



The American Livestock Breeds Conservancy
N E W S

September – December, 2012
Volume 29, Issue 5
Conserving rare breeds since 1977

Conference Keynote Speaker Addresses Breeds and Seeds

In the words of ALBC’s executive director Eric Hallman, “ALBC’s national conference is gearing up to be a great one.” We are happy to announce that Diane Ott Whealy, co-founder and current Vice President of the Seed Savers Exchange, will be our keynote speaker for this year’s conference.

Diane has been a national leader in the heirloom seed movement and a strong advocate for the protection of the earth’s rare genetic food stocks for nearly 40 years. Today she is a featured speaker at garden shows and botanical gardens throughout the country. In June 2011, she published *Gathering: Memoir of a Seed Saver*, which tells the story of how Seed Savers Exchange has grown from a small group of passionate gardeners to one of the most

active and effective seed saving organizations in the world. Today, the Seed Savers Exchange describes itself as the nation’s largest non-governmental seed bank, with more than 13,000 members and a vast seed catalog of thousands of varieties of rare vegetables, herbs, flowers and plants. The goal of SSE, now based at a scenic, 890-acre farm in Decorah, Iowa, is both to preserve biodiversity and to share those varieties with the public.

Diane’s experiences growing up in a farming family in Iowa are partially responsible for her interest in heirloom varieties of seeds. The Whealys’ collection started when Diane’s terminally ill grandfather gave them the seeds of two garden plants, Grandpa Ott’s morning glory and German Pink tomato. Grandpa Ott’s parents brought the seeds from Bavaria when they immigrated to St. Lucas, Iowa, in the 1870s. In the early years, the Whealys scraped together funds to publish a small newsletter, the *True Seed Exchange*, from their modest homestead in northwest Missouri. Much like the early years of ALBC, Seed Savers Exchange started



Diane Ott Whealy, co-founder and current Vice President of the Seed Savers Exchange will be ALBC’s keynote speaker for this year’s conference.

out as a small operation, driven solely by the passion of the Whealys and a handful of other like-minded individuals from around the nation.

In 1986 Diane helped to develop Heritage Farm, Seed Savers’ headquarters near Decorah, Iowa, to maintain and display collections of endangered food crops. Diane is an experienced gardener who designs the heirloom display gardens each summer at the farm. Heritage Farm is also one of two major American breeding sites for Ancient White Park cattle, holding around 80 of just over 200 that currently exist in the United States. Another heritage breed, Gloucestershire Old Spots pigs, are being employed at Heritage Farm this year to “clean-up” windfalls in the orchard, thereby reducing pests. Each year the farm also hosts a display of Heritage poultry. This year’s display features Sussex, Delaware, and Wyandotte chickens, Buff ducks, American Buff geese, and a Narragansett turkey.

Join us at the ALBC Conference in November to hear about Diane’s experiences with breeds and seeds and celebrate 35 Years of Conservation Success! ❖



Heritage Farm, the headquarters of Seedsavers Exchange, is one of two major American breeding sites for Ancient White Park cattle. Photo by Darcy Poquette.

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The American Livestock Breeds Conservancy News

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Basic annual membership is \$35, and includes the bimonthly *ALBC News* and the annual *Breeders Directory*. We also accept unsolicited donations. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law. Please send changes of address to ALBC.

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Going Back to Its Roots

Beginning with the first issue of the *AMBC (now ALBC) News* in the fall of 1982, the organization's newsletter has grown from a four-page, black-and-white quarterly leaflet mainly covering letters to the editor and the occasional summary of the annual membership meeting, to the current bi-monthly, 20-page full-color publication covering everything from historical articles about rare breeds to the latest research ALBC is conducting in the field. The *ALBC News* has evolved substantially with the organization over the past 29 years, and as ALBC continues to evolve, so does our beloved newsletter.

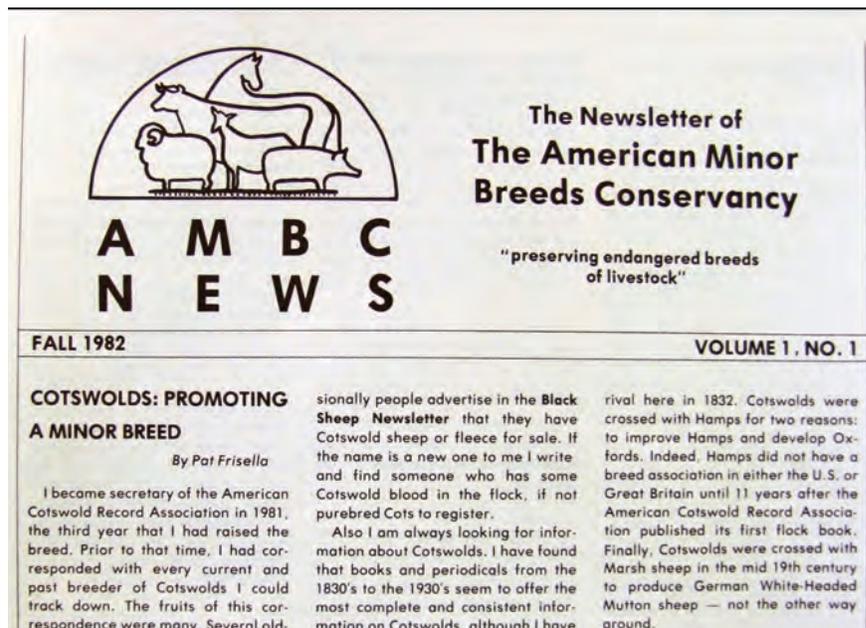
Coinciding with the upcoming launch of our new website and its enhanced membership features, the *ALBC News* will be moving back to a quarterly distribution beginning in January, 2013. Watch for exciting new material in the *ALBC News* and digitized archives of back-issues, as well as many more member-exclusive features, in the member login section of our new website.

This change to quarterly printing will benefit the organization in several ways and allow ALBC to focus more of its efforts on our conservation work. One of the obvious benefits will be the savings in postage and printing costs. The change will also benefit the environment, as roughly 130,000 fewer pages will be

printed each year. While many organizations have moved to entirely electronic newsletters in recent years, and several of our members have suggested the current newsletter be distributed only online, ALBC feels that it is important to keep the print version of the newsletter, as many of our members do not have (or have limited) Internet access. The monthly email newsletter, the *ALBC E-News* will keep its current schedule and serve as a way for our members and fans to stay up to date between issues of the quarterly *ALBC News*. Make sure we have your email address on file and up-to-date if you would like to receive the *E-News*.

For those who are advertising in the newsletter, rates will remain the same; if ads have been paid for in advance, they will still run for the number of issues currently paid for. If you are interested in advertising, the rates are \$32/issue for business-card-size ads and \$96/issue for quarter-page ads, with a 10% discount for purchasing a year's worth of advertising. This will be the last issue for 2012 as we prepare for the transition to the new distribution schedule, with newsletters sent out in January, April, July, and October. As always, we will continue to strive to bring you relevant and interesting articles and information about rare breed conservation and the work that ALBC does. ❖

Questions, comments, and article submissions for the ALBC News can be directed to Ryan Walker at rwalker@albc-usa.org.



Pictured: The fall 1982 first issue of the AMBC News.

FROM THE DIRECTOR



By Eric Hallman

As I write this column, it has been a little over three months since I joined the staff of ALBC. During this time I have learned a great deal, enough to know that I have just scratched the surface in appreciating the contributions of ALBC and its members. In the following space, I reflect on three things that have most impressed and informed me in this short time – the ALBC membership, the ALBC staff, and ALBC programs. Much of this may seem obvious to many of you but I feel it's worth mentioning.

