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Conserving rare breeds since 1977

THE LIVESTOCK CONSERVANCY™ NEWS

Little Sheep Carrying a Big Message

By Kristen Bacon

One of my favorite times of year is fair season. Every year in the late summer the kids and I pack up our clippers, halters, buckets, brushes, and a trailer full of sheep; and head out to the local fairs to exhibit our sheep. We started doing this some 16 years ago when my older boys were in 4H.

After a few years of showing rabbits, the kids desired to work with larger animals. We decided on sheep, and after some research, the boys chose Shetland sheep, while my daughter, Ruth, chose a babydoll Southdown. Our first three sheep were all wethers and the kids loved them.

That first summer we showed up to our 4H fair with the three cute wethers in tow. The kids were so excited about their sheep and the chance to show them off at the fair. As we settled them into their pens, we were greeted by some of the other sheep exhibitors and their 4H leaders. After a few giggles they asked us, "What are they?" The boys proudly exclaimed that they were Shetland sheep, even telling them how they originated on an island off the coast of Scotland and were prized for their lovely fleeces. When they caught sight of Ruth's babydoll Southdown, they really laughed saying, "Those will never catch on!" It was suggested to me that I may want to consider getting my children some real sheep for 4H. By "real sheep" I later learned they meant "large meat sheep."

My children and their sheep came in



Sheep have lived on the Shetland Islands for well over 1,000 years, adapting to the harsh environment and thriving in the cold, wet climate. Photo by Kristen Bacon.

at the bottom of all their classes that year, and pretty much every year thereafter. While it was disheartening at times, they did get used to it. The boys didn't care so much, but it did bother Ruth. While she knew she had quality sheep and that if they were truly judged according to their own merit they would place much higher, she also knew that she was never going to win that coveted blue ribbon as long as her sheep were a tiny wool breed. She eventually gave in and exchanged her babydoll Southdown for a full sized Southdown ewe named Sapphire.

The next fair season was a good one for Ruth. She was socially accepted by her sheep-showing peers. She won blue ribbons for showmanship with her new

sheep. She continued showing that sheep and her offspring for a couple of years. During that time she learned something else. She learned that once you start showing those big meat sheep, you start really feeling the level of competition you are in. There was so much more pressure when you are showing something that is actually considered in the show ring. She loved her sheep, but she hated exhibiting them. That made me sad, as sheep exhibition was something I loved sharing with my children. The boys had grown up and moved on, and Ruth was now my sheep showing buddy. But now, Ruth was done showing sheep.

Luckily, my youngest two children were just getting into it. Loriann fell in love with her Shetland sheep and was thrilled to take them to the fairs. She didn't care what anyone else thought about her little sheep, she just loved showing them off. By this time, we had learned so much more about our breed of sheep and how truly special they were. We attended fairs with posters and displays of wool and yarn from our sheep. We put effort into not just showing our sheep in the ring, but promoting our breed to the public and other breeders. We realized that even if the judges and other exhibitors were not so excited about our Shetlands, the public certainly was. Fair visitors would walk through the sheep barn and flock to our pens taking pictures, petting noses, and asking questions about these adorable and intriguing little sheep. They wondered why they looked so different than the other sheep in the barn and commented on what great pets they must make. Loriann glowed as she told the story of the Shetland sheep!

This past fall we added a new breed of sheep to our farm. We were fortunate enough to befriend a breeder of Santa Cruz Island sheep. We became instant
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MEMBER VOICES

I don't remember when or where I first heard about [The Livestock Conservancy], but I knew immediately it was something I wanted to support. I grew up on a small (80 acre) family farm in Geneseo, Illinois. This was around 1950-1965. We had a small herd of Guernseys and a couple Jersey dairy cows. We also raised hogs, outcrossing yearly between Duroc, Yorkshire, Hampshire, Tamworth, and Berkshire boars which we would purchase. We liked the Yorkies and Hamps the best. I'm

a bit dismayed to see all of these breeds now listed on your list of endangered or rare breeds. We also had around 100 white Leghorn chickens. We sold eggs to a commercial outfit in town and cream to the Galva Creamery.

I still own the land, which we rent out to a neighbor who tills it for corn and soybeans.

I was fortunate to visit the Cotswold Rare Breeds Park in England around 1996 and fell in love with the animals. I am a huge supporter of keeping the old breeds viable, and even though I now live in a suburb of Chicago, we have an acre yard

so I have a small coop with two Java hens which I purchased at the Garfield Farm Rare Breed show two years ago. They are currently getting over a molt, but have given us many beautiful light brown eggs in the past.

I will continue to support the Conservancy as long as I am able.

*Caroline Lewis
Naperville, IL*



Welcome to our Newest Life Members!

The Livestock Conservancy would like to give a special thanks to the following individuals who recently chose to support the Conservancy and its conservation programs by becoming life members.

Stephen & Sally McVeigh
Middleburg, VA

David E. Pepe
Kingston, MA

For more information on becoming a life member, please contact Ryan Walker at 919-542-5704, ext. 102, or rwalker@LivestockConservancy.org.

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Basic annual membership is \$45 and includes the quarterly *Livestock Conservancy 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 the Conservancy.

The Conservancy welcomes articles, photographs, letters, and classified advertising for possible publication. Publication of articles or advertisements is not necessarily an endorsement by the Conservancy. Articles from this newsletter

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FROM THE DIRECTOR



What Matters – A New Year’s Resolution

By Alison Martin, Executive Director

With more and more divisiveness in the world around us, it sure is good to get up every morning and do something that really matters, and makes a positive difference in the world. Many of you tell us that this is why you support conservation through The Livestock Conservancy, and why you raise rare breeds, because you know it matters. You are leaving a legacy for future generations. We may not vote for the same politicians, watch the same news channel, or drink the same beer (no IPA for me, thanks), but we share a passion for rare breeds. For those of you who farm, that passion is reinforced each and every day.

Sometimes our passions lead us right back into conflict. Should the breed standard include or exclude snips of white? Should the herdbook be open or closed? Should breeders be “allowed” to cross-breed? Are the descendants of this bull “real” members of the breed? What should be done about breeders who don’t play nice with others, or who place profit motives above conservation?

