x	\$15.00 =	_____
Gift B - Sheep Thrills	_____ x	\$30.00 =	_____
Shipping/Handling per address:			
(# of addresses)	_____ x	\$5.00 =	_____
		<b>TOTAL:</b>	_____

MAIL TO: Wisconsin Meadows, Inc.  
Rt. 2 Box 125  
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

QUESTIONS? Call (715) 268-4559 or (715) 723-2262

Anything else is just cheese!

Send Gift A or B to:

A  B Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City/St/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Message \_\_\_\_\_

A  B Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City/St/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Message \_\_\_\_\_

See attached list for additional gift boxes

In order to not delay shipment of your order, we reserve the right to substitute items of equal or greater value.

**This Holiday Season why not give some  
"Sheep" Thrills?**



**Delightfully presented gourmet cheeses.  
Made from 100% pure sheep milk!  
"Mild & Mellow"**



100% Pure Sheep Milk Products

Rt 2 Box 125

Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

**Send something Ewenique for the Holidays!**

## Coming Soon

### October

- 19-22 Katahdin Hair Sheep Internat'l Convention, Picton, Ontario, Canada. Contact: Mike Bondy, (613) 476-6782.
- 21-22 NY Sheep/Wool Festival, Dutchess Co. Fairgrounds, Rhinebeck, NY. Contact: (914) 758-8100.  
Northeast Reg. Natural Colored Sheep Show. Contact: (914) 373-9128.
- 26-28 PA Sheep Sym., Lebanon Expo. Center, Lebanon, PA. Contact: Joe Vogel, (610) 756-4212.

### 27-

- Nov. 5 51st Grand Nat'l Rodeo, Horse & Stock Show, Cow Palace, P.O. Box 34206, San Francisco, CA 94134. Contact: Sarah Merlini, (415) 469-6075.
- 28 New England Sheep/Wool Growers 3rd Annual Fall Sheep Sym., UMass Hadley Farm, Hadley, MA, 8:30-2:30, Fall Sorted Wool Pool. Contact: Bruce Clement, UNH Co-op Ext., 33 West St., Keene, NH 03431, (603) 352-4550.

### November

- 3-6 Southeastern Animal Fiber Fair, Dixie Classic Fairgrounds, Winston-Salem, NC. Contact: Kris Savage, (704) 632-6529.
- 10-12 Idaho Wool Growers Assoc. 103rd Annual Convention, Pocatello Park Hotel, Pocatello, ID. Contact: (208) 344-2271.
- 10-17 North American Internat'l Sheep Show, KY Fair & Expo Center, Louisville, KY. Contact: (502) 595-3166.
- 17-18 NE Sheep Sym., Hastings & USMARC Clay Center. Contact: Ted Doane, (402) 472-6433.
- 25 IL All-Breeds Bred Ewe Sale, Springfield, IL. Contact: (309) 785-5058.

### December

- 3-5 North Am. Grazing Conf., Drawbridge Estates Hotel, Fort Mitchell, KY.
- 7-9 OR 100th Sheep Growers Assoc. Annual Meeting, Pendleton, OR. Contact: (503) 364-5462.

## EWESFUL GIFTS

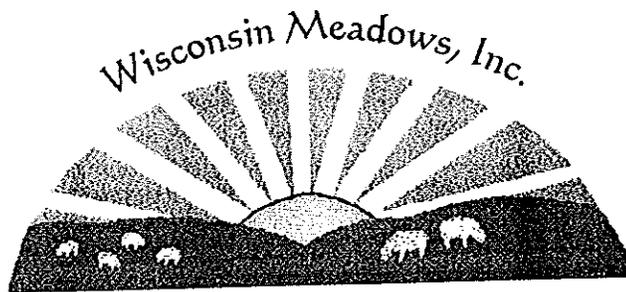
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Columbus, WI 53925  
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**20 cards**

5"x4"  
\$6.95 +  
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More designs of Christmas cards for sheep enthusiasts available in Fall catalog—\$1.00



100% Pure Sheep Milk Products

Looking for the perfect Holiday gift? Sheep milk cheese is not only healthy and nutritious, but tastes magnificent as well! Wisconsin Meadows offers two gift boxes that will make "ewenique" presents for your "Top of the Flock" holiday list. The following 100% pure sheep milk cheeses will delight the palate of your friends and relatives (and don't forget to treat yourself!).

### HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS!

- DERONDA**—Our original award-winning cheese. Made in the tradition of Spain's most famous sheep cheese, Manchego.
- QUESO FRESCO**—This cheese redefines the definition of "Cream Cheese"! Creamy, with a wonderful hint of tanginess.
- EWZARELLA**—A semi-soft cheese that is great as a snack—and even better as a cooking cheese.
- GOLDEN KAAS**—A golden blend of Ewezarella and Colby (100% pure sheep milk). Another award-winning cheese.
- CORDERO GOLD**—An aged Cheddar (1 year) that combines creamy and sharp together!

"Anything Else is Just Cheese"

## WISCONSIN MEADOWS, INC.

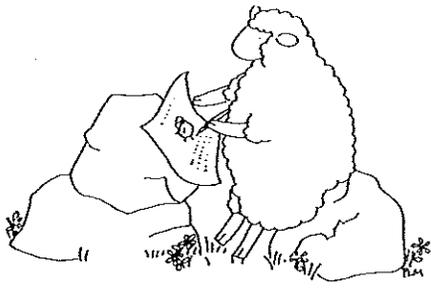
Rt. 2, Box 125, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729  
(715) 268-4559

- { } A. Wisconsin Meadows Sampler - \$15.00  
A sampling of four of our best-selling cheeses.
- { } B. Sheep Delights - \$30.00  
A larger sampler of our cheeses with a 5th variety.

Send to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

(Add \$6.50 per shipment for shipping and handling)

## Letters to the Editor



Dear Shepherd,

With the summer shows and fairs quickly coming to an end, I would like to take a minute to reflect on the positive side of our industry. I'm sure I can speak for most of us when I say, "Enough with last year's problems." Let's charge on to a brighter future. Remember, "One bad apple won't spoil the whole bunch."

The picture I have enclosed is our future. This is my 3-year-old nephew, Ethan West, from Cambridge City, Indiana. This picture was taken during a Pee Wee Showmanship class at the Wayne County Open Show. As you can see by the sparkle in his eyes he's looking forward to a bright future. A future without illegal use of drugs, unethical treatment to animals, or unsportsmanlike conduct in the show ring.

So remember the past, but let's look forward to the future. A very bright future.

Thanks so much,  
Steven W. West  
Indianapolis, IN



Master Ethan West of Cambridge City, Indiana, competing in the Pee Wee Showmanship class at the Wayne County Open Show.

Dear Shepherd:

In regards to the upcoming referendum, if I may borrow (and slightly modify) from the advertising industry:

"When business was good he said he didn't need to promote; when business was bad he said he couldn't afford to promote—for the life of me I can't remember his name."

I ask all eligible voters to consider this cliché and realize it applies to all of us in the sheep industry.

Sincerely,  
Brian DeMatio  
West Branch, MI

Dear Shepherd:

I realize that letters to the editor are not a regular feature of your magazine, however, I suspect you printed the commentary by Stan Potratz with the idea of receiving some response. If you feel these comments are worthy of space, feel free to include them in your publication.

The comments by Stan Potratz point out some of the conflicts that became apparent at the mid-year meeting of ASI in Denver. Primary among those are the conflicts between the objectives of the National Lamb Feeders and the leadership of ASI, which has carried the ball in creating the legislation necessary to achieve a viable promotion, education, and research organization. His comments also reflect a common lack of awareness as to the great work being done with lamb in order to meet the demands of the consumer. I believe that anyone who saw the display of new products in Denver would agree that we are on the right track. The rest of the points, as far as I am concerned, are way off base.