ALBC Members

ALBC's membership is wonderfully diverse. Active in all 50 states (and elsewhere), our approximately 3,000 members cover the entire demographic spectrum (socio-economic, political, cultural, animal, vegetable, and mineral) – a true cross-section of America. And we are all unified by a common commitment and passion for the mission of ALBC. Whether owners of rare breeds or not, our members embrace the importance of genetic conservation and biodiversity.

I have been getting to know individual members and learning more about both the challenges and rewards of working with heritage breeds. I have been delighted to meet so many genuine and dedicated folks. You are responsible for conserving more than 180 breeds from eleven different species. And since ALBC's inception, you've never failed a breed identified as endangered. This is heroic work and I'll argue that you are American heroes! Thanks for making ALBC a true success story.

I'm looking forward to meeting many more of you at the Annual Conference in November. As you'll read in this newsletter, we have a great lineup including a fantastic keynote speaker in Diane Ott Wheeler, co-founder of Seed Savers Exchange.

One last comment on membership: There is strength in numbers and we can use all the help we can get. I challenge everyone reading this to pass this newsletter on to friends and ask them to join ALBC.

Staff

While I've learned about the passion and commitment of ALBC members, the staff is rabid – in a good way! Everyone here is truly dedicated to the mission and the membership of ALBC. Like all organizations these days, we've had to tighten our belts and become more efficient with our resources. One of the consequences has been reduced ability to provide phone coverage. I ask that you be patient with us. We know how important it is to talk to someone on staff and we do not want to lose the personal connection we have with you. In trying to do more with our resources, we are moving more information online and making it more easily available.

We plan to roll out many of these features after the national conference. Still yet, we realize many of our members have limited Internet access and will continue to provide printed material and phone access as we have been doing.

One staff note is that Jennifer Kendall, our Marketing and Development Director, has moved on to another job, much to our regret. Jennifer was a great asset to ALBC and we wish her the best in her new position. Jennifer built a robust marketing and development program that will continue to serve us well. We are fortunate that our former Membership Services Manager, Ryan Walker, has stepped into this position without missing a beat. We know we'll continue to see great things from Ryan – this newsletter for one.

Programs

When I first became involved with ALBC, it seemed simple to describe the mission of the organization – conservation of the genetic heritage of America's livestock breeds. What was more difficult was to capture all we do, what you do, in an easy-to-understand story. I found that

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Helping Hands (and Feet!) for ALBC

By Jeannette Beranger

As a non-profit, ALBC depends upon its members and supporters to make our work possible, and occasionally some come up with very creative ways to help bring funding to the organization. Our office was contacted this past spring by Tori Mason, the Historic Farm Manager with the Nashville Zoo at Grassmere with a proposal to raise money for ALBC. The zoo's historic farm dates back to 1810 and includes a number of heritage breeds including Milking Devon cattle, a Clydesdale horse, Cotswold sheep, and others. The Nashville Zoo has been influential with breed conservation education in the region by informing their nearly 650,000 annual visitors about endangered breeds and the work of ALBC. To our surprise, Tori informed us that the zoo and its chapter of the American

Association of Zookeepers (AAZK) wanted to further support rare breed conservation by utilizing the proceeds from their annual animal art auction to benefit ALBC. The zoo extended an invitation to the ALBC staff to attend the affair which included an after-hours visit to the zoo, fine food, and live bluegrass music that gave the event a festive atmosphere. Because several of us had planned to be in

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ALBC Board Chairman Charles Taft, Nashville Zoo Board Chairman Jim Hunt Sr., ALBC Executive Director Eric Hallman and Research and Technical Programs Manager Jeannette Beranger at the auction. Photo by Tori Mason.

A Resource for Broadening the Genetic Base of Livestock Populations

Harvey Blackburn

For the past decade, the National Animal Germplasm Program (NAGP) has been acquiring semen, embryos, and blood samples from livestock in the United States. To date, more than 800,000 samples from over 18,000 animals have entered the repository. A substantial portion of these samples were derived from rare and minor livestock breeds. In total, samples from 48 rare breeds of cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and chickens have been acquired. Originally, the intent in developing the collection was to have a collection of “last resort”; in other words, to use the samples if and when a breed was in critical danger. However, since the collection’s initiation it has become clear that the collection can be used for more routine uses. To date, for example, samples from over 3,300 animals have been released from the repository for reconstituting populations, adding genetic variation to populations, and DNA studies. This article will detail how the collection has been used by several breeders that raise rare breeds of livestock.

In 2008 and 2009, Cantagree Milking Shorthorns submitted a request to NAGP to use semen from two Milking Shorthorn bulls, Borgs Dairy King 5th (born 1959) and Floyd Crest Dairymaster (born 1954). They believed these two bulls would add needed and useful genetic diversity to their herd and subsequently benefit the breed.



A son of Milking Shorthorn bull Borgs Dairy King 5th, courtesy of D. Wold.

For the Milking Shorthorn breed, it has been estimated that the average inbreeding level is 6% according to the Animal Improvement Programs Laboratory. In comparison, these two bulls are only slightly

related to the current population, and it was estimated that their expected future daughter inbreeding would be 1.4% for each bull. The request was reviewed by the NAGP Dairy Species Committee (which included the CEO of the Milking Shorthorn Association), and they recommended that the semen be released. Upon receiving the semen, Cantagree artificially inseminated their selected cows with semen from the two bulls, and nine calves were born. Of these calves, several bulls have been raised. These were sent to an artificial insemination (AI) stud where they could be collected and the semen cryopreserved. A portion of these collections were then sent back to NAGP to replenish and add to the Milking Shorthorn collection.

A different type of repository use has been to assist breeders with adoption or development of new technologies, in addition to facilitating the formation of different genetic combinations. For several years, NAGP has worked with Ken and Oogie McGuire in evaluating nonsurgical AI with Black Welsh Mountain sheep. Semen samples from their Black Welsh Mountain rams have been collected and cryopreserved as part of developing the Black Welsh Mountain sheep collection in the repository. Sufficient



Black Welsh Mountain ewe with lambs, sire by a repository ram, courtesy of O. McGuire.

quantities of semen have been collected so that the repository samples could be used to test and evaluate transcervical AI approaches in sheep. While the results to date are inconclusive, the project has enabled the breeder to generate lambs from desired matings, and with the subsequent collection of semen samples from those progeny, new genetic combinations were entered into the repository.

The germplasm collection is maintained as a public good. Therefore, samples are distributed at no cost. With the assistance of our species committees, the livestock industry, and ALBC, a process has been developed for accessing the germplasm in the collection. This involves:

- looking up the animals in the collection of the breed of interest on the internet or contacting us about animals of interest,
- submitting a germplasm request form, which can be obtained from our website,
- review of the request and development of a recommendation by the appropriate NAGP species committee, and
- NAGP’s making a final determination about the request.

Once a request is approved, the shipment is coordinated with the requester. There are conditions which can prohibit us from distributing germplasm. For example, there has to be a sufficient number of semen units in the repository to be able to release material without compromising the breed reconstitution element of this program. Second, if the requested material can be obtained directly from the breeder, a potential user’s first step

New Website Launch Soon

We are excited to let you know that we have made significant progress on our new website and member database, and we expect to launch the new site by the end of the year. The new site will have a sleeker, more modern feel and will be better organized than the current site. ALBC launched its website in 1998, when 30% of the people in the United States were Internet users. Today, around 79% of Americans are connected to the Web, the technology has advanced, and an updated website is much overdue! We welcome your feedback and ask for your patience through the conversion. Many steps are being taken to make the transition as seamless as possible, but as we all know – with new technology, there are occasionally times when things don't go as smoothly as you expected them to. Be on the lookout for a survey where you can provide feedback after the new website is launched and get ready for some awesome new features!

should be to obtain the germplasm from the original source or from other practicing breeders that may have similar genetic backgrounds. Third, the requestor is asked how the germplasm will be handled (e.g., inseminated) and if they have prior experience using the technique or are working with some person or entity that routinely does matings with cryopreserved semen. If these concerns cannot be satisfied, the request will be denied.

