



THE LIVESTOCK CONSERVANCY™ NEWS

Summer, 2015

Volume 32, Issue 3

Conserving rare breeds since 1977



Visit www.LivestockConservancy.org to complete the census, or contact the Conservancy directly if you need a paper copy to fill out.

Make Your Poultry Efforts Count!

The most comprehensive poultry census ever conducted is now underway across North America. Funded by Murray McMurray Hatchery, this critically important project will enable us to understand how different poultry breeds are faring in the United States and Canada. The last poultry census was conducted by the Conservancy more than a decade ago, and now with the Federal National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) no longer collecting breed-specific data, this will be the only effort of its kind in America.

Each month, about one breed of livestock out of the world's approximately 7,600 is lost to extinction. The results from this census will help ensure that the remaining breeds are properly accounted for, monitored, and maintained, adding their own unique traits to the earth's biodiversity and to the security of the food supply. The census will be a vital source of information for the Conservancy as well as other poultry focused organizations nationwide and internationally. The data gathered will help to direct and extend vital breed conservation work where it is needed the most and will guide efforts throughout the 21st century.

The census will be focused on old landrace and large fowl standard bred poultry as recognized in the American Poultry Association's Standard of Perfection— more specifically, on the **breeding stock** being maintained. We are specifically asking for information on the number of **breeding birds only** in order to get an estimate on the size of the actively reproducing gene pool for each breed. The information you provide for this census will be held in strict confidence unless you indicate that you would like us to share it with others interested in the breed you maintain.

Visit www.LivestockConservancy.org to complete the census, or contact the Conservancy directly if you need a paper copy to fill out. The final results will be shared on the Conservancy's website and with all of our project partners, without whom this project would not be possible. These partners are: Murray McMurray Hatchery, Tractor Supply Co., Mother Earth News, Rare Breeds Canada, the Heritage Poultry Conservancy, the American Poultry Association, and the Society for the Preservation of Poultry Antiquities. ❖



Wyandottes, now recovering, were listed in the most endangered category after the first pountry census in 1987. Photo by Jeannette Beranger.

Advertise in the 2016 Breeders & Products Directory

How would you like the opportunity to get your farm, business, or organization in front of over 125,000* farmers, ranchers, and potential customers? Advertise in The Livestock Conservancy's 2016 *Breeders and Products Directory*!

The Livestock Conservancy's Breeders & Products Directory lists members raising the breeds of livestock and poultry on our Conservation Priority List, and the products available from these breeds that they offer, from hatching eggs to yarn. The directory is distributed to thousands of Conservancy members across the country and offers terrific targeted exposure for organizations, businesses, farms, and ranches looking to market themselves and their products. Not only does your ad help get your name out, it also helps The Livestock Conservancy offset some of the cost of producing the directory. Becoming an advertiser is easy.

1. Choose Your Size

With 4 options to choose from, pick the ad size that works best for your farm, business, or organization.

1/8 Page (3.5"x2" or business card-size) = \$75

1/4 Page (3.5"x4.75") = \$125

1/2 Page (7.25"x4.75") = \$175

Full Page (7.25"x9.5") = \$250



2. Reserve Your Spot

Don't miss out on this great opportunity! Email Ryan Walker with your preferred ad size to reserve your spot today at rwalker@LivestockConservancy.org or call 919-542-5704, ext. 102.

3. Submit your Artwork

Send high resolution (300dpi+ preferable) ads to Ryan Walker to be included in

the 2016 directory **no later than December 31, 2015**. Ads may be sent in color, but will be printed black and white. Ads can be mailed and scanned, but emailed attachments are preferable for the best quality.

Questions? Contact Ryan Walker to find out more at rwalker@LivestockConservancy.org or 919-542-5704, ext. 102.

**Based on online directory and print directory numbers combined.*

From the Editor

I'd like to apologize for the tardiness of this newsletter issue. As you can tell from the contents of this newsletter and if you follow us online or have spoken to us in person or on the phone, we have been extremely busy lately at the Conservancy. I intend to catch up getting the newsletters out as quickly as possible and I thank you for your patience. As always, this is your newsletter and we welcome articles and submissions at any time. You may send any content you would like to submit to rwalker@LivestockConservancy.org, or PO Box 477, Pittsboro, NC 27312.