The gestation period of a ewe is approximately five months. She will not likely breed back while lactating, and will probably need a little post-lactational rest in order to ovulate at a high level for the next productive cycle. Therefore, I assume that most lambs are weaned at

no more than six months of age. Nearly all lambs at this age are of very high quality and would be consumer preferred, regardless of breed or feed type. From that point on, the lamb feeder is responsible for the quality of the product. If our reduced demand for lamb is because of reduced quality brought on by excessive age and/or feed types—the blame rests squarely on the backs of the lamb feeders—not the producers. The current Lamb Council is dominated by lamb feeders. Yet we continue to hear the cry that the lamb feeders will be under-represented on the new board. How many dollars does the NLFA spend on promotion? How many dollars are spent to support the development of new products? As long as corn is cheap, the feeders make money on fat and not consumer preferred products. This new board, dominated by producers of high quality lambs, and importers who know how to listen to our customers and how to market a product, is likely to make it difficult for those feeders who create a poor commodity from a valuable product. There are many lamb feeders who do an excellent job of sorting and marketing lambs at an appropriate time. It is my observation that these feeders are in favor of the referendum. I suspect that they might not feel it is necessary to distinguish between the two groups—as we all depend on the production of the ewe as well as each other.

The large size of the new board will ensure representation and participation by the producers across the country, regardless of the numbers of sheep in their states. Where would we be now without the help of people like Phil Hobbe, Roger Thacker, Larry Becker, etc.? With a small national board, the political reality is that they probably wouldn't be in their current positions. The new **organizations** will have to be different than the current **one** as specified in the legislation. Therefore, at our national meetings, it should be more easy to sort out the promotional, educational, and research discussions from the legislative action debates. Although the rate for the checkoff is steep when compared with cattle, it might create the critical mass of dollars necessary to do an effective job in today's high priced advertising markets. The increased revenues coming back to the states will allow producers to do some creative marketing of their own high quality consumer preferred products. What is the per capita lamb consumption in Iowa? Is it possible that increased promotion dollars expended by the producers in Iowa, using their own creativity and knowl-

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**Contact:**  
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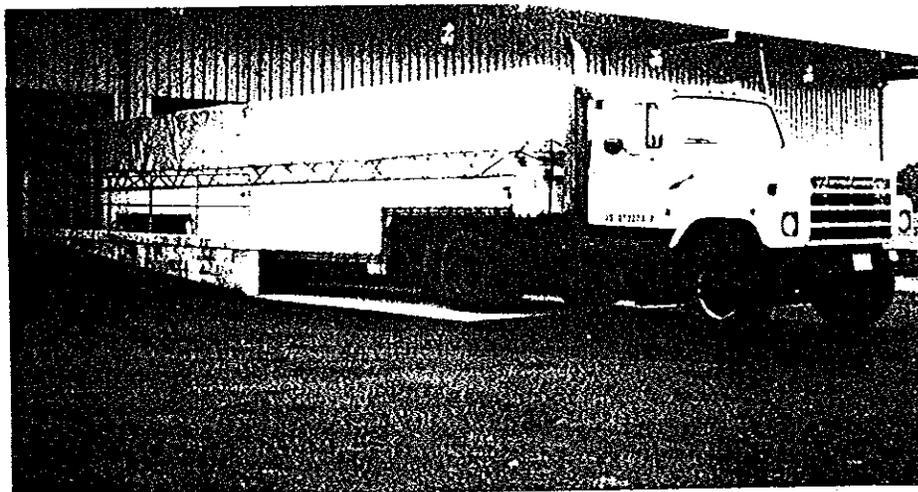
Dr. Harvey Cole, B.Sc., D.V.M., 403-556-1608 (P & F)  
Peter Welkerling, 403-728-3257 (P & F)  
Ian Clark, 403-748-2624 (P & F)  
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**CORDERO GOLD**—An aged Cheddar (1 year) that combines creamy and sharp together!

---

[ ] A. Wisconsin Meadows Sampler - \$15.00  
A sampling of four of our best-selling cheeses.