The example of using semen from the repository underscores the utility of developing and maintaining a national gene bank with a collection that is publically available. While a substantial collection has been developed, there is still a need to further enhance the collection particularly for the rarer breeds. Therefore, we will continue to seek additional animals from which samples can be collected, cryopreserved and utilized by breeders. ❖

Dr. Harvey Blackburn is the NAGP Coordinator. For further information about NAGP activities and the collection of germplasm and tissue, contact him at Harvey.Blackburn@ars.usda.gov or (970) 495-3268.

Culling Practices in Rare Breeds

By D. P. Sponenberg

In the last few months, several questions have come up concerning culling in rare breeds. Culling is an important practice in breed management, and has a role in all breeds, regardless of their rarity. Unless done carefully, though, it can damage rare breeds beyond their capacity to survive as the useful entities they are. All breeds need to have some culling, but that culling must be conducted wisely in order to not jeopardize the breed's future genetic structure and viability.

Culling serves various purposes in breed maintenance, and all of these are related to the removal of animals from the reproducing population. This means different things in different species. The castration of a colt to make a performance gelding is an example of culling, because that horse can no longer reproduce even though he now has a productive role in breed promotion. In most other species "culling" means removal from the breed by slaughter and entering the food chain, although certainly some culling of rams for wool-producing wethers, or bull calves for oxen, are examples of nonlethal culling that still removes these animals from reproducing the breed.

Culling, essentially, is the downside of selection. Selection sounds so wonderfully positive, because certain animals are

recruited for reproducing the next generation. Culling is the other side of that coin, and represents those animals that are not destined to reproduce the breed. Reasons for culling vary, and can usually be split into two main categories: low production potential or deviation from the breed standard. These two are very different, and breeders need to reflect on those differences in order to use culling most effectively for breed improvement, survival, and conservation.

In all breeds it is important to breed "to the standard," and to work to ensure that the animals produced do indeed meet that standard. However, the standard can become a very harsh dictator, and in some cases can impede breed survival if breeders impose culling levels that are too high. Depending on the specific factor that is used to cull animals, the breed standard can itself become a huge problem in breed survival. Some points in a breed standard are more important than others (usually these relate to soundness and production) and others have less importance (usually these are the details of appearance that contribute to "breed type" and set one breed off as unique from other related breeds).

The differences in importance of characters in the breed standard are not trivial,

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Research and Technical Programs Manager Jeannette Beranger helps ALBC member Gra Moore evaluate his Buckeye chickens in Pamplico, SC. Photo by Ryan Walker.

Culling Practices in Rare Breeds

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and if each character is used as an independent and absolute “veto” of an animal’s future in the breed, then many breeds will have so few animals remaining that will cease to be viable as genetic units. This means that breeders need to be wise in using the breed standard as a tool for culling. The breed standard is a useful tool, but needs to be used constructively.

One approach to using the breed standard as a tool in culling animals is to mimic “card grading” as a process for evaluating animals. In card grading, each animal is compared to the breed standard, rather than comparing the animals to one another. This is a useful alternative to competitive showing, and the same procedure can be useful in individual flocks and herds of animals as young candidates for inclusion in the breeding population are considered.

Card grading has been done on several occasions by Leicester Longwool sheep breeders, and the results are interesting and useful for all breeds. The top “blue card” animals are obvious choices for retention into the breeding population. Likewise, the “red card” animals usually are good choices, despite having a weakness or two in meeting the ideal breed standard. The “yellow card” animals are a very fascinating group, because some of these have a single significant flaw, while others are more generally more moderately weak in several different characteristics. The “single significant flaw” animals are actually pretty useful in the breed, because they can be mated to animals that are strong in whatever one characteristic is weak, and the other strengths in the “yellow card” animal can therefore benefit the breed. The key here is that these “single significant flaw” animals may indeed have a role, and an important one at that, in the breed’s future despite their flaw. The key is that they must be used wisely. If the breed standard is used as a sequence of absolutes to require culling, then these animals would be removed and their positive contribution would be lost.

The “overall weak animals” have less to offer a breed, and if used at all must be used carefully, although they certainly



Card grading is used to evaluate individual animals relative to a breed standard and assess their potential as breeding stock.

could be mated to uniformly strong animals to improve the next generation. At the bottom of the heap are “white card” animals, which deviate from breed standard in significant ways. Some of these still only have one very serious flaw, and even in this case such animals might have a role in the breed’s future, but only with wise and limited use.

The key point is to not let a single flaw eliminate an animal from having a useful and important role in the genetic structure of the breed. Flawed animals must be used carefully and wisely, but that is the point of good conservation breeding in the first place! To remove such animals not only removes their flaw, but also removes all of their good traits. In many cases, animals with even a significant flaw have produced offspring that have more ideally met the breed standard and have been able to contribute positively to a breed’s secure future.

The other major division of characteristics includes production characters, and these also need to be the basis for culling decisions in order to keep animals productive and economically rewarding to their owners. Even in this case, though, a straight-line approach may not serve breed future very well, as a low performer may indeed be important to the breed for reasons of rarity of bloodline or other compelling factors.

All of this may sound like a free pass to use all sorts of defective animals in con-

servation breeding; however that is most certainly not the case! Any animal with a structural or breed-type defect should only be used for very a specific and narrow goal. That goal is usually to produce a few offspring that do not have the defect but that retain the other genetic benefits that the animal brings to the breed. Too many breeders fail to distinguish between substandard or defective animals and other animals that are truly superior, and that “head in the sand” approach leads to no improvement in the weaknesses that these animals have. A delicate balance has to be reached, and breeders of all breeds should develop their ability to see and appreciate true and valid superiority in their animals.

Culling is the tool that keeps breeds productive and distinctive, and should never be discontinued in any breed. Culling provides for animals that are useful, and the fact that they meet the breed standard is a hallmark of that usefulness. It is important, though, to never throw out the baby with the bathwater, and that is easy to do if culling becomes automatic and thoughtless. The key is to use breeding decisions to constantly move in a direction of improvement in terms of both production and adherence to the breed standard. Culling is a great tool in that endeavor, but will never completely replace the positive side of the process. That positive side is the creative and wise pairing up of animals to produce that next generation that is better than the parents. ❖

Phil Sponenberg, DVM, Ph.D. is a Professor of Pathology and Genetics at Virginia Tech. He is a long-time member of ALBC and serves as a Technical Advisor to the ALBC staff. He can be reached via email at dpsponen@vt.edu.

Pastured Meat and Dairy and Certified Organic Produce Advisory Group

Mother Earth News is organizing a series of nutrient tests to compare “real food” to industrial products. From time to time, they will invite members of this group to provide samples for nutrient testing. They may also send you questions to help them collect information when they are writing articles about these topics. To learn more and join the group, visit www.motherearthnews.com/ipost.aspx.

The Extinction of Historic Breeds of Swine

By Bruce H. Kalk, PhD

The following article was first published in the March-April 1991 issue of the AMBC News (ALBC changed "Minor" in its name to "Livestock" in 1993). The research was paid for by AMBC members who sent designated gifts in for the AMBC Extinctions Project. The original full-length report was published later that year as well. The article below is in its original, published form. Several clarifications have been made at the end based on research conducted since the article was published. Though since the founding of ALBC we have not lost any breeds, it is still incredibly important to remember that the threat of extinction for the breeds we work with is very real, exemplifying the continued need for livestock conservation.