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The *Livestock Conservancy News* (ISSN 1064-1599) is published quarterly by The Livestock Conservancy. The Livestock Conservancy is a nonprofit tax-exempt corporation established to conserve and promote endangered breeds of livestock and poultry. The Conservancy is a membership organization that engages in research, education, and communication to promote these purposes.

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

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Virginia residents: A financial statement is available from the State Office of Consumer Affairs in the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services upon request.

Washington: For additional information

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Livestock Conservancy Staff

Alison Martin, PhD, Acting Executive Director
Jeannette Beranger, Research & Technical Program Manager
Michele Brane, Donor Information and Research Manager
Angelique Thompson, Operations Director
Ryan Walker, Marketing and Communications Manager

Advisors

D. Phillip Sponenberg, DVM, PhD, Technical Advisor

FROM THE CHAIR



By John Metzger, Board Chairman

Eric Hallman, who led the Livestock Conservancy for over three years as Executive Director, left us at the end of August. He supports our mission wholeheartedly, and we're all going to miss Eric's cheerful spirit around the office and the country. As he moves on to new opportunities and challenges, we wish Eric the very best.

Dr. Alison Martin, who has served four years as our Program Director, is stepping in as interim Executive Director. She brings tremendous experience in business, finance, and leadership. Alison is a scientist at heart with fifteen years in poultry vaccine development, technical laboratory management, and project implementation. She is excited about this challenge and sees wonderful opportunities ahead for The Livestock Conservancy.

We are blessed and lucky to have a remarkable staff. They truly have our mission in their hearts and work long hours as a powerful team. The next time you phone the office or see Alison, Jeannette, Ryan, Angelique or Michele at a fair or festival – please step up and tell them “Thank You!” They truly deserve it.

The Livestock Conservancy is currently engaged in a strategic planning process. One of the questions we must answer is “Where would we like to be in five years?” That vision is coming into focus as we examine our core mission and vision in the light of other successful conservation organizations. When I see the future Livestock Conservancy I see an organization which has support among the general public similar to that of the The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Most of TNC's one million members have never drafted a conservation easement or brokered a large land purchase. Yet, these members recognize the importance of land conservation and are willing to support the organization financially because they all understand they need to conserve the lands and waters on which all of life depends. Only a small fraction of their membership is involved in hands-on conservation efforts.

In contrast, The Livestock Conservancy relies heavily on its members to both support our work financially and to do the actual conservation work of raising these rare breeds.

As many of you know too well, sometimes you have to choose between membership dues and feed for your animals. For the Livestock Conservancy to be successful we need support from the broader general public. We must cultivate an appreciation of rare breed conservation and the work of The Livestock Conservancy and its members. We want to broaden our base of support – and I would personally like to see that within the next ten years, we would have a million people supporting the cause of discovering, securing and sustaining several hundred breeds of livestock and poultry because we all need to protect livestock and poultry diversity, which are essential for the future of farming.

Each of the breeds with which we are working has a wonderful history that can capture the attention of the public. A broader audience is finding out about our work through an increase in conventional media coverage – magazine articles, television reports, newspaper stories, and

public lectures. Our most exciting growth is through the Internet. Our website has almost two million unique visitors per year, and the number is growing. We started a Facebook campaign a little over three years ago and our Facebook fans have more than doubled every year to more than 15,500. The National Heritage Breeds Week social media campaign reached nearly 100,000 fans in just one week!

How do we convert these numbers into members and financial supporters? This is where you come in. Since you are reading this lengthy article all the way to the end, you understand the message we must tell. I will challenge you to tell someone every month about rare breeds, their value to our future and how critical it is to save them. Don't just tell another farmer, tell someone that is not in agriculture. Give them a copy of your Livestock Conservancy newsletter – or, ask the office for some membership brochures. When you run out, contact us and we will send you more newsletters or brochures. You are our best ambassadors. By working together, we can grow the Livestock Conservancy into the largest and most effective livestock and poultry breed conservation organization in the world.