At the conference in Amherst, more

than 30 of us gathered to ponder “The Tricky Business of Breed Associations”. There was a lot of shared angst and bonding in knowing that each of us struggles with these same concerns. The conclusion? It ain’t easy.

Here in the office, breeders and breed associations call when they are struggling with conflict. The funny thing is, one-on-one, listening to all sides of these disagreements, nearly always, each person sincerely believes in the good of the breed, and is truly trying to do their best. We just disagree on the approach.

With such small numbers of animals and breeders, we simply have to be willing to give each other the benefit of the doubt. Doubly. Sometimes I jokingly say that some of our breeds have more breed associations than animals. What is serious is this: breeds suffer when we disagree. They suffer more from open disagreement and working apart than they would from whatever the disagreement was about (if anyone even remembers).

Breeds suffer when associations split, and breeders have to choose which registry to belong to. Breeds suffer when long time breeders get disgusted with the politics and leave. Breeds suffer when disputing breeders pounce on potential new breeders to educate them on the “right” opinions. Many of these potential breeders turn to

less conflict-ridden breeds, and those that stick with it are confused by the barrage.

It doesn’t have to be this way. In 2013, Red Devon breeders came together in a series of meetings to see if they could merge two organizations that had been split for many years. They found that the common ground outweighed the disagreements and, since the merger, Red Devons are stronger than ever.

What’s the answer?

It comes back to basic principles, doesn’t it. Every day, we need to channel our kindergarten teachers. Treat others as you would want to be treated. Listen and put yourself in the other person’s shoes. Count to ten before speaking, and sleep on it overnight before hitting the send key. A wise man once said, “Never attribute to malice that which can be adequately explained by stupidity,” and our observation has been that breeders are very seldom driven by malice. Can we find it in our hearts to forgive ignorance? To disagree without being disagreeable?

In the coming year, for the good of all the breeds, let’s re-commit to putting our past divisions aside, and see what we can build on the common ground – our shared passion for the long term future of some really amazing livestock and poultry. It matters. ❖



International Summit: Representatives from The Livestock Conservancy, Rare Breeds Canada, and the Rare Breeds Survival Trust took the opportunity to meet at The Livestock Conservancy’s 2016 national conference. Ways to work together to promote heritage breeds were discussed, including joint activities like International Heritage Breeds Week, which will be held May 21-27, 2017. From left to right: Jeannette Beranger (TLC), Elwood Quinn (RBC), Pam Heath (RBC), Ryan Walker (TLC), Alison Martin (TLC), Tom Beeston (RBST), and Charlene Couch (TLC).

Conference Recap

The Livestock Conservancy's national conference was held at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts this past November, at the site of our very first meeting. The New England fall colors were at their peak for attendees as weather had been unseasonably warm leading up to the conference. The 2016 theme was "A United State of Agriculture – Working Together toward Common Goals" as attendees learned about ways to cooperate within their own breed communities, as well as nationally and internationally, to promote conservation. A fantastic keynote was delivered by Tom Beeston of the U.K.'s Rare Breeds Survival Trust. Several conference sessions were streamed live on Facebook and viewed by nearly 60,000 people online. More information about next year's conference will be announced very soon. Stay tuned!



Top and middle left and top right: attendees learn about Dutch Belted and Milking Devon cattle. Middle right: Rare Breeds Survival Trust's Tom Beeston talks with attendees. Bottom left: member Hannah Matica teaches attendees about her Shetland sheep. Bottom right, above: Hannah spins Shetland sheep fiber during a workshop. Photos by Ryan Walker.



Top left: attendees participate in the silent auction. Middle left: Marushka Farms displays Romeldale/CVM fiber and poster. Bottom left and both middle right: Attendees enjoy dinner prepared with heritage breed products. Top right: Attendees listen to a plenary session Saturday morning. Bottom right: Kathy Smith, Drew Conroy, and Elaine Shirley pose for a quick photo during Saturday night's dinner. Photos by Ryan Walker.



Remembering Darwin Kelsey

Founding member of the American Minor Breeds Conservancy (now The Livestock Conservancy) Darwin Kelsey passed away Sunday, December 11, 2016. He was 76.

“Darwin was a great friend to the Livestock Conservancy and a personal friend of mine,” commented former ALBC Executive Director, Don Bixby. “He was one of the founders of our organization and maintained contact and interest even while engaged in other areas of endeavor. He was a kind of visionary, thinking in novel concepts to promote agricultural education and conservation. He held agriculture and farming systems as the basis for human existence and spent his life supporting his beliefs. He made a difference and will be missed and remembered for what he was able to accomplish.”

Darwin was born on June 8, 1940 in Waverly, New York to Dortha and Paul Kelsey. He grew up on the family dairy farm in Danby, New York. He later raised small livestock on a farm in Connecticut.

From 1989 to 1999, Mr. Kelsey was an administrator with Lake Farmpark, in Kirtland, Ohio, an innovative science and cultural center devoted to agricultural and environmental education. Before that, he was director of the National Museum of the Boy Scouts of America in Kentucky. Mr. Kelsey also founded and oversaw the



Darwin Kelsey

Association of Living Historical Farms and Agricultural Museums and the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy.

Darwin was the founding director in 1999 of Countryside Conservancy, a non-profit dedicated to fostering small-scale farming and farm-to-market foods based at the Cuyahoga Valley National Park in Northeast Ohio. Here, he served as its Executive Director and focused his life's work on his passion for sustainable agriculture and the importance of local food production. He was a driving force behind local efforts to bring farm-fresh foods to farmers markets from Howe Meadow in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park to Highland Square in Akron. He launched the first farmers market in a national park and his Countryside Initiative program for the National Park Service is a one-of-a-

kind farmland leasing model that has been studied and replicated many times across North America.

Darwin led the organization until stepping down in September, after which he served as director emeritus. At the time of his death, he was aiding in the search to find his replacement.

“Darwin made an enormous contribution to Cuyahoga Valley National Park, helping bring farms to life to preserve the rural landscape. His work has been very important locally, but also has been a model for the National Park Service across the country,” said Craig Kenkel, Cuyahoga Valley National Park superintendent.