There is an intrinsically close relationship between the history of food habits, the economic development of the livestock industry, and the rise and fall of specific livestock breeds. The extinction of a number of historic swine breeds was directly related to the many changes which took place in the American swine industry between the early nineteenth century, when hogs were kept on small farms for household consumption, and the mid-twentieth century, when farmers were producing hogs for distant markets.

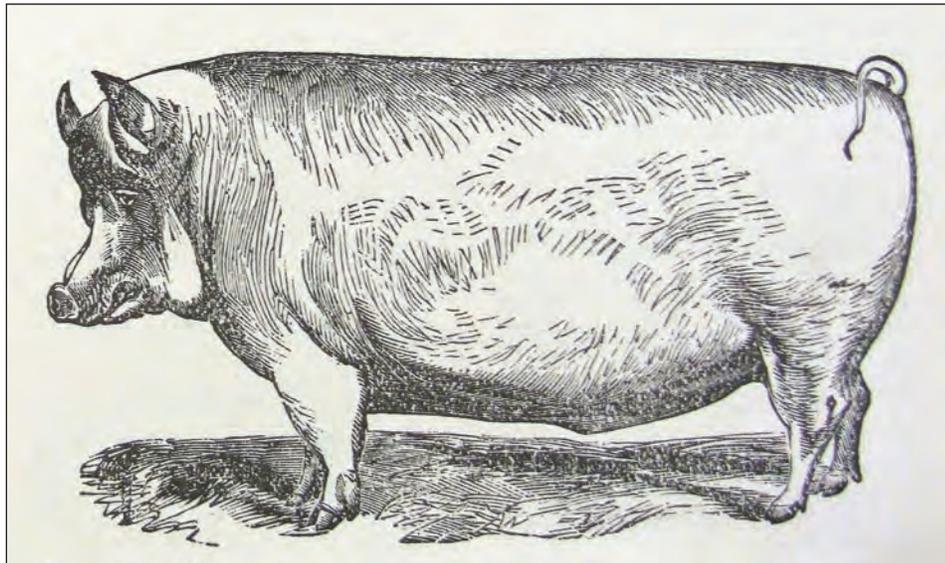
Eating habits over the period changed in two directions: away from pork towards other meats and away from lard-type hogs toward bacon-type hogs. Some swine

Swine Extinctions

Bedford - 1855-70
Byfield - after 1850
Irish Grazier - 1870-1900
Suffolk - after 1930
Big China - 1835

Red Hogs:
Jersey Red, Duroc, Red Guinea,
Spanish Red, Portugese Red - 1883

Curtis Victoria - ca. 1900
Davis Victoria - 1930s
Cheshire - 1930s
Essex - after 1930



Improved Suffolk hog as seen on the cover of the March-April 1991 issue of the AMBC News.

breeds were ill-adapted to survive this transition.

Other swine breeds were lost during the gradual relocation of the hog-raising industry from the eastern seaboard to the Midwest.

And finally, several important breeds became extinct due to the mania American farmers have shown for selective cross-breeding of stock for improvement, with little thought given to conserving the original crossing breeds.

For the purpose of this research, I have considered a breed to be "historically significant" if it met any two of the following criteria:

- 1) If it was recognized as a breed *ca.* 1905 (by which time breed associations were well-developed for swine) by possessing a breed association;
- 2) If it was commonly recognized as an existing breed in livestock manuals *ca.* 1900-1930;
- 3) If it was recognized in the secondary literature on the history of livestock as a historic breed of some prominence at any point in American history.

The "first wave" of swine breed extinctions occurred among some of the earliest improved breeds introduced to the United States in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Perhaps the first of these was the Bedford, variously called the Cumberland; the Bedfordshire; or, in New York and Massachusetts, the Woburn hog. This breed first came to the United States during the early nineteenth century, especially in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Virginia. It was also known in New

York, where it was held in especially high regard, and in Massachusetts.

While the animal was considered a significant improvement over common stock, it did not survive efforts to selectively cross-breed it with the common stock of Chester County, Pennsylvania, on which it exhibited a "distinctively refining influence" and resulted in the establishment of a new breed, the Chester White. One writer remarked in 1855 that "our hogs have been crossed upon the 'Berkshire,' 'Irish Grazier,' 'Woburn,' &c., until we scarcely know what we have, except that they are hogs." By 1872, the U.S. Department of Agriculture considered the Bedford already extinct. We can thus date the Bedford's extinction to sometime between 1855 and 1870.

The Byfield hog was another victim of its usefulness for selective cross-breeding. The animal originated in Byfield, Massachusetts *ca.* 1800 when Chester Forham discovered the floppy-eared beast in a local marketplace. It quickly became the predominant breed in New England. The Byfield allegedly evolved from a mix of Bedford, Old English, and Chinese pigs and was itself greatly valued for cross-breeding. Eventually the Byfield immigrated with New England landers west to Ohio sometime before 1816, although it was also known in the South. In Ohio, the Byfield hog was cross-bred with a variety of other breeds resulting in the Poland China hog. Paradoxically, the Byfield, whose characteristics were so esteemed for cross-breeding, was supplanted by its

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The Extinction of Historic Breeds of Swine

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Poland China offspring. Thereafter the Byfield became extinct.

The Irish Grazier¹ was another significant breed that died out because it helped produce a more advantageous animal for the competitive market. Irish immigrants imported their country's native hogs in very large numbers in the early nineteenth century. The animal was greatly valued for it could readily survive grazing on garden and dairy leftovers with almost no tending at all. In 1839, the Irish Grazier was introduced to the Miami Valley of Ohio where it became an element in the development of the "superior" Poland China Breed.

Although frequently criticized for being less profitable than if it were cross-bred (it was slow-maturing and big-boned), the Irish Grazier appears to have remained one of the two or three most popular breeds throughout the country; certainly it was extremely popular in the South on the eve of the Civil War. It is unclear when the breed's unprofitability resulted in extinction, but the animal is not mentioned in livestock literature *ca.* 1900, so it apparently disappeared between 1870 and 1900.

"There might be pages of testimony given in favor of Suffolks," wrote the U.S. Commissioner of Agriculture of one of the country's most widespread hog breeds in 1863. "We think it no exaggeration to say that we believe three-fourths of the hogs

of northern Illinois have strains of Suffolk blood." The animal, along with the Irish Grazier and Berkshire, was probably the most popular pig in the United States during the 1850s. Farmers praised the Suffolk for keeping easier, maturing younger, and fattening quicker with less expense than other breeds. But the nineteenth century proved to be the heyday of the Suffolk. By the twentieth century, the breed was no longer regularly mentioned in livestock manuals. In 1930, only 303 living registered pure-bred Suffolks existed. The Suffolk seems to have disappeared thereafter.

One of the most significant swine breeds was the Big China hog, considered the "forerunner" of the Poland China breed. John Wallace, a trustee of the Shaker Society, visited Philadelphia in 1816 and procured several of these swine, which he brought back to southwestern Ohio. Agricultural periodicals, namely the *Ohio Cultivator* and the *Western Farmer*, frequently lauded the virtues of the Big China for cross-breeding purposes. By 1835, the animal became known as the "Warren County Hog" or, when crossed with the Bedford, Byfield, and Russian hogs, and later on the Berkshire hog, the Poland China.

We know nothing of the history of a number of breeds, including the Russian hog so important to the development of the Poland China. The same can be said of the Siamese, Calcutta, Barnitz, Lincoln, Middlesex, and Newbury White breeds.