We have a very exciting future in front of us if we all work together. ❖

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

Jacqueline B. Mars
The Plains, VA

Christa B. Schmidt
Newton Square, PA

P. Allen Smith
Roland, AR

Ann Huebner-Waller
Lexington, VA



GREATNONPROFITS
2015
TOP-RATED
NONPROFIT

The Livestock Conservancy is proud to announce it has once again received distinction as a “Top Rated Nonprofit” by Greatnonprofits.org. Many thanks to all of the members, followers, and breed stewards who make the Conservancy's mission of protecting nearly 200 endangered breeds from extinction possible.

Member Survey Results

This winter we asked for your help with strategic planning to set the future course of The Livestock Conservancy. You responded! We received 121 responses and are very grateful to you for sharing your thoughts. The following summarizes much of what you shared.

Question 1: What are the one or two most useful things The Livestock Conservancy has done in the last five years?

Your answers ranged from more general to more specific. Among the general answers, most of you highlighted our mission (for example, “Identifying and helping endangered breeds survive”) or our efforts to bring endangered breeds to the attention of the farming community and general public. Among more specific accomplishments, you value the Breeders Directory, both online and printed. Other specific benefits you enjoy include our information, education programs, breeder network and support, conference and newsletter. Several of you mentioned that you like our modernized website, social media, and podcasts, and applauded the additional online access to resources.

Question 3: What are The Livestock Conservancy’s strengths?

You agreed broadly on what we’re doing well. Some of you listed several! We’re proud that you’ve recognized our commit-

ment in these areas, and proud that you value each other’s dedication as well.

Question 2: What are the most important issues The Livestock Conservancy must deal with in the strategic planning process? AND

Question 4: What are the Conservancy’s weaknesses?

You also helped us identify areas where we can do better, where we will need to focus attention in coming years. Questions 2 and 4 elicited similar comments, so they are summarized together here.

Some big-picture issues you feel we need to keep in mind as we go through our strategic planning process include global warming, aging of farmers, and widening our base. Specific areas where you feel we can do more:

- Many of you feel that we need to do more to bring awareness of endangered breeds to the general public
- You told us that we need to do a better job at securing our financial base. You have recognized that operating on a shoestring affects what we can do, and you would like us to do a better job fundraising so that programs can be expanded.
- Some of you expressed concern that we aren’t able to do more in certain geographic areas, most notably the West. You would like to see us bring more programs to these areas, and to develop a stronger presence through partnerships and more networking.
- You emphasized that the economics of

raising and marketing heritage breeds are difficult, and asked us to find ways to help ranchers and farmers surmount this barrier so that you can do even more to help breeds.

- Other areas for attention included building stronger partnerships with other organizations, most notably breed associations, and adding youth programs. Some of you want us to build bridges to the larger agriculture landscape (“big ag”) while others emphatically do not!
- Finally, some of you would like to expand the Conservancy’s mission. Some suggestions included adding criteria for the quality of breeding stock, GMO issues, welfare, and breeds that fall outside of our current criteria. All of these provide us useful direction for planning the next five years.

Question 5: As members, what do you need or expect from the Conservancy?

Overwhelmingly you want us to build on our strengths. In addition to believing and caring about our mission to conserve endangered breeds, most of you have come to rely on the Conservancy for knowledge, information, and help connecting with other farms and breeders. You also like that we are there as a backstop, to step in when things go sideways. One member called us “the glue that holds rare breeders together.”

Quite a number of you mentioned that you would like more frequent communication. Whether you’d like us to send frequent short snapshots on progress, or

The Livestock Conservancy’s Strengths



Strength	# responses	Sample responses
Knowledge and Information	36	The Conservancy does an amazing job of creating educational and entertaining materials, providing success and personal stories regarding endangered breeds, welcoming others to join the cause, and monitoring breed populations.
Mission	28	Serving as a go-to source for research, education, bringing existing breeders and new ones together, and giving a voice to these individual groups
Members and Network	19	The passion of its members. Bringing people together.
Staff	23	Dedication and technical (animal) expertise.
Stature and Reach	12	Positive reputation of the organization; national visibility.
Other	14	Passion, real world projects, creativity, breeders directory, leadership, science

follow up more quickly when you have questions, you share our own wish that we could do even better and even more to touch you personally. If the organization succeeds in growing, this will be a continuing challenge.