Noelle Celeste, founder of Edible Cleveland and a former board member for the Countryside Conservancy, remembered Kelsey in a Facebook post following his death:

“That man, an amazing visionary and activist died yesterday. While I know I will miss Darwin Kelsey in so many ways, I know most of all how I will remember him – every time I drive through the park and see those working farms, his spirit will be present.”

He is survived by his wife, Chris van Huisse, his five children, and his seven grandchildren.

Gifts in Darwin's memory can be made to the Countryside Conservancy either online at cvcountryside.org/give-donate.htm or by mail to 2179 Everett Road, Peninsula, OH 44264.

For more information about Darwin's work, please visit www.cvcountryside.org.

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friends with her and her children as we shared a love for heritage breeds of sheep. We purchased some Santa Cruz Island sheep from her and another New England farm and started a new endeavor. They were so different than our Shetlands, yet there were some familiar aspects of the breed. They were just as hardy and unique. We instantly fell in love. Our first Santa Cruz Island lamb was born in November 2015, a ram lamb we named Solomon. We spent so much time with him that he became one of our most friendly sheep, and quickly became everyone's favorite on the farm!

Solomon became a “spokessheep” for

his breed. He attended both the Connecticut and the Rhode Island sheep and wool festivals. He drew so much attention at those venues that I sold out of all the Santa Cruz wool I brought. He made his appearance in the show ring at the 4H fair in August and proceeded to take first place in the obstacle course and won a blue ribbon for his AOB wool class. As summer ended we took him and a younger ewe lamb to a couple county fairs. My daughter and I made posters telling all about history of the breed. Our friends joined us at one fair with a couple of their Santa Cruz lambs. I loved hearing the two girls tell people all about the sheep...and then to hear adults sharing with one another what they had

learned from these young shepherds. The other breeders, and even the sheep judge, took the time to check out these endangered sheep. The girls felt very accepted at the fairs.

I think what happened is that due to our persistence in bringing our heritage sheep breeds to the fairs and promoting them in every way we could think of, we helped to educate others, including those who once thought our odd sheep foolish. It wasn't always easy. Loriann was told by one judge that her sheep, “were just toys and didn't belong in the show ring.” But this just made her, and me, that much more determined to change the minds of those around us. The great thing about sheep is that they are so diverse. And lest we lose this diversity, we need to breed and promote rare breeds. I know Loriann will

continue to do so.

I do have one other child, Markie. He doesn't care for sheep, though I have tried to change his mind on that. He is a goat boy all the way. So, this fall when he asked if he could really get into breeding goats I suggested he look into endangered goat breeds. He did that, and chose to work with San Clemente Island goats. He liked that they come from the same area as his sister's sheep. He likes that he will be the only one at the fair with them, and that will make his goats special. He is ready to preserve and promote his chosen breed of goat with a devotion our sheep experiences has instilled. He picks up his goats in two weeks.

We will continue to raise endangered breeds of sheep and goats on our farm and to promote them to the public whenever and wherever possible. We believe in the importance of diversity in livestock breeds for the wellbeing of all. We look forward to the next fair season where we will work hard to let everyone know the story of our animals. My advice to anyone who wants to venture into showing sheep, choose your sheep because you love the breed, not because they are the breed that the judge will love. ❖

Kristen Bacon owns Tranquil Morning Farm in eastern Connecticut, a small family farm raising a variety of rare and heritage breeds of livestock. See the farm's website at www.tranquilmorningfarm.webs.com/



Young people can serve as terrific ambassadors and educators by showing rare breeds.



Sustainability of Swine Production Farms

By Paul M. Pitcher, DVM, MS and Jenny Blaney

To 'sustain' means to keep in existence, to maintain, to continue.¹ Sustainability is the property of biological systems to remain diverse and productive indefinitely.² A sustainable system must address four interconnected domains in the context of both the production system and the marketplace for its produce: ecology, economics, politics, and culture.² Let's briefly examine each of these domains of sustainability in the context of the pork industry.

The culture of food production and consumption is shifting towards a greater preference for local produce from farms of lower intensity. These farms rely less on infrastructure and capital investment in facilities and equipment than do more intensive farms. Typically, there is a stronger, more personal connection to consumers, who may, in turn, identify with the farmer and his values. Compared to intensive farms, consumers perceive differences in the processes of low-intensity farms: greater animal welfare, more natural production methods, less reliance on chemical intervention, among others. Thus, in the marketplace for produce from low-intensity farms, the culture of production sustains the enterprise.

Politically, farms using free range man-

Quarantine areas should be used when introducing new stock to a property and to isolate sick animals. Clothes and boots should be cleaned and disinfected after entering a quarantine area. Photo courtesy Todd Johnson, USDA-APHIS.

agement have the potential to run afoul of regulations enacted to protect surface waters if control over animal wastes and access of animals to sensitive ecosystems is inadequate. On the other hand, intensive farms may come under legislative restrictions on corporate farming. These political pressures can impact the marketplace and threaten sustainability. Security of animals against harmful exposures is generally higher in intensive farms, and so the political domain interacts with the ecologic domain to impact sustainability.

Economic sustainability is captured by the combination of low production costs and high market value of produce. Intensive farms place greater reliance on technology and infrastructure which results in greater control over the process and production costs. An economy of scale determines whether these strategies are feasible which explains why intensive farms are generally larger than low-intensity farms. On the other hand, the value added by the culturally distinct low intensity farms creates opportunities for premium pricing, which can partially offset the economic drag of production inefficiency.

The domain of ecology as it relates to the sustainability of swine farms comes to bear at the interface of swine and their physical surroundings as well as those living organisms that interact with them:

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Sustainability of Swine Production Farms

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microorganisms, predators, and people. Intensive farms evolved to enable control over physical surroundings and predators. Low-intensity farms rely on the philosophy that swine can adapt to their physical surroundings and fend off predators. Many heritage breeds of swine seem to be better adapted to a natural environment than are their conventional cousins.