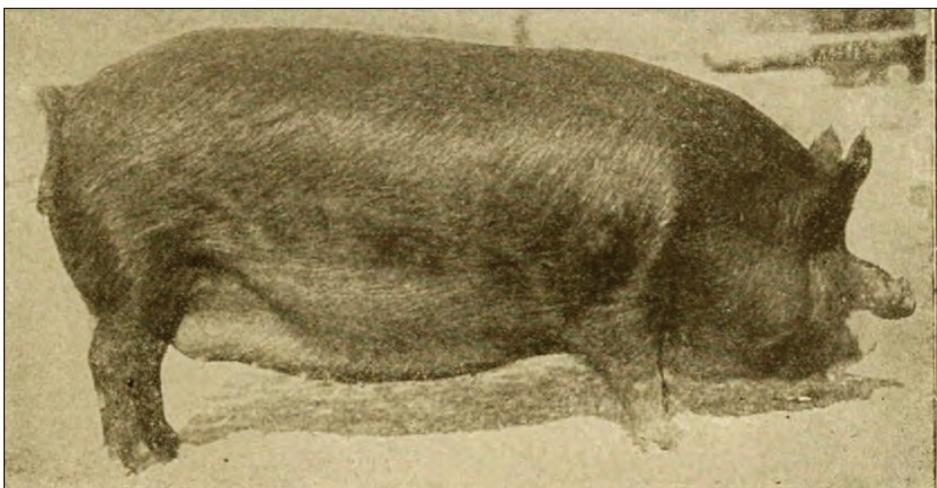
The last part of the "first wave" of breed extinctions concerns the various red pigs first known in New York and New England during the late colonial period. Guinea hogs², from West Africa, arrived in

America with the slave trade; their presence here can be documented as far back as 1804. Henry Clay is said to have imported Spanish and Portuguese red hogs to the United States in 1837. These red hogs – "native," Guinea, Portugese, and Spanish – intermixed on a local basis and cannot be regarded as "improved" animals; local red hog stock was a conglomerate of many ancestors distinctive primarily in geographic terms.

The recognition of two red hog strains, however, paved the way for the establishment of a recognized red hog breed towards the end of the century. In the process of forming an improved breed, however, the unimproved strains ceased to have any individual identity. Saratoga County, New York saw the foundation stock for its "Duroc" strain of hogs develop during the 1820s. Meanwhile, in 1857, James B. Lyman, agricultural editor for the *New York Tribune*, made reference to the "Jersey Red," and thus christened New Jersey's red hog stock a swine breed. These two breeds became the sources of selective cross-breeding which resulted in 1872 in the formal uniting of the Duroc and Jersey Red breeds at the National Swine Breeders' Convention that year. After 1883, when the Duroc-Jersey breed association formed, no efforts were made to keep the two strains separated from one another.

Despite its east coast origins, the Duroc-Jersey became an increasingly western breed of swine. It attracted considerable attention when exhibited at the Columbian Exposition in 1893 and has flourished ever since. It may then be said that the "extinction" of the individual varieties of red hogs in America was remarkably official and took place with the establishment of the American Duroc-Jersey Record Association in 1883.

The "first wave" of swine breed extinctions occurred between 1835-1900 (with the exception of the Suffolk, which I have included in this group because it flourished during the nineteenth century rather than the twentieth). The breeds lost included the first improved swine stock importer to America; the predominant breed in New England; the forerunner of the Poland China; the various strains of red hogs; and two of the three most widespread mid-nineteenth century breeds. The "second wave" of extinctions took place during the first half of the twentieth century when four breeds disappeared: the



Essex sow from the 1914 book *Live Stock: A Cyclopedia for the Farmer and Stock Owner*.

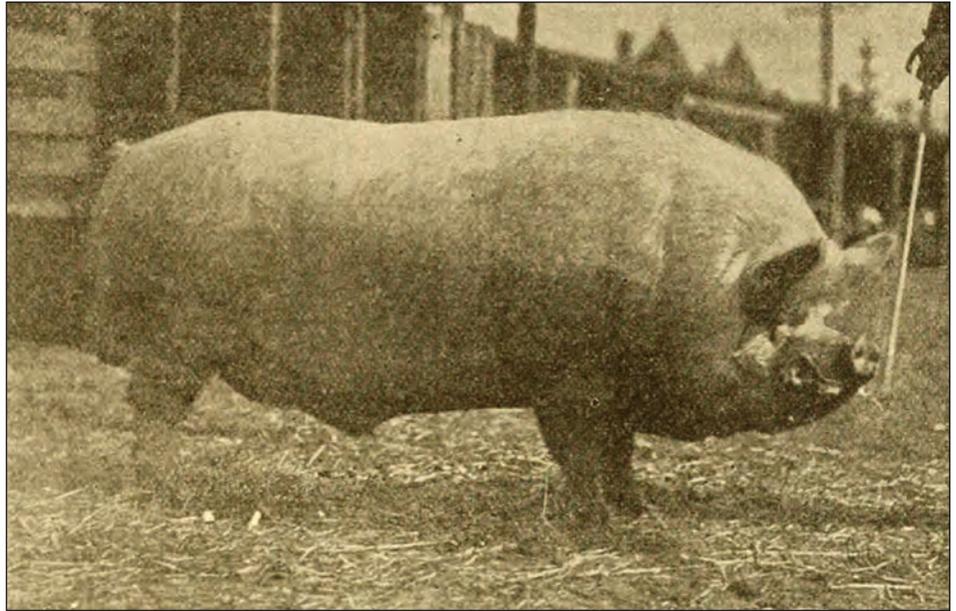
Essex, the Cheshire, the Curtis Victoria, and the Davis Victoria.

The Essex³ pig, which probably shared a common ancestor with the American Hampshire, was a black swine breed that had by 1840 become extremely popular in Great Britain. The Essex was first imported to the United States in 1820. Early on, the animal was used more by small household-oriented farmers rather than for commodity production for large-scale marketing across the country. Around 1830, British breeders crossed the pig with the Old English, Berkshire, Sussex, and Neapolitan pigs. Known to mature early and feed well off a small amount of food, the Essex possessed a high percentage of fat in its meat. At least one farm manual recommended the Essex as a preferred breed for those with a “desire to realize the largest profits with the least outlay of time and money.”

The American Essex Association organized and began publishing herdbooks in 1890, but the Association only published three volumes. About a century after its arrival in the United States, the Essex was clearly in decline. According to one period livestock book, the animal’s popularity by 1920 had reached “A low ebb... [it is] losing favor year by year,” in part because the Essex was too fatty, too “delicate,” and too often failed to “grow into money.”

The Cheshire hog originated in Jefferson County, New York; this “Jefferson County Hog” was first exhibited at the New York State Fair in 1859. Thereafter it became the primary white hog exhibited at New York’s fair. The Cheshire was small in size but matured at an extremely early age. A breed association for the Cheshire started in 1884, and by 1906 it had published four herdbooks. In 1905, the association registered 1000 pure-bred Cheshires; in 1910, the Cheshire was the third most popular swine breed in New York.

Shortly thereafter, interest in this particularly docile animal waned. The final herdbook was published in 1914. Although there were Cheshire herds in many parts of the country and breeders showed the animal throughout the east at agricultural fairs, the Cheshire remained primarily of interest to breeders in New York state. By 1920, outside of the northeastern states, the Cheshire nowhere represented more than 1% of the hog population. By 1930, only forty Cheshires survived; their demise can thus safely be dated to the 1930s.



Curtis Victoria boar from the 1914 book *Live Stock: A Cyclopedic for the Farmer and Stock Owner*.

The Curtis Victoria pig originated in Lake County, Indiana around 1850 out of efforts by F.D. Curtis of Saratoga, New York to develop a new breed by crossing a number of existing varieties of improved swine. Curtis hoped to conserve the best genetic qualities of each of the breeds he crossed. The breed failed to catch on, however, and no known pure-breds existed *ca.* 1900.