Question 6: In your opinion, what ideas or suggestions might you have that would help us do an even better job of ensuring the future of agriculture through the genetic conservation and promotion of endangered breeds?

Your many and varied suggestions will give us much to think about! A few interesting ideas included:

- More educational workshops, especially for beginning farmers and kids
- Develop a kit that members can take to their own events
- Develop a “chapter” program for members to work together at the local level
- Broaden our farmer/breeder base to include more class and economic diversity
- Match mentors (experienced breeders) with newbies
- Reach out to older breeders to make sure herds are not lost
- Provide breed registry services
- More food programs, including documenting the nutritional value of heritage food products
- Engage more with universities and USDA
- More partnerships – you suggested deeper relationships with Slow Foods, Seed Savers, and more

On behalf of all the staff, THANK YOU for your feedback. The work of saving endangered breeds is not a solo effort. As one of you pointed out, it is a three-legged stool that relies on the work of breeders, breed associations, and The Livestock Conservancy. Therefore, the input provided by you, the members, and those who responded with your breed association hats on is vital to keeping OUR organization on track.

In recent months, a facilitator led staff through some initial steps to list our what staff would like to accomplish in coming years. This process will continue with the assistance of our board, and the feedback that you the membership have provided. We will report back via the newsletter. ❖

Remembering Bill Hadlow

William (Bill) John Hadlow, 94, long time resident of Hamilton, Ohio and member of the Conservancy for 23 years, passed away at his home on Saturday, June 20, 2015.

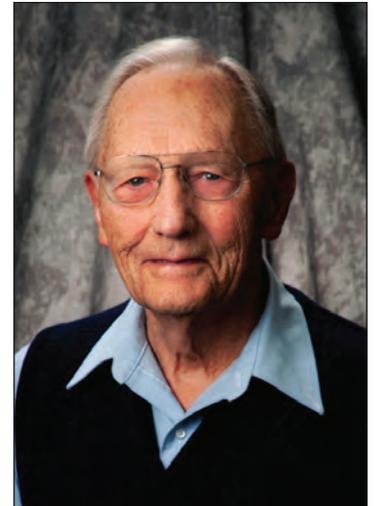
He was born April 8, 1921 to James and Emma Hadlow at the family home in the village of West Park, Ohio. Two years later the village was taken into the city of Cleveland, forming its near rural west side. There Bill grew up amid all kinds of animals, especially poultry, and learned the work ethic and the rudiments of good husbandry from his father. When Bill graduated from John Marshall High School in 1939 he planned on becoming a carpenter, for he had shown an aptitude in working with wood and few other options seemed feasible then. But an uncle encouraged Bill to attend college and helped him financially to do so. After graduating from The Ohio State University, Bill went on to the University of Minnesota. While in Minnesota, he met Evelyn O'Connor and they married on June 7, 1952.

Bill made his living as a general veterinary pathologist, first at the Rocky Mountain Laboratory in Hamilton where he spent most of his career, and later at two animal disease laboratories in England. Bill fully retired in Hamilton in 2005, completing 50 years of professional work.

During his college years, Bill served in the U.S. Army in a specialized training program and then in the U.S. Navy in the Hospital Corps.

Bill was a great friend of The Livestock Conservancy and contributed many books over the years that make up a large portion of its library. Bill's legacy will live on through these books and the small notes he included in them.

Private committal services were held at Riverview Cemetery in Hamilton. Condolences may be left for the family at www.dalyleachchapel.com.