The ecology of animals' interactions with microbes is complex indeed. And, when zoonotic diseases (animal pathogens that can infect humans) are considered, microbes can profoundly affect the interaction of animals and people. A microbe in this category is the bacterium *Brucella suis*, first described in 1915 as the cause of "infectious abortion" in swine and soon discovered to be a cause of "undulant fever" in humans.³ During the early 1930s, the disease caused by *B.suis* was reported in humans in every state in the U.S., except Utah.³ Iowa, Missouri, California, and Ohio reported more than 100 human cases per year, and New York reported nearly 200 cases per year during that period.³ Methods to prevent the disease in swine herds were well-established by the 1930s, and recommendations included avoid-

ance of borrowing or lending boars and knowing that the herd from which replacements are made is free from infection.⁴ By 1948, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) had formulated recommendations for eliminating the disease from infected swine herds and by 1952, limited control programs were in place in several States.⁴ In 1961, a national swine brucellosis eradication program was established by USDA.⁵ By 1985, many U.S. swine herds were Validated Free of swine brucellosis and *B.suis* as a cause of undulant fever in humans had been eliminated in the U.S. In 2011 all 50 states were declared free of brucellosis in domestic swine.⁶ However, about 150 cases of human brucellosis are recorded each year in the U.S.⁶ among abattoir workers, travelers who have consumed raw milk overseas, hunters of feral swine, and immigrants.

In April, 2016, swine brucellosis re-emerged in New York when a swine farm worker was diagnosed with the disease by her physician. Testing of the herd she worked at identified swine infected with the identical strain of *Brucella suis*, subtype 1. Epidemiological investigations ultimately identified nine infected herds, six in New York, and one each in New Jersey, Virginia, and Maine. In all, 50 swine herds in 13 states were investigated. Genetic analysis of 29 isolates from the infected herds was done, but neither this or epidemiological investigation revealed a common ancestor of the strains isolated in 2016.

To control the outbreak, all farms found

to be infected with *B.suis* were quarantined. Two strategies for elimination of the disease from infected herds were employed: Test and Removal for very small herds, and Whole Herd Depopulation for herds with more than two infected swine. Among depopulated herds, the prevalence of known exposed or infected breeding swine ranged between 5% and

100%. Owners of depopulated herds were indemnified and costs were shared by the USDA and states' Departments of Agriculture. Attempts were made to move potentially exposed swine through market channels, but in the end, Federal inspectors and slaughter plant owners refused to handle these animals out of concern for the potential of additional human exposure. In all, several hundred swine were killed and disposed of by burial, composting, or rendering.

The experiences of one of the authors of this article, Jenny Blaney, owner of a farm infected with *B.suis* in Washington county, New York, are shared here:

"Here is my story which I hope will help others. Twelve years ago, I decided to concentrate on heritage breeds of pigs. My 57-acre farm was double-fenced and I seeded as much area as I could to make appropriate pasture. I tried to provide a 'natural' setting with woods, pasture, streams, and mud holes. Heritage pigs seemed more rugged and better at foraging than conventional breeds. For many years, the pigs thrived and reproduced well."

"In July of 2016, a disease popped up that had not been reported in New York for 33 years. My herd of 130 heritage pigs, along with a few other herds in my area, was blood-tested and came back positive for *Brucella suis*. All cows and dogs on my property tested negative. I had seen no symptoms of swine brucellosis in my pigs. There had been no abortions. Two boars became infertile one year prior to the diagnosis. Two sows conceived and showed udder development, but never farrowed. Heritage pigs come with their own challenges, so I did not see this as significant since the herd produced more than 400 piglets from February 2015 to February 2016. I thought my farm biosecurity protocol was sufficient to protect the pigs but obviously something went wrong. It is not clear how my pigs became infected. Because of the high prevalence of exposed swine in my herd and the public health risk, the request was made that I consent to Whole Herd Depopulation to control the situation. This I did, and I received much support from State and Federal animal health officials during a very difficult time. These people were responsive, compassionate, and respectful. I will repopulate my farm with heritage pigs. I plan to establish a Validated Brucellosis Free herd with direction and guidance of animal



Heritage breeds, such as the critically endangered Mulefoot, are often considered hardier than some mainstream breeds. Photo by Jeannette Beranger.

health authorities. By maintaining this certification, I can responsibly resume serving the heritage breed community's needs for purebred genetics that work in their farms. This has been a learning experience for me and I hope my story will help other farmers, since this could have been any disease affecting any species of animal we raise. By raising awareness of potential threats to sustainability, we can take better preventive measures to keep our pigs and our business enterprises healthy."

In conclusion, the swine brucellosis incident that occurred in 2016 had a severe, lasting impact on the financial well-being of the heritage swine breed and pastured pork industries in the northeast U.S. Because of gaps in appreciation of the ecological domain, sustainability of the affected farms was destroyed. The Uniform Methods and Rules for the swine brucellosis control program specify that herds must restock from Validated Brucellosis Free herds. Since the declaration that all 50 states were free of swine brucellosis in 2011, many Validated Brucellosis Free herds have allowed that status to lapse. Yet, the findings of our grandparents of the most effective methods of preventing swine brucellosis are as true today as they were 70 years ago. In the wake of this incident, seedstock producers intending to serve the marketplace for heritage breed genetics would support the sustainability of the communities they serve by earning the status of Validated Brucellosis Free.

"Progress, far from consisting in change, depends on retentiveness...those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."❖

Notes

George Santayana, *Reason in Common Sense*, 1905

¹ Duvall Z; President, American Farm Bureau. Farmers are proud of their sustainability narrative. *Lancaster Farming*. November 26, 2016.

² James P, et al. (2015) *Urban sustainability in theory and practice*. Routledge, London.

³ Graham R, Michael V. (1935) Brucellosis in swine. U of Illinois Circular 435.

⁴ Crawford A, Manthei C. (1948) Brucellosis of swine. USDA Circular 781.

⁵ Spickler A, Korslund J. (2003) Swine brucellosis. USDA-APHIS, VS Career Services Program Training Module.

⁶ Currier R. (2013) Brucellosis history summary. USDA-APHIS.