Twenty years after Curtis developed his “Victoria” breed, George F. Davis bred Poland Chinas, Chester Whites, Berkshires, and American Suffolks to produce the Davis Victoria, genetically unrelated to the Curtis breed but unwittingly also named for the reigning Queen of England. Breeders of the Davis Victoria claimed that the animal shipped well and was extremely resistant to mange and sun blisters, thus making the breed particularly attractive to southerners. They also praised its “unusual economy in production of the flesh.” Although a Victoria breed association arose *ca.* 1900, the organization apparently did not publish herdbooks. Modern livestock manuals do not discuss the breed at all. As of 1930, only 94 Victoria swine existed. The breed clearly died out shortly thereafter.

The historians of extinct swine breeds demonstrate how market forces and the evolution of food habits affect livestock history. By 1920, over 62% of U.S. swine were estimated to be one of two breeds: the Poland China or the Duroc-Jersey. A pattern had long since established itself

and resulted in the disappearance of many once-treasured animal breeds. America’s obsession with output alone and the mania for selective cross-breeding to improve animals out of recognizable existence had already exacted their heavy toll on agricultural diversity in the United States.

Update notes on breeds in this article

1. Although today’s Tamworth pigs were originally known as “Irish Graziers,” the Irish Grazer in this article refers to a different breed known by the same name. According to *The History of Ohio Agriculture*, published in 1900, the Irish Graziers in this article were “white, with a few spots of black, upright ears, light jowl, fine-coating, and would fatten at any age. This was the stock of hogs that gave the Poland Chinas their fine coating and symmetrical form.” Tamworth hogs have a ginger red coat and are unaffiliated.

2. The Red Guinea hog breed mentioned in this article differs from today’s Guinea Hog breed, and disappeared as a distinct population in the 1880s, when most of the red breeds and types of hogs in the eastern United States were combined to form the new Duroc-Jersey breed. Although extremely rare, occasionally today’s Guinea Hog breeders find red highlights in the hair of their Guineas and even more rarely, a completely red individual is born. The relationship between the historic Red Guinea and today’s Guinea Hog may be simply the common use of the term “guinea” to refer to the small size of the

continued on next page

The Extinction of Historic Breeds of Swine

Continued from previous page

hogs, not necessarily indicating origins in the Guinea region of Africa.

The exact origins of the Guinea Hog are unknown, but there is some link to hogs imported to America during the colonial period documented as early as 1804 by Thomas Jefferson and other Virginia farmers. Recent ALBC research has placed a “Guinea Hog” breed in England as early as 1767, where they are mentioned in *The Complete Grazier* as “famous” and “the most profitable for breeding pigs, sweetness of flesh, and for being easily raised and fattened. It is the most hardy of all others, and will make the best shift for its food of any hog that we know.” At that time, they were also referred to as the “Bantam Breed,” the “African hog,” or the “Black French hog,” further adding to the mystery of their origin. The Guinea Hog is once again experiencing the praises it enjoyed years ago, as chefs across the country are taking note of the excellently flavored meat and high-quality lard.

3. The Essex is yet another example of two distinct breeds that have been referred to by the same name – one performed well in the United Kingdom and one performed well in the United States. While the American Essex is extinct, an extremely small population of British Essex still exists. The Guinea Hog may or may not be related to the American Essex. The Essex hog’s history is also obscure. “Guinea Essex” pigs were used in research at Texas A&M University and at the Hormel Institute in the 1960s, though there is little information available about those stocks. ALBC is currently conducting research to further clarify the relationship between Guinea and Essex hogs. ❖

Dr. Bruce Kalk is the Associate Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences at Southern Connecticut State University. At the time this article was written, he was a PhD candidate in history at the University of North Carolina. He can be reached at Kalkb1@southernct.edu.

Quick Marketing Responses for the Farm

By Ryan Walker

By now, many of you have probably seen QR codes plastered all over everything from magazines, to cereal boxes, to your ALBC membership renewal reminders. Not ringing a bell? You know, those little pixelated squares that look slightly reminiscent of the white noise your television used to display when the rabbit ears got bumped or that darned buzzard was sitting on the outdoor antenna again. “So what’s the big deal?” you might ask. Why should you care about QR codes? Good news my friends, you’re about to find out!

QR codes, or “Quick Response Codes,” work a lot like the barcodes that have been around since the first one showed up on a pack of Wrigley chewing gum in 1974. While bar codes are considered linear, or one-dimensional, QR codes are two-dimensional, thus allowing much more data to be stored in the image compared to its older cousin. QR codes were developed by Toyota in 1994 to track vehicles during the manufacturing process and have exploded in popularity with marketing gurus in recent years because of their ability to quickly direct consumers to their websites. Each little pixel inside the box corresponds to letters, numbers, or symbols that would



QR codes can be a new way to reach customers and get the word out about what you have going on at your farm.

show up on a computer keyboard. The main reason why these codes have recently become so popular is because of the rise in usage of smartphones and other mobile devices like tablet computers, which have the ability to read the codes and open websites that are linked to the code. In 2012, the number of consumers in the United States that use smartphones eclipsed 50% for the first time, and the trend does not appear to be slowing down any time soon. Rather than trying to write down or remember a website, email, or phone number, consumers can simply take a picture of a code and *voilà!* – you are instantly at the website.

Uses in Agri-Marketing

I have seen many ingenious examples of using QR codes to market heritage breeds and their products over the past couple of years. One of the most common examples I have seen is placing a QR code



A dairy cow in Leicestershire, England with a QR code spray-painted on its side is being used to promote the UK dairy industry. Photo by Shinesquad Ltd., London.

on a business card. Historically, business cards haven't been good for much more than including contact information for someone to follow-up later. Once people started having websites and email addresses, they started printing them on the cards, but, especially if you have a lengthy (or hard to spell) web address, it can be hard for someone to re-type every letter exactly. It is hard enough to remember the hyphen in the ALBC website: <http://www.albc-usa.org>! QR codes eliminate the possibility of typos when trying to re-type the web address.

Another great use I have seen is on brochures or flyers. Many of our members have put together brochures to hand out at events, farmers markets, or in the places where their products retail. QR codes can expand the amount of information you can share, while avoiding the need to print so much on your brochure. Just remember to print the important information in the brochure, because many people don't have smartphones or won't take the time to scan the QR code. Some examples I have seen include a link to a farm's blog or its online store. Others include a link directly to "like" its Facebook page. This can be an incredibly effective way to grow the base of engaged customers that are interested in your products. Yet another use I have seen is on the farm. If your farm is open to visitors, having signs placed around the farm with QR codes on them can allow customers to learn more about the specific animal or product that is being grown. This can be a valuable way to pass along information like price, nutritional values, recipes, or an educational tool linking to information about the specific breed or variety you are selling. Even if you don't have a website with this information, you could put a QR code on something that links to the breed profiles on ALBC's website. There are countless other locations you can use QR codes: product packaging, bumper stickers, t-shirts, billboards, your poster in the contest at the ALBC conference in November... basically anywhere a potential customer might be with their smartphone. Absolutely the most creative use I have seen is QR codes painted onto the sides of cattle so they serve as walking billboards!

How to get started

There are many free QR code genera-



A sign at Queen Anne Farmers Market in Seattle, WA directs customers to farmers' Facebook and Twitter pages. Photo by Karen Williams.

tors available online. One of my personal favorites is www.beqrrious.com/qr-code-generator/. This site allows you to create a QR code for websites, emails, phone numbers, small amounts of text, Facebook pages, Google maps, and several other places you may want to direct people. You can also change the color, format, and size of the code, and even integrate a picture into it if you're feeling especially tech-savvy. After the code is created, you can save the image to your computer and copy and paste or upload it to various documents, just like you would a photo.