“Savor the Age of Flavor”

Jackson Park | Santa Rosa, CA
Nov. 7, 6-9pm

FEATURED CHEFS

Douglas Keane, Cyrus

Michael Tuohy, The Legends Group

Adam Mali, Twitter

Justin Wangler, Jackson Family Winery

Tucker Taylor, Culinary Gardener

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Barry Estabrook, Author

• 4-H/Slow Food
Heritage Turkey
Auction

• Live Display of
Heritage Animals

Dinner & Auction \$150

LivestockConservancy.org



Twilight of an Era

By Charles Simon, Covington County Extension Coordinator

The 80- by 14-foot mural pictured above was commissioned for the Covington County courthouse in Andalusia, Alabama to help us to remember an era when the old Spanish-based native cattle grazed the understory of the vast longleaf pine forest of the Gulf Coast. This old breed of cattle gave meat, hides, tallow and draft animals to a succession of owners from the Spanish cattle ranches and missions of Florida to the Southeastern Native Americans and finally to settlers of the newly formed United States.

The new mural is entitled “Twilight of an Era.” It depicts the time period of 1890-1910 AD. This is the time span when the “old growth” timber, predominately, longleaf pine, was rapidly being harvested opening up the land as a result. The federal and state cattle tick eradication program began then, with the goal of eliminating the cattle tick from the Southern United States. The pace of new breeds of cattle being introduced picked up momentum as the “tick barrier” was gradually eliminated and the use of pastures and fences was being promoted by a new generation of agricultural progressives. The old free-ranging “native cattle” were being cross-bred or eliminated completely from the farm. By the 1960s, only a few of the pure native cattle survived on rangeland owned by families, like Dewey and Okla Barnes of Covington County, who still saw value in the breed.

The mural depicts a young boy “salting” his family’s free-ranging native cattle. The old growth longleaf pine forest has had its understory “freshened” by a recent burn. The cattle are grazing new growth wiregrass, bluestem and other native

grasses along with other recovering understory plants. The cattle are also “marked” by having their ears cut as calves in specific ways to denote ownership. Brands were also used, though curiously not as much in Covington County. Earmarking was easier, permanent and done when the young calves were caught. The type of mark and brand chosen were registered in the owner’s name at the local courthouse. Today, cattle earmarks are no longer recognized as a mark of ownership. Only hot brands and ear tattoos are now recognized by the State of Alabama.

The young boy’s horse, carrying a surplus McClellan saddle and old quilt used as a pad, and the family dog are looking on as he pours coarse salt into a “lick log”. The hollowed-out trough cavities of lick logs were filled with the coarse salt which was essential to the cattle and used to keep them in an area. The family’s dog is an example of an all-purpose farm “cur” dog that was used for hunting, gathering and/or “catching” of cattle. These dogs used their canine fierceness to intimidate cattle to bunch together or force straying cattle back to the group so they might be driven to another location. These dogs could also grab the straying cattle by the muzzle or ear for additional control. Examples of these dogs are Blackmouth curs, Catahoula curs, Mountain curs, or any other mixed breed cur-like dogs that were trained to do this type of work.

The mural is not only a colorful illustration of the lifestyle and material culture of a people but it also tells a story of a type of forest range management that used fire and cattle grazing to provide income to rural people that were here a century ago. Our history along the Gulf Coast was not of the “Plantation South” but of small independent “yeoman” farmer/stockman who made their living utilizing the resources that the longleaf pine forest pro-

This mural by artist Wes Hardin was commissioned for a wall of the the Covington County, Alabama courthouse.

vided. A distinct culture arose and thrived for generations. Hopefully, their contributions will not be forgotten.

Today, many see the need to bring back the longleaf pine to its rightful prominence in our southern forestlands along with the original natural understory of “vast grasslands under forest” that early travelers through the region described. Longleaf pine forests are being replanted and prescribed fire, used liberally for managing timber growth and understory restoration, is returning. Also, new groups of enthusiasts are trying to save the old lines of native cattle from disappearing. Today, these cattle are called “Cracker cattle” and “Pineywood cattle” depending on the family lineage.

Some cattle producers still allow their cattle limited access to their forestlands for shade, water and undergrowth control. Some have even begun using a proven forest/pasture combination called “silvopasture.” This land management technique uses widely spaced pines that allow a significant amount of sunlight to support a “pasture” of bahiagrass or bermudagrass to grow beneath the pine canopy. Silvopasture allows a long-term investment in pine trees and a short-term cash flow from cattle. It seems to have come back in full circle!!