[ ] B. Sheep Delights - \$30.00  
A larger sampler of our cheeses with a 5th variety.  
(Add \$6.50 per shipment for shipping and handling)

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Rt. 2, Box 125, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729  
(715) 268-4559 (715) 723-2262

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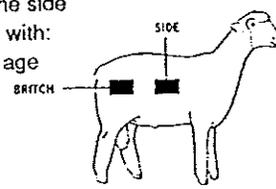


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- October 19 ASI Producer Meetings (See itinerary this issue)  
 20 ASI Open Forum/Executive Board,  
 Sheraton Hotel, John Nolen Drive, Madison, 7:30 PM.
- November 4 42nd. Bred Ewe Sale Rock Co. Fairgrounds,  
 Janesville. (See catalog this issue)
- December 1 Nominations due, Fall Ram Test  
 (See nomination form this issue)  
 9 Delivery date, Fall Ram Test, Wisconsin Ram  
 Test Station, Nelson Crest Farm, Janesville.
- January 1996  
 26 Ads, Copy and Calendar Listings Due,  
 Conference Issue *Wisconsin Shepherd*
- February 3 UWEX-MATC Sheep Seminar,  
 MATC Portage Campus,  
 330 Collins Street, Portage.  
 For Information: Rudy Van Fleet,  
 608/742-9862 or Bob Black 414/623-3536.
- March 28-30 Wisconsin Sheep Industry Conference, Ramada  
 Hotel & Capitol Conference Center, Madison



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**GOLDEN KAAS** - A golden blend of Ewezarella and Colby (100% pure sheep milk). Another award winning cheese.

**CONDERO GOLD** - A carefully aged cheddar - one year old

"Anything else is just cheese"

WISCONSIN MEADOWS, INC.

Rt. 2, Box 125, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

(715) 268-4559

- [ ] A. Wisconsin Meadows Sampler - \$15.00  
 A sampling of four of our best-selling cheeses.
- [ ] B. Sheep Delights - \$30.00  
 A larger sampler of our cheeses with a 5th variety.

Send to: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ St. \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

(Add \$6.50 per shipment for shipping & handling)

A04750C

Fewer sheep to sell didn't seem to consignors or buyers at the recent Dorset Show & Sale, where the showed a healthy \$253 on 27 head into their sixth year with the event. Ewes produced a small, but high quality rams for judge Darwin Hall to place. The champion honors went to Spilde Dorsets. The winning ram drew a bid of \$450 from Farms, Amery. Ben Schultz of Gale up on the reserve champion entry of Farm, taking that yearling home on a bid of \$500. When it came to ewes, the bidding was very competitive. Lien Dorsets grabbed the purple with their bid of \$550 on a bid of \$500. Hass of Delmar, IA. Spildes got right with a spring ewe that grabbed reserve and brought \$500 from Stark Farms. Bockmann Dorsets, long-time supplier, had a solid afternoon grabbing from Jennifer Tremaine of Oconomowoc a yearling and another of \$210 from E



Wisconsin's Dorset Queen, of Cambridge, waits for Day placing at the State Fair Dorset

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## Let's Go Euro!

**MTV:** The young and the self-absorbed abroad

**M**TV'S TRUE-LIFE SOAP OPERA "THE Real World" is rivetingly repellent, like reading someone's diary. It can also be hilarious, sometimes even moving. The grim postscript to last season's San Francisco-based "Real World" was the AIDS-related death of a gay cast member. Season four, starting June 28, is the first Euro-"Real World," programmed for the network's global empire. Three Americans are outnumbered by four non-Americans in a London "flat" that looks like a monastery redecorated by Urban Outfitters. Here the seven videogenic, self-absorbed youths will eat, lust, vent and—the intro promises—"stop being polite and start being real." Television as voyeurvision. What red-blooded viewer could resist?