After you have created your QR code, you can test it out by downloading an app to your mobile device that can read it (if there isn't one already installed). There are quite a few apps out there; most are free, so I have never bothered paying for one. Some of them will even let you create the QR code from within the app if you don't feel like sitting down at a computer to do it. Scan, RedLaser, and QR Droid are a few of them, but they all do basically the same thing.

Some Reminders

- If the code directs people to somewhere online, an Internet connection is required for the reader on their mobile device to work (3G, 4G, Wi-Fi, etc.).
- Don't make the code too complicated. If you're using it to link only to text,

try to keep it to a few sentences or less.

- If you resize the image, make sure it doesn't get distorted (stretched out).
- Make sure the entire code can be scanned. I once saw a billboard with a QR code on it, but a tree was covering part of it up, making it completely useless!
- Be smart about it! Don't omit information like your farm name or logo from printed materials just because you have a QR code on there. Use it as a way to *expand* on the information that has been printed.
- You don't need a QR code on your website! If they make it there, they have accomplished what the code is meant to do.

Although QR codes probably aren't going to make you rich or immediately form a line of customers standing at your door, they can be a valuable asset in your marketing toolbox. Combined with traditional methods of advertising, integrating QR codes can provide a fun new way to reach customers and get the word out about what you have going on at your farm. Best of all, they're free! ❖

Ryan Walker is ALBC's Marketing and Communications Manager. He can be reached at rwalker@albc-usa.org, or here:



Welcome to our Newest Life Members!

ALBC would like to give a special thanks to our members who have most recently chosen to support ALBC and its conservation programs by becoming life members. If you would like to learn more about becoming a life member, please contact Ryan Walker at 919-542-5704, ext. 102, or rwalker@albc-usa.org.

Emily Davidson
Farmville, NC

Terry & Judy Wollen
Falls Church, VA

Albert Vernon Lapps
Mansfield, PA

From the Director

Continued from page 3

the work ALBC does is interconnected and multifaceted. It involves the animals, the land, food interests, our history, and the consumer, and as I learn more, I continue to add to that list. Each breed has a story that captures the unique spirit and heritage of those animals. It is a challenge to succinctly capture and present ALBC's impact.

This multi-faceted nature also creates challenges with managing programs. To address this, ALBC staff is working on an exciting new initiative that brings together the census, educational outreach, documentation, and master-breeder profiles in a cohesive, science-based endeavor.

We are proud of the work we've done at ALBC – and we should be. The organization has made a very real difference in the world. It seems like at least once a week I am reminded of how well-regarded ALBC is. We are widely recognized as an information source based on solid science,

research, and experience with heritage breeds. It is in no small part due to the dedication of our members and our staff that ALBC enjoys a stellar reputation from the local level up to national and international levels.

In Summary

Great things are happening for ALBC. Opportunities seem to popping up unexpectedly. As you'll see in this edition, our own Jeanette Beranger will be appearing on the award-winning public TV show *Growing a Greener World*. A highly regarded national retailer will feature a product from one of our members, whose sales will benefit ALBC. We can't tell you any details right now, but look for an announcement soon. Also, *Mother Earth News* will begin publishing ALBC articles in its online blog and including articles in its print versions over the next year. Tractor Supply Company has also asked for ALBC to provide articles for its *Out Here* magazine. It seems that lots of folks want

to be associated with the work we do.

These are great opportunities, but we can do more. We need to do a better job of blowing our own horn. Now is the time to expand ALBC's reach and visibility. The more I learn about ALBC, the more excited I get about our work and the future of the organization. I know many of you share these same feelings. As you read this newsletter, I hope you'll commit to spreading the word about us. Pass this newsletter along to a friend and let's get more folks to join us in this mission. I ask that each of us renew our efforts as ambassadors for ALBC and its mission. Get out there and tell the world what ALBC is doing and how important it is! ❖

Helping Hands for ALBC

Continued from page 3

the area on other business around the time of the auction, we were able to work it into our schedules and took the zoo up on the offer to attend. ALBC was further supported at the time by the local Hampton Inn & Suites which generously donated rooms for us during our stay in Nashville.

ALBC Executive Director Eric Hallman, Board Chair Charles Taft, and I traveled to Nashville where we were warmly greeted by the members of the zoo's chapter of the AAZK who ran the auction event. We were delighted by the more than 60 auction items that the zookeepers and volunteers created during the year with the help of the zoo animals. Items included art painted by elephants, footprints of clouded leopards, a lamp made of porcupine quills, and even the nose prints of giant anteaters from the zoo's collection. With great music

in the air, everyone began bidding on their favorite items. Periodically, bids closed on some items, which were then awarded to the lucky winning bidders. (I was able to get a great deal on a Cotswold lamb footprint painting for my home office!) In the end, everyone had a blast at the zoo and the auction was a great success bringing in \$3,800 for ALBC. Kudos and a heartfelt *thank you* to all of those at the zoo and with AAZK who made the event possible and for bringing needed support to our organization. ❖



Christmas ornaments filled with unique animal products were a big hit at the auction. Photo by Jeannette Beranger.



What You Can Do

There are many ways that you as members can support your organization much like the Nashville Zoo did. Think about holding a local event in your own area. These can be simple ideas that not only support ALBC, but help to promote and market your own farm animals and products. Consider events such as:

- Farm tours
- Farm-to-table events
- Tasting events at a restaurant
- Rare breed-themed arts and crafts
- Booths at local fairs and festivals
- Riding events, rodeos, or play days
- Auctions or raffles
- Cow patty bingo, kiss-the-pig, or other similar events
- Photo opportunities for the public with rare breeds

You are limited only by your creativity! If you need more ideas or further help developing and planning your own event, contact the ALBC office for more information and assistance. ALBC has a number of tools you can use to promote ALBC, such as brochures, a banner and pop-up display, and an introductory ALBC PowerPoint presentation.

Participate in “Out Here With Animals” Event at Tractor Supply

Tractor Supply Co. will be hosting an Out Here with Animals event in all TSC stores on September 29. This event celebrates the joy and richness that animals bring to our lives by combining education, demonstrations, and product specials at every store.

Why get involved?

If you are part of an organization or business involved with animals, this is an excellent opportunity for you to interact and promote your organization and its services to other animal lovers in your community.

Non Profits and Rescue Groups can raise awareness, recruit members or volunteers display needy animals for adoption, and raise funds.

Breeders can show off stock, raise awareness of their breeds, and find customers.

Businesses can demo services, raise awareness, and attract customers

Once you have signed up, work with your local store manager to determine how best to tie in with the event and meet the needs of your organization.

What do I need to do?

Commit to be present at a store September 29. Although not required to be there for the full day, you are welcome to be. Once you have signed up you will work out specific details with the individual store manager.

Plan with the store manager to determine available space, tables, chairs, etc.

Present your organization or business and Tractor Supply Co. in a professional manner.

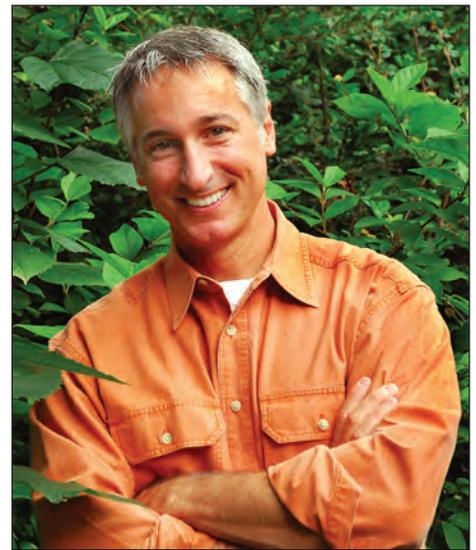
How do I sign up?