Finally, a questions that is asked by many: “Why, is the calf out of the mural?” If you raise cattle you know! It has to do with calves and fences. ❖

The mural was made possible by the contributions from The Alabama State Council on the Arts, Covington County Cattlemen Association, the Covington County Forestry Committee, The Solon and Martha Dixon Foundation, Dr. and Mrs. James Barnes, and Mr. Albert Cravey.

BREED SPOTLIGHT

The American Chinchilla Rabbit

Conservation Status: Critically Endangered

Use: Meat, Fur

Adult Weight: 9 - 12 lbs

Temperament: Docile

Experience Level: Novice

Notes: Fast growth; Good meat to bone ratio

The first Chinchilla rabbits were created by a French engineer M.J. Dybowski and were shown for the first time in April 1913 at Saint-Maur, France. The new breed, which greatly resembled the South American *Chinchilla lanigera*, took the rabbit world by storm as the ideal fur rabbit. A Mrs. Haidee Lacy-Hulbert of Mitcham Surrey, imported the first of the breed to England in the summer of 1917. A British exhibitor presented a shipment at the New York State Fair in 1919. After the show, he sold all the stock to Edward H. Stahl and Jack Harris. The original Chinchillas were rather small at 5 to 7-1/2 pounds, and American breeders set out to produce a larger animal that would be better suited for meat and pelts. Through



American Chinchilla buck. Photo by Jeannette Beranger.

selective breeding for larger size, fine bones, and a good dress-out percentage, a breed standard was issued for the Heavyweight Chinchilla. It was a larger form of the Standard Chinchilla – the same shape, color, and general make up. In 1924, both Chinchilla breeds were adopted into the standards book and shortly thereafter, the Heavyweight Chinchilla was renamed the American Chinchilla.

There is no single person that can be credited with the development of the American Chinchilla, though the Chinchilla can be credited with making a large impact on both rabbit keepers and other rabbit breeds. Between November 1928 and November 1929, no less than 17,328 Chinchillas were registered through the American Rabbit & Cavy Breeders Association (now the American Rabbit Breeders Association, Inc.) – a record that has yet to be broken. The Chinchilla rabbit has contributed to the development of more breeds and varieties of rabbit worldwide than any other breed of domestic rabbit. Sports from the Chinchilla have created the Silver Martens and American Sables in the United States, and the Siamese Sable and Sallander breeds abroad.

The American Chinchilla is the rarest of the Chinchilla breeds. Its small population is largely due to the demise of the rabbit fur industry of the late 1940s. Despite the breed's fine meat-producing qualities, today's producers prefer an all-white rabbit for the meat market.

The American Chinchilla is a large, hardy, and gentle animal, with mature bucks weighing in at 9 to 11 pounds and does at 10 to 12 pounds. They produce large litters, have good mothering instincts, and fryers reach market weight quickly. At first glance the American Chinchilla is salt-and-pepper colored, but once air is blown into the fur, four distinct bands of color will appear. ❖

More information about American Chinchilla rabbits can be found by contacting the following organizations:

The Livestock Conservancy, PO Box 477, Pittsboro, NC 27312, www.Livestock-Conservancy.org

American Chinchilla Rabbit Breeders Association, PO Box 505, Schofield, WI 54476, www.acrba.org

American Rabbit Breeders Association, Inc., PO Box 5667, Bloomington, IL 61702, www.arba.net

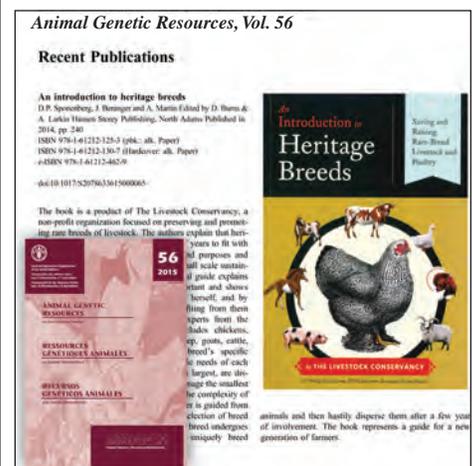
New Book from the Conservancy Receives International Recognition

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) journal *Animal Genetic Resources* recently published a full page promotion for The Livestock Conservancy's new book, *An Introduction to Heritage Breeds*, on page 155 of Volume 56, 2015, noting "This eloquent, inviting, visual guide explains why conserving heritage breeds is important and shows how one can raise such breeds him or herself, and by this helping to preserve them and benefiting from them at the same time."