Anti-Americanism seems to be the designated "issue" this time around. "Big Ben is a clock?" asks Mike, a 21-year-old race-car driver from St. Louis. The kid might as well have UGLY AMERICAN tattooed on his forehead. Mike: meet Neil, a nipple-pierced Brit who sings in a "techno-sleaze" band. Neil doesn't fancy Americans, except for the apple-cheeked Kat, who fancies him back. This makes Mike jealous. You can tell because the Gin Blossoms' alterna-pop hit "Hey Jealousy" is blaring in the background. We all know this is what "The Real World" is really about. "The place is *sexually charged*," explains London native Sharon. It's the house of hormones—and Jacinda the hot Australian model hasn't even put herself in play yet. Looks like Lars has a clear shot at her, though. "I fart. I snore. I stink. Everything," announces the leather-clad deejay from Berlin. You gotta love Lars. He's so, like, real. RICK MARIN



Big Ben's a clock? Mike, Jacinda in London MARTIN GARDNER



Here's looking at ewe: Hey, this stuff would taste great on pizza, with sun-dried tomatoes CHRIS BUCK

## Say Good Night, Goats

**Food:** The new trendy cheese comes from sheep

**S**IX YEARS AGO JOAN SNYDER SET OUT to persuade retail stores to carry something new and weird: the sheep's milk cheeses she was producing in upstate New York. "I started at Fairway, Balducci and Dean & DeLuca," she says, naming three of Manhattan's most sophisticated food shops. "They loved it, and I thought, 'This is a piece of cake.'" Then she tried every place else. "They all said, 'Sheep cheese? Get it out of here.'" Today her job is a lot easier: sheep cheese and yogurt from Hollow Road Farms, as well as from a dozen or so other producers, can be found in classy retail dairy cases around the country. Quantities are still very limited—Hollow Road, the largest producer, will make only about 12,000 pounds of cheese this year. But this stuff has a future: once people try sheep cheese, they're hooked.

Fresh sheep cheese is pure white and wonderfully clean-tasting, with a slight tang that evokes the sun, the air and the grass that went into the making of the milk. The yogurt is scrumptious, too, so rich and complex it leaves pallid, supermarket yogurts in the dust. Some producers are making hard, aged sheep cheese, such as pecorino, and Hollow Road has come up with a lovely Camembert knockoff. But it's the light, spreadable fresh cheese that's winning hearts and minds—in part because, like all fresh cheeses, it's low in fat. Fresh sheep cheese has only about three grams of fat per ounce. Cream cheese, its closest sibling in taste and texture, has 10.

Can sheep cheese become the next *g* *t*

cheese? That's the question the industry is debating right now. "It's coming along, but it's probably where goat cheese was back in the early '80s," says Ari Weinzweig, owner of Ann Arbor's Zingerman's Deli, known for its handpicked array of cheeses. One problem is that there's not that much sheep cheese around. American sheep are fine for meat and wool but give little milk, so until recently, sheep farmers who wanted to make cheese had to breed their way to more productive animals. Now better sheep are being imported, and farmers are upgrading their flocks. "We'll get twice as much milk from the same number of animals," says Cindy Callahan of Bellwether Farms in Petaluma, Calif.

Then there's the problem of getting people to eat sheep cheese. "Unless there's a strong connection with chefs, it's going to be a difficult market to develop," says Allison Hooper, president of Vermont Butter and Cheese, which produces both goat and cow's milk cheeses. "Small companies look to chefs to set the trend, and I'm not sure chefs would replace chevre with sheep's cheese." But some celebrated chefs are on board, including Michael Romano of New York's Union Square Cafe. "Goat cheese is more widely known, but it's not necessarily better," he says. "We use sheep's milk ricotta as a ravioli filling. It's very delicate, very sweet and mild." Sounds yummy, but that's not going to put sheep cheese over the top. When you see it on pizza, *everywhere*, that's when you'll know sheep rule.

Laura Shapiro

## UW Dairy Sheep Program Moving Ahead

There is increased interest in Wisconsin in dairy sheep production, and the UW-Madison is increasing its commitment to the development of this industry. Through a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection's Agricultural Development and Diversification Program, three East Friesian crossbred rams were purchased from a breeder in Canada. Semen from these rams was used on ewes in ten different Wisconsin flocks in 1993 and 1994, and will again be used in 1995. The purpose of this project is to improve dairy genetics of Wisconsin sheep flocks and to provide a genetic link between flocks in order to start an effective selection program for increased milk production.