Visit www.TractorSupply.com and enter your zip code to find stores in your area. Call the Tractor Supply Company Event registration line at 1-877-234-0623 to check availability and reserve your location. Immediately upon completing your registration, an email will be sent to you and the store manager. Then, you will need to make contact with the manager and work out details for your event. Some stores may have space or other restrictions that may limit the ability to accommodate multiple group or certain activities. ❖

Hooves Gone Hollywood

ALBC and rare breed conservation are about to burst onto the national TV scene. On September 29, rare breed conservation will be the focus of an episode of *Growing a Greener World*, the popular PBS series “delivering the latest trends in eco-friendly living mixed with traditional gardening know-how to a 21st-century audience.” While the series mainly focuses on the plant side of agriculture, rare breeds and sustainable animal husbandry practices go hand in hand with the eco-conscious series’s efforts to showcase people, organizations, and events that are making a difference in the world today.

The camera crew and host Joe Lamp’l visited ALBC’s headquarters to film some of the episode and traveled to ALBC Research and Technical Programs Manager Jeannette Beranger’s farm, where her Buckeye chickens and Marsh Tacky horses were filmed. Jeannette discussed the importance of conserving rare livestock and poultry breeds and ALBC’s conservation strategies. Jeannette and the crew also traveled to ALBC member Mary Longhill’s Leicester Longwool sheep farm on a “blazingly hot” summer day. The sheep didn’t seem to mind being filmed, and the crew got to test out their shepherding skills



Growing a Greener World Executive Producer and Host Joe Lamp’l.

as they tried several different methods to get the sheep to pose, walk, or turn their head at just the right time. Mary’s 100+ pound Great Pyrenees guard dog offered his help with herding the sheep, although he felt that he should be the focus of the shots. ❖

Growing a Greener World airs on PBS stations across the United States. To find out if it will be featured on your local station, and for more information about the series, visit www.growingagreenerworld.com. If you aren’t able to see the episode on TV, it will be available to view online after it airs.



Leicester Longwool sheep from Mary Longhill’s farm in North Carolina will be featured on Growing a Greener World September 29. Photo by Jeannette Beranger.

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Check out www.albc-usa.org for more news, updates, and information.



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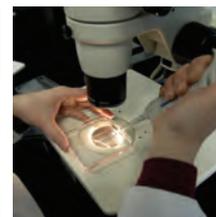
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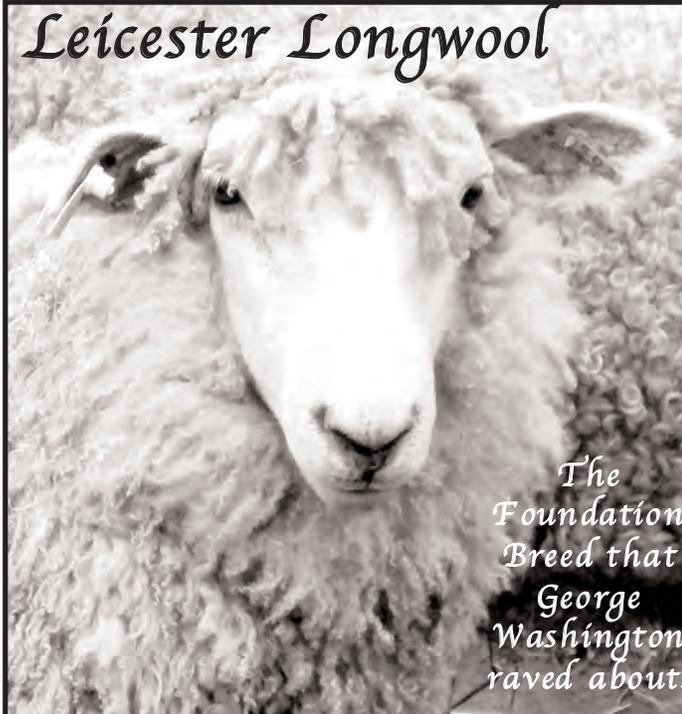


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See the ALBC website for a more extensive list of events. ALBC encourages event organizers to submit events related to conservation, farming, sustainability, rare breeds, and more to the ALBC Calendar. Send your submission to rwalker@albc-usa.org or mail to PO Box 477, Pittsboro, NC 27312.

September

++ **September 22-23 - The Mother Earth News Fair** will be held in Seven Springs, PA. This family-oriented, sustainable lifestyle event features dozens of practical, hands-on demonstrations and workshops on everything from beekeeping to using solar electricity. Visit www.motherearthnews.com/fair for more information.

September 29-30 – Mt. Bruce Station's Annual Sheep and Wool Festival will be held in Romeo, MI. Visit www.sheepstuff.com, email uhlianuk@sheepstuff.com, or call (810) 798-2568 for more information.

October

October 13-20 – The 2012 American Dairy Goat Association Convention, hosted by the Treasure Valley Dairy Goat Association, will be at the Doubletree Riverside in Boise, ID. This week-long event will include daily speakers, seminars,

clinics, and an extensive vendor area and hospitality room. For more information, contact ADGA, call (828) 286-3801, email adga@adga.org, or visit www.adga.org.

October 20 – The American Suffolk Horse Association 2012 Annual Meeting will be held in Ledbetter, TX. For more information, contact ASHA at (979) 249-5795 or visit www.suffolkpunch.com.

October 26-28 – The Carolina Farm Stewardship Association's 27th Annual Sustainable Agriculture Conference will be held in Greenville, SC. CFSA's mission is to advocate, educate and build connections to create sustainable food systems centered on local and organic agriculture. Learn more at www.carolinafarmstewards.org or (919) 542-2402.

October 27-31 – The American Rabbit Breeders Association National Convention will be held at the Century II Performing Arts & Convention Center in Wichita, KS. Rabbits and cavies of all breeds recognized by ARBA will be exhibited, including several listed on ALBC's Conservation Priority List. Free to come and watch! For information, see the webpage at www.heartland2012.com/info.php.

November

November 3-4 – Maryland State Poultry Fancier's Association Annual Show (sanctioned by the American Poultry Association) will take place at the Frederick Fairgrounds in Frederick, MD. Rare breed poultry from the mid-Atlantic region will compete for best in show. There will also

be an egg show competition, a poultry swap, and a farmers market selling birds, all-things-poultry, and small farm related accessories. Visit <http://mdpoultryfanciers.webs.com/> for more information.

November 3-4 – The Nebraska State Poultry Association 128th Annual Poultry Show will take place at the Lancaster Event Center in Lincoln, NE. Visit www.nestatepoultryshow.com/ for more information.

++++**November 9-11 – The American Livestock Breeds Conservancy's 2012 Annual Conference** will be held in Cary, NC at the Embassy Suites Raleigh-Durham/Research Triangle. We are excited to be in our own backyard, and to share some of the great agricultural accomplishments of North Carolina. Programs will be held at the Embassy Suites with some clinics taking place at local farms. Visit www.albc-usa.org, email albc@albc-usa.org, or call (919) 542-5704 for more information.

December

December 1-2 – Mt. Bruce Station's Christmas Weekend will take place in Romeo, MI. Enjoy Christmas Shopping at the Farm and meet Mt. Bruce Station's Mary & Joseph and watch and participate as they prepare for the new born king. The stable will be filled with the smell of fresh clean straw, eager shepherds, and woolly sheep! Visit www.sheepstuff.com, email uhlianuk@sheepstuff.com, or call (810) 798-2568 for more information.