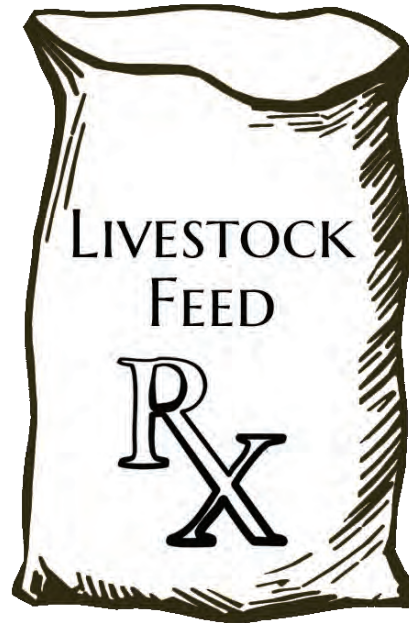
Understanding New Rules for Antibiotics in Animal Feeds

Beginning January 1, 2017, all livestock feeds that contain a 'medically important' antibiotic and certain other feed and water medications (not injectables) will require a prescription, now called a *Veterinary Feed Directive* (VFD), which will be issued by your veterinarian under guidance from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). These changes don't apply to currently over-the-counter injectable antibiotics, or to dewormers or anticoccidial medication, since these aren't deemed medically important for people. For example, you'll still be able to buy and feed anticoccidial medicated feed to poultry without a prescription.

Availability of antibiotics in feeds has offered a great advantage for treating bacterial infections in groups of animals or in humans. They have been useful for respiratory and diarrheal disease, pink eye, blood bacterial infections (e.g., anaplasmosis), among others and for use in starter rations for young stock.

However, with increasing use, resistance of the bacterial organisms that cause infections has grown to the extent that many of the antibiotic products now available are no longer effective or have greatly reduced effectiveness for both livestock and humans. This challenge has grown to critical levels, especially in hospitals and with people who have reduced innate abilities to fight infection.

Animal agriculture uses a greater share of antibiotics in our world than humans use. As livestock and poultry owners, we



will need to share in the judicious use of these medications, if we are to retain our ability to use them at all. The purpose of the new Veterinary Feed Directive is to ensure that illness in our livestock is being treated with the right drug and to avoid over-use, incorrect dosage or improper selection of product.

Finding more information

A clear, simple 3.5-minute explanation of antibiotics and antibiotic resistance can be

found on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=OqQxtFcXNGk

Drover's Journal published a very useful Q&A to address some of the common questions and specific uses, primarily in cattle. Other livestock and breed organizations may have their own specific comments that will follow the same line of these VFD requirements. See www.cattlenetwork.com/advice-and-tips/cow-calf-producer/here-are-practical-answers-your-vfd-questions.

The *Farm Journal's Ag Web* provides additional perspective and background as we approach this new management responsibility. See www.agweb.com/article/just-how-will-veterinary-feed-directive-work-naa-university-news-release/.

The first step for a producer whose livestock or poultry need medical treatment – especially in the feed or water – is to meet with your veterinarian. In fact, we encourage those raising heritage breeds to form relationships with veterinarians long before any medical treatments are needed. Doing so helps breeders be good stewards for their animals, the breed as a whole, and for their customers.

If you have questions about the new rules, make an appointment to meet with your local veterinarian.❖

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A Presidential “Stomp” of Approval

By Jeannette Beranger

During the history of livestock breeds in America, not many breeds can claim their origin began with the vision of an American President. The American Mammoth Jackstock is one such breed. Visionaries such as George Washington understood the growth of the new country would be dependent on using superior draft animals such as the fine working mules of Europe. At the time, however, America did not yet possess large donkeys needed to create such desirable animals.

During Washington’s presidency, the King of Spain gave him an Andalusian jack (a male donkey) named “Royal Gift” along with two jennets (female donkeys) of the same breed. Not long afterward, Washington’s long-time friend, the Marquis de Lafayette, sent him a jack and two jennets from the Isle of Malta. Washington bred the Maltese jack with one of the Andalusian jennets and produced a fine breeding jack he named “Compound.” When he bred this animal to horses, the outcome was exceptional work animals that were superior in their working abilities and endurance to oxen or horses. By the time of Washington’s death, mules produced by “Compound” sold for about \$200 a piece, which in today’s dollars would be nearly \$3000 each. Washington’s work with breeding mules earned him the nickname “Father of the American Mule” and set off great interest in mules, especially in southern states such as Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and others.

There were many importations of large donkeys from Europe during the 1800s. The Catalonian donkey from Spain was of primary interest to American breeders, but Poitou (from France), Majorcan (from Majorca), and Italian strains of donkeys were also used. Breeders crossbred these strains, selecting for size, soundness, and strength. The end-result was the creation of the American Mammoth Jackstock breed. A registry was created in 1888 and a second one in 1908. The two combined to create the Standard Jack and Jennet Registry (SJJR.) Today it is known as the



In the early 20th century, American Mammoth Jackstock numbered an estimated five million animals in the national herd. Today, The Livestock Conservancy has this breed listed as “critically endangered” with less than 200 annual registrations for the breed.

Photo by Jeannette Beranger.

American Mammoth Jackstock Registry. George Washington’s Mount Vernon estate still keeps and works Mammoth Jackstock mules as a testament to the work he did to create the magnificent breed on the property.

Mammoth Jacks are tall and sturdy, with substantially thick legs and large, well-made, massive heads. Their ears are one of their outstanding trademarks often measuring 33 inches from tip to tip. Breeders must pay close attention to size and bone in their animals. According to the American Mammoth Jackstock Registry, jacks are expected to stand no less than 14.2 hands (58 inches) high at the withers and at least 61 inches around the heart girth. Jennets and geldings can be no less than 14 hands (56 inches) and have the same heart girth as jacks. Many animals can be taller than this, with weight ranging between 900 and 1,200 pounds. Young donkeys may be registered if both parents are registered stock. However, the youngsters must be re-evaluated by age five to ensure they meet the size requirements for the breed.

Numbers of American Mammoth Jackstock came to a peak in the early 20th century with an estimated five million animals in the national herd. As agriculture became more dependent on mechanized farm tools, the mule slowly lost favor on the American farm. Today The Livestock

Conservancy has this breed listed as “critical” with less than 200 annual registrations for the breed.