Two grants were received from the Babcock Institute for International Dairy Research and Development, UW-Madison. The grant sponsored the international speakers for a very successful Great Lakes Dairy Sheepposium held in Madison on March 30, 1995. The second grant provided funds for Yves Roger, Spooner Agricultural

Research Station, and Dave Thomas, Department of Meat & Animal Science, to spend two weeks in England and France this summer visiting dairy sheep operations and sources of improved dairy sheep genetics. This second grant also has funds allocated for the purchase of semen from dairy sheep rams in Europe. USDA currently is considering a change in their import regulations which would allow such semen to enter the U.S.

A sheep milking parlor is under construction at the Spooner Agricultural Research Station and should be operational by late fall 1995. The first ewes will be milked in the parlor in April 1996. Funds for this construction came from the UW-Madison College of Agricultural & Life Sciences from some of the proceeds of the sale of the Hayward Sheep & Beef Station. The parlor will accommodate 24 ewes at a time - 12 on either side of a 3-foot deep pit. Ewes will be milked with six milking units attached to a high line so that the milking units can be swung from one side to the other. Milk will move through a pipeline to a bulk tank. There will be adequate

viewing facilities for visitors to observe the milking procedure. This parlor will be an important component to the research and extension programs in dairy sheep production.

The UW-Madison Department of Food Science and Agricultural Economics have both started research projects to aid the dairy sheep industry. The Department of Food Science is investigating the properties of whey from sheep's milk and its potential uses and will also experiment with specialty cheeses from sheep's milk. The Department of Agricultural Economics is investigating the effects of recent free trade agreements on the U.S. market price of sheep milk cheeses. While a large amount of effort will be directed toward dairy sheep research and extension in the near future, producers can rest assured that programs with lamb and wool production will continue at both the Arlington and Spooner Stations.

*Dave Thomas*  
*Sheep Extension Specialist*  
*Dept. of Meat & Animal Science*  
*UW-Madison*

## Timetable Announced for Ram Tests

Following a successful sale at Arlington and the recent completion of the Group III and National Dorset Ram Tests, the Wisconsin Sheep Breeders Co-op Ram Test Committee has announced the schedule for both the Fall Test and the 1996 test series. The timetable is as follows:

	Fall '95-96	Group I	Group II	Group III
Rams born between:	9/1/95	1/1/96-	2/1/96	3/1/96
Nominations in by:	10/15/95	2/10/96	3/10/96	5/20/96
Delivery date:	12/1/95	3/30/96	4/13/96	7/8/96
Official start:	12/9/95	4/6/96	4/20/96	7/13/96
Final weigh date:	12/16/95	4/12/96	4/26/96	7/19/96
	2/9/96	6/7/96	6/21/96	9/13/96

Consignors may pick up their rams on the day following the final weigh dates for each test. Average daily gain on test for each ram will be adjusted at the start of the test period. The final report for each test will contain ratios relative to breed averages for that test.

The costs for individual tests, on a per ram basis, include a **Nomination Fee (\$35)** due with entry form by the nomination date, plus a **Delivery Fee (\$70)** due at the time the ram is delivered to the station. Test station entry fees total \$105 per ram. Consignors wishing fiber diameter measurements on wool will be charged \$7 per sample and \$7.50 per sample for yield grade measurements. Consignors to the Wisconsin test must be members of the Wisconsin Sheep Breeders Co-op; dues are \$15 per year. The Wisconsin Ram Test station is owned and managed by Nils Nelson, and located at Nelson Crest Farm west of Janesville. The Wisconsin Ram Test is a function of the Wisconsin Sheep Breeders Co-op in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Producers interested in signing to the Wisconsin Ram Test should contact Richard Roembke, 3696 County Aire Drive, Cedarburg, WI 53012. phone: 414/377-1491.

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