Animal Genetic Resources is a specialized journal supporting the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources. Papers are published in English, French or Spanish, with a summary in all three languages) Two volumes are published per year.

The journal was launched and initially published by FAO and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) "with the aim of facilitating the spread of knowledge on animal genetic resources." Approximately 1700 institutions subscribe to Animal Genetic Resources and 3200 copies of the journal are printed and distributed to readers in 187 countries.

The journal archive can be accessed via the website of Cambridge University Press (paper by paper; abstracts free, full papers requiring subscription) or at www.fao.org/AG/AGInfo/programmes/en/genetics/journal.html.



Linear Measuring Points to Better Grass-fed Genetics

By Angela Lovell

This article originally appeared in June 2015 in Grainews (www.grainews.ca/).

As consumers continue to drive demand for grass-fed beef, some producers are rethinking their cattle genetics to select for animals that will be the most productive on forages.

Brian Harper has been using linear measuring as part of his beef genetic selection process since 2007, and has seen steady improvements in the quality of his grass-fed herd. Harper, who raises Lincoln Red and Shaver Beefblend cattle near Brandon, Manitoba, breeds only the top 10 per cent of his cows – determined through linear measuring – with his premier sire to maximize the best genetics.

Harper learned linear measuring from Gerlad Fry, an Arkansas cattleman who is an astute student of Dr. Jan Bonsma of Pretoria, South Africa. Bonsma, during many years of research as he developed the Bonsmara breed, evolved the linear measuring method, and Fry developed the software Harper uses. Bonsmara cattle are a cross of native South African and European cattle breeds which produce high-quality meat and thrive under drought and harsh conditions.

“You can’t improve your cow herd by just culling,” says Harper. “You need to select from the top, and that starts by using the bull with the most prepotent (showing greatest potential) paternal genetics you can find, and always breeding him with your best cows. It may take two or three generations to get what you need but I’ve seen definite improvements in the quality and efficiency of my herd over the past five years.”

Linear measuring is not about a gene pool, but rather a tool that enables the producer to identify structural weaknesses and strengths that are genetic, and thus heritable. Linear measuring shows how different body measurements correlate to indicators of potential fertility and produc-



Brian Harper demonstrates how a caliper is used to measure the width of a Lincoln Red’s rump – all part of the linear measure technique used to determine the potential of beef cattle to finish on grass. Photo by Angela Lovell.

tion efficiency. The process allows producers to select bulls and cows for breeding that have the highest levels of reproduction, the best ability to efficiently utilize grass, low maintenance requirements, and the ability to produce prime-quality meat.

At a recent workshop, Harper demonstrated to producers how he takes measurements of the rump, body length, neck, shoulders, and heart girth with specially designed calipers that he says any enterprising farmer could easily fabricate in his or her shop. Harper feeds the measurements into a computer program which ranks the cows or bulls according to the measurements, and from this ranking Harper picks animals with the most desirable genetics for his breeding program.

The ideal grass-fed cow

“The ideal cow that will perform well on grass should have rump width wider than the rump length,” says Harper. “As well, wide shoulders equal to the rump length, and a deep chest or large heart girth, which is larger than the total topline, will provide optimal grass utilization.” Harper says every extra inch of girth that is greater than the topline equates to 37 pounds more meat, and conversely, every inch of girth that is less than the total topline equals a deficit of 37 pounds of meat.

Harper also emphasizes the importance

of producing milk that is high in butterfat.

“The average beef cow today produces about eight ounces of butterfat a day, which is around four per cent of butterfat content in the milk. A calf receiving eight ounces a day will have an approximate average daily gain of about 1.6 lbs./day. We need our cows to produce 13 to 16 ounces of butterfat a day – or greater than six per cent butterfat content – to achieve an average daily gain of 2.25 to 2.5 lbs./day,” says Harper.