I had the opportunity to encounter two exceptionally sweet Mammoth Jackstock donkeys, “Jaxon” and “Chloe,” a few years back at the Mother Earth News Fair in Lawrence, Kansas. The animals belonged to Dwite and Mary Sharp of Paradise Ranch Adventures LLC, who utilized the donkeys for trail riding and packing tours. I asked Dwite about his start with donkeys, which took him back a good number of years to when he first graduated high school and began a career playing donkey basketball for the Reynolds Company in San Bernadino, California. He was hooked immediately by the personality and intelligence of these animals and has never looked back.

On his farm in Council Grove, Kansas, Dwite got his first Mammoth Jackstock donkey 15 years ago. She was originally brought in as a guardian donkey for their pack goat herd and arrived to their place pregnant. Her foal, Chloe, was the first Mammoth donkey that he had trained for riding by noted horseman Frank Buchman. I asked what the difference was between training a horse verses a donkey, and Dwite said, “Donkeys are very intelligent and operate on trust and caution. Without trust you get nowhere. Buchman noted

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Guinea Hog on the Menu

By Cathy R. Payne

Executive Chef Marcos Fernandez is starting a food revolution in Lakeland, Florida. He prides himself on creating flavorful dishes out of fresh, local ingredients and is committed to assisting in conservation efforts by featuring the Guinea Hog on his trendy menu of Latin-inspired dishes. Marcos opened his farm-to-table restaurant Nineteen61 in Lakeland in December, 2015. Since then he has served only one breed of fresh and local pork – Guinea Hog.

The Guinea Hog is unique to North America and is listed as Threatened by The Livestock Conservancy. The Conservancy often emphasizes the importance of eating heritage breeds in order to help save them. Chefs who use, feature, and promote heritage breeds in their menus serve an important role in supporting local conservationists and small farms, and creating demand for superior culinary products.

Marcos explained how he uses the Guinea Hog for his restaurant. “We make our own bacon, cure our own ham hocks for the beans, take the head and make head cheese, and render the lard. We are actually creating a ground sausage recipe for the Sunday brunches. We make our own stocks, and we don’t cut corners. We make everything our own.”

Even before he found a farmer to work with, he made a commitment to the Guinea Hog as a breed. He did some research online and found a reference to Guinea Hogs and how they almost became extinct because of their slow growth and small size compared to other breeds. As a small restaurant owner with limited kitchen space, he finds that they are a “good size to just come in and do everything with,” turning the smaller size into an advantage. He uses all Guinea Hog meat for the Cuban sandwiches on the lunch menu at Nineteen61. The kitchen staff prepares the meat sous vide for 24 hours before pulling the pork, creating a moist, flavorful product. The restaurant serves 20 to 30 sandwiches a day on their lunch menu, so they can go through a single pig rapidly.

He is currently planning to harvest some suckling-sized pigs to feature a sweeter, lighter version of the Guinea Hog



Chef Marcos Fernandez with a Guinea Hog. Photo by Karen King.

meat on his Sunday brunch menu. He is also considering opening a second, more casual restaurant to serve hamburgers and Cuban sandwiches.

When Marcos began seeking out local meat sources for Nineteen61, he was challenged with the difficulty of finding local pork. Marcos currently sources the Guinea Hogs for Nineteen61 from Bob and Karen King at Mt. Citra Farm in Citra, Florida. This farm is more of a homestead farm than a production pork operation. This is encouraging, as it demonstrates that small, local farmstead conservators can have a market for their cull hogs to local farm-to-table operations.

Bob King “stumbled across” the Guinea Hog breed when looking for a sustainable pig that suited his property. As a beginner without a farming background, he decided that this breed was a perfect fit.

While King currently has purebred but unregistered stock, he is becoming interested in having registered lines in the future. He recently purchased stock bred by Maveric Ranch in order to meet the growing demand for meat hogs that has come from the relationship with Chef Fernandez. In another move to meet restaurant demand, Mt. Citra and another farm helped in a herd dispersal of hogs from a fourth-generation Guinea Hog farmer, Brent Sumrall, when his father, Gary Sumrall, passed away. Brent and his mother were left unable to care for the herd or find

a market for dozens of mature barrows and gilts. A group of conservators took possession of breeding stock to preserve the old Sumrall lines, and Nineteen61 served up five of the Sumrall-bred barrows and two meat gilts.

King notes three characteristics making the Guinea Hog a good fit for his farmstead. First, their size puts fewer pressures on his land. Second, the meat quality and flavor profile is outstanding. And third, it produces high quality lard in good quantity for a small pig.

Tammy Albert of Jail Creek Farm in Twigs County, Georgia also raises Guinea Hogs. Comparing the meat of this breed with Hampshire hogs raised in the same environment and on the same feed, she noted that the Hampshire produced more meat in quantity, but the Guinea Hog was a standout in quality. She said that the Hampshire meat was white and dense, with a hard fat. In contrast, the Guinea Hog meat was darker in color and the fat was not at all hard or rubbery. “When you cook it, it melts off into the pan. Flavor-wise, once you taste Guinea Hog meat, it is hard to go back. Big difference in taste there.”

Craig Diehl, executive chef of Cyprus and Artisan Meat Share in Charleston, South Carolina, evaluated the Guinea Hog meat raised by Gra Moore of Carolina Heritage Farm for the benefit of both Slow

Continued on next page

Guinea Hog on the Menu

Continued from previous page

Food Charleston and The Livestock Conservancy (then the American Livestock Breed Conservancy) in 2009. Chef Diehl stated, "It was super flavorful. It was nice and tender. It kept on coming down to the abundance of fat...in my opinion it has a much better quality of fat. A firm fat, good flavor, real dense, and perfect for curing."

The Guinea Hog is an old fashioned lard hog, meaning that it was bred for its quantities of quality lard as much as for its succulent meat. Lard was demonized during the low-fat diet craze, but has more recently become recognized for its many positive and healthy attributes. Prior to 1975, fat was at the forefront of human diets and culture worldwide. Now quality pork lard is hard to find. Jennifer McLagan, in *Fat: An Appreciation of a Misunderstood Ingredient, with Recipes* explains that pork fat is mostly monounsaturated fat, as is olive oil. It also contains palmitoleic fatty acid which has an antimicrobial effect, and does not become readily rancid like polyunsaturated fats. It is also very stable when heated. She writes, "Not only are food fried in lard very crisp, but they absorb less fat than if they were fried in oil."

The flavor profiles of pork change depending not only on breed, but on the diet of the pig and how it is raised. For the most part, Guinea Hogs are raised on small farms and kept on grass pasture, under fruit orchards to harvest windfall fruit, or in oak forests with acorn mast. They also enjoy eating both weeds and overripe vegetables from the garden patch. The Guinea Hog is an active forager that spends as much time grazing or rooting as sleeping. They are thrifty, requiring very little grain input compared to other breeds.

Chef Marcos said that choosing the Guinea Hog for his restaurant rather than using a commercial type pig has been eye opening. "You can really taste the difference in the naturally raised hogs [from Mt. Citra Farm]. These are free range and fed organic. They eat fermented oats and then graze. That diet totally makes a great product. They are not penned up. They are free. They are happy pigs." ❖

For more information on the Guinea Hog, contact the American Guinea Hog Association (AGHA) at president@guineahogs.org. Cathy R. Payne raises American Guinea Hogs and Gulf Coast Native sheep on her farmstead in Northeast Georgia. She is researching the history of the breed for a series of nonfiction books. She can be contacted at BroadRiverPastures@gmail.com.

"Stomp" of Approval

Continued from page 10

that compared to horses, donkeys have a short attention span, so training in short time spans such as 30 minutes per day will get you the best results." By the end of 28 days of training, Buchman returned Chloe to Dwite saying "A cowboy dreams of having one truly great horse in a lifetime. Although she's not a horse, she's your one amazing mount of a lifetime." Today there are six Mammoth Jackstock donkeys at Paradise Ranch.

Dwite says that donkeys are very easy keepers, but the biggest mistake people make with them is feeding them a diet too rich in grains or high quality hay. "Alfalfa is a big no-no for donkeys," he remarked. The only time he feeds oats is if the animals have had a challenging workday. Another mistake is breaking donkeys for riding at too early an age. He does not start his donkeys until they are at least four years old. Starting earlier can cause harm to both the donkey and its rider since the animals still have not learned how to "wear their feet" to the best of their abilities. He went on to say that Mammoths that are too tall and leggy tend to be a bit clumsy as mounts; he finds the ideal size for a trail donkey is around 14.5 hands.

Dwite's final thoughts on Mammoth Jackstock donkeys was this: "The greatest gift the donkey provides its rider is common sense. If the animal trusts you and decides to refuse to do something for you – take a good look around because it's probably seeing a danger you don't. A good donkey will take care of its rider." Today Dwite's grandchildren still ride Chloe, and she's takes very good care of them on the trail. ❖

For more information on Mammoth Jackstock donkeys visit The Livestock Conservancy at www.LivestockConservancy.org or the American Mammoth Jackstock Registry at www.amjr.us.



Cathy Payne with her hogs. Photo by James L. Hicks.

Beware the Feral Hog!

An invasive pest is tearing up the American landscape and threatening the health of people and domestic pigs. These long-snouted hairy monsters are known by various names: feral hogs, wild boars, or razorbacks. Whatever you call them, free-living, unowned pigs are mayhem for heritage hogs and their caretakers.

Feral hogs are expanding their populations and geographic range in the United States, so if they aren't in your neck of the woods yet, they probably will be soon. Unless solid walls and impenetrable fencing keep them out, feral hogs will very happily move out of the woods and freely sample the benefits of life as domestic pigs, enjoying the good feed, water, and company. Farmers in feral hog-rich environments are very familiar with the visible damage feral hogs cause by rooting up the earth and breeding half-feral piglets, but they may not be aware of the sneakier ill effects from diseases feral pigs can transmit to livestock and humans.

The two diseases of greatest concern are brucellosis and pseudorabies, since feral hogs very commonly carry these infections and can transmit them to other animals. The chart below summarizes each of the two diseases.

Heritage pig producers should be especially concerned about feral hogs, because heritage pigs are often raised on pasture and are at high risk of encountering their free-living cousins. Also, irreplaceable

genetic resources could be lost if individual pigs or whole herds of heritage breeds must be destroyed to control outbreaks of domestic swine diseases introduced by feral hogs.

It has happened! Recently, a multistate outbreak of brucellosis in the northeastern United States infected domestic pigs (including heritage pigs), dogs, and people. Investigators discovered that feral hogs living with domestic pigs provided the source of the infection. Because pigs, dogs, and other animals cannot be cured of brucellosis, infected animals found in this outbreak were euthanized to prevent spread of the disease. We don't have the details of the human infections in this outbreak to share with you, but we know that people who are affected by brucellosis can be treated with antibiotics, although they might not be completely cured even with a prolonged course of treatment.

How can you protect your animals and yourself from this porcine menace? So far, no one has been able to trap, shoot, neuter, or barbecue their way to eradicating feral hogs from any infested area of the United States. There is also no practical way to vaccinate or medicate the infection out of the elusive feral hog population, so pig farmers need to build good barriers. Fence feral hogs out! (This is easier said than done.)

What's an effective barrier?

Hogs in general are wily, and the free-living sort seem to have super-porcine powers for finding and enlarging weak spots in fences. Here are some hard-won tips from people who successfully keep

pigs in and out:

Double fence. Nose-to-nose fenceline contact is enough to spread infection from feral hog to pastured pig, so double fencing is essential. Ideally, the two fences should be separated by a 'sneeze zone' of several feet.

How high is high enough? Studies show 28 inches is enough to exclude feral swine from wildlife feeding stations (hence, your pig pasture).

What type of fence material? Electrified wire, high tensile wire, woven field fencing, and welded wire livestock panels can be used effectively. At least one electrified strand of fence wire will improve your chances of keeping hogs on the right side of any type of fence.

Size of bottom gaps? Baby pigs can get through small gaps at the base of fences, so make sure the bottom wires are no more than two inches apart, or electrify bottom strands.