To develop efficient and productive genetics, Harper leaves his calves nursing their mothers for ten months, which allows the calf’s gut to develop so it can process forages more efficiently.

“The calf requires the high nutrition found in its mother’s butterfat for at least ten months to provide better efficiency and a low maintenance animal,” says Harper, noting it’s important once calves are weaned they receive high-quality forages.

A superior sire

An ideal bull will have a shoulder measurement wider than its rump length, says Harper. “A wide-shouldered bull produces more sperm cells and live semen, and his calves will be born on time and within five per cent of his own birth weight. His daughters will also have wider rumps, indicative of high fertility. The aim of these selection and breeding practices is to make

the male offspring of the bull genetically superior to their sire, so they can eventually replace him as the lead sires for the herd.”

Other indicators of forage efficiency

There are other indicators besides just linear measurements which can tell a lot about the health of a cow or bull, and their potential to produce healthy offspring that will also do well on forage, says Harper.

“The hair coat, hair patterns, and even coloration of the animal will tell you a lot about what is happening inside the animal’s body,” he says. “For example, a well-defined adrenal hair whirl that is located between or ahead of the shoulders, coupled with a slender, smooth, hourglass cannon bone and a loose, supple hide indicate tender, gourmet meat. Yellow flakes on the tail reveal an animal that is high in butterfat production, which is also associated with tender meat. As well, a dark line that runs the full length of the top of the animal’s back and a large thymus whirl show its glandular system is active. Animals showing these signs will not get sick and neither will their calves.”

Harper continues to improve the genetics of his herd by using linear measuring, and says the bar is constantly rising. “When I first started I wouldn’t use a bull that scored less than a three on the linear measuring ranking, but now I won’t use one scoring under 3.5, which shows how the breeding program is making progress,” he says. “I also use other management techniques, such as holistic management and high stock density to improve soil health and the mineral cycle of my pastures. I haven’t had to vaccinate my herd for five years because my cows are healthier. I am producing nutrient-dense beef that more health-conscious consumers are demanding, and improving profitability by making the best return from the grass that grows on my farm.”

Details on the linear measuring process

Brian Harper says linear measurement is about creating balance. Cattle that are not balanced display defects and generally are not productive or efficient in a forage-only environment. Here are more details on how linear measurements are taken, and recommendations for ideal measurements to maximize productivity on forages.

Cow measurements

- Rump length – measured from the rump to the hip. Should ideally be 38 to

40 per cent of body length.

- Rump width – should be a minimum of 2.5 inches wider than the rump length by 12 months of age to give higher fertility and fewer calving problems.
- Rump height – a frame score of four (around 48 inches) is recommended.
- Body length – a 2/3 measurement from a spot in between the shoulder blades to the rump. When the body is too long the loin becomes stretched and irregular and produces less meat.
- Neck length – from the body measurement point to the poll of the head. It should be half of the body length or one-third of the topline.
- Shoulder width – should be at least equal to rump length.
- Heart girth – should be equal to or greater than the topline for improved vigour, adaptability and forage efficiency. A narrow, pinched girth creates glandular dysfunction making the cow and its calves more susceptible to stress and disease.
- Flank – should be two to ten inches larger than the heart girth.

Bull measurement

Linear measurement recommendations for bulls are the same as for cows, with the exception of the following:

- Shoulder width – To be considered superior, a bull should be at least six to eight inches wider in the shoulder than the rump length, with a minimum allowance of 2.5 inches wider than the rump length.
- Rump width percentage – to determine the percentage, divide the rump width by the rump height. For the best sires the goal is to have a minimum rump width of 44 per cent, with 46 to 50 per cent of his rump height being ideal.
- Flank – should be equal to total topline.
- Heart girth – Should be two inches or greater than the topline for maximum meat production, adaptability, fertility and performance on grass.

For more information about linear measuring contact Brian Harper at 204-724-0936 or harper4@goinet.ca. ❖

Angela Lovell is a freelance writer based in Manitou, Manitoba. Visit her website at <http://alovell.ca> or follow her on Twitter @angelalovell10.

MEMBERS IN ACTION

Livestock Conservancy member Historic Schaefferstown, Inc. held their annual Cherry