How hot? When electrifying fences for feral hog exclusion, don't skimp on the charger. Wildlife fence experts recommend a powerful (six Joules and up), well-grounded, low-impedance charger.

Mega fence. A highly effective and lower cost fence design is known as the "mega fence," consisting of a double fence with electrified wire strands. The outer fence has one strand at 10 to 12 inches from the ground, and the inner fence has strands at 12 and 24 inches from the ground (a third strand at 54 inches high will keep deer out, too). All wires are energized. The outer and inner fences are set three feet apart.

If you have pigs or are thinking about getting pigs, find other pastured pig producers and your local extension agent and

pester them about good fence design. If you think or know your farm defenses have been penetrated by feral hogs, contact a veterinarian, or your State Veterinarian's office, to discuss the risks of brucellosis and pseudorabies in your swine herd. ❖

Diseases Commonly Carried by Feral Hogs

	Brucellosis	Pseudorabies (or Aujeszky's disease)
Caused by	<i>Brucella suis</i> bacteria	Pseudorabies virus, in the Herpesvirus family
Transmitted through	Afterbirth, semen, blood, tissues, urine, and feces	Saliva and nasal secretions
Illness in domestic pigs	Infertility, abortion	Abortions, stillbirths
Causes illness in other livestock and dogs	Yes; reproductive tract infections, lameness,	Yes; intense itching, paralysis, convulsions, death
Causes illness in people	Yes; arthritis, recurrent fevers, nervous system infections, possibly fatal	No
Treatment for infected livestock and dogs	None	None
Disease control measures	Test and remove infected animals	Test and remove infected animals

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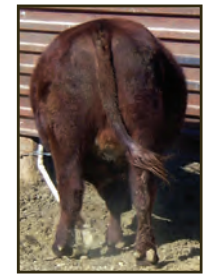


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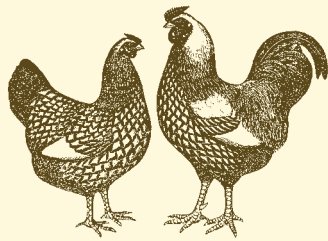


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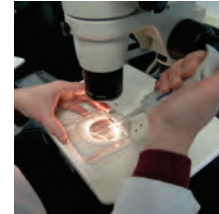
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★★ denotes Livestock Conservancy event

★ denotes Conservancy participation

See the Conservancy website for a more extensive list of events. The Livestock Conservancy encourages event organizers to submit events related to conservation, farming, sustainability, rare breeds, and more to the Conservancy's Calendar. Send your submission to rwalker@livestockconservancy.org or mail to PO Box 477, Pittsboro, NC 27312.

January

January 13-February 4 – The 121st Annual Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo will be held in Fort Worth, TX, with livestock shows, kid-friendly exhibits, carnival/midway fun, live music, unique daily shopping and nightly rodeos. Over 1 million visitors and 22,000 head of livestock participate each year. Visit www.fwssr.com for information.

January 25-28 – The American Sheep Industry Association Convention will be held in Denver, CO. Visit www.sheepusa.org/About_Events_Convention for information.

January 25-28 – The EcoFarm Conference “Cultivating Diversity” will be held in Pacific Grove, CA. Visit www.eco-farm.org for more information.

January 25-28 – The Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group Conference “Practical Tools & Solutions for Sustainable Family Farms” will be held in Lexington, KY. Visit www.ssawg.org for more information.

★ **January 27 – Flavors: Historic California** at The Autry Museum in Los Angeles, CA is a special meal event combining

heritage livestock with indigenous plants to create dishes that would be familiar to Californians over the centuries. Visit <https://theautry.org/events/special-events/> or call 323-667-2000 for information.

February

February 1-4 – The 26th Annual Farming for the Future Conference will be held at Penn Stater Conference Center in State College, PA. Learn more at www.pasafarming.org/conference or call 814-349-9856.

February 2-4 – The 25th Annual Grazing Conference will be held in Wisconsin Dells, WI. Visit <http://grassworks.org/?110340> for more information.

February 9-11 – The 38th Annual Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA) Conference “Growing Today, Transforming Tomorrow” will be held in Dayton, OH. Workshops, a trade show, local and organic meals, a kids' conference, childcare, and keynote speakers. Visit www.oeffa.org/conference2017 for more information.

★ **February 24 – Flavors: Future of Food** is a special meal event at The Autry Museum in Los Angeles, CA featuring smaller, flavorful breeds and locally sourced ingredients from a time of less intensive agriculture and greater species diversity. Visit <https://theautry.org/events/special-events/> or call 323-667-2000 for more information.

March

★ **March 6 - The Organic Commodities and Livestock Conference** will be held in Mount Olive, NC. Livestock Conservancy staff will present on raising heritage goats in the Southeast. For more information, visit <https://www.carolinafarmstewards.org/oclc/> or call 919-542-2402.

March 25 – The High Desert Wool Growers 20th Annual Fiber Market Day will be held in Prineville, OR. For more information, visit www.highdesertwoolgrowers.org.

April

★★ **April 2-5 – Mother Earth News Institute: The Power of Poultry** will be held in Seven Springs, PA. A one-day marketplace featuring vendors of poultry products and other related goods and services and a full slate of programming on the basics of keeping poultry. Registration is limited and on a first-come basis. For tickets and information visit www.motherearthnewsinstitute.com.

★★ **April 7-8 - The Livestock Conservancy's “From Service to Stewardship” workshop** to train military veterans with heritage breeds will be held in Lexington, VA. Visit <https://livestockconservancy.org/index.php/what/internal/veterans-workshop> for more information.

2017 Mother Earth News Fairs

★ **Belton, TX:**
Feb. 18-19

★ **Asheville, NC:**
May 6-7

★ **Burlington, VT:** June 10-11

★ **Albany, OR:** Aug. 5-6

★ **Seven Springs, PA:** Sept. 15-17

★ **Topeka, KS:** Oct. 21-22

These family-oriented sustainable lifestyle events feature dozens of practical, hands-on demonstrations, including heritage breed livestock exhibitions. Visit www.motherearthnewsfair.com for more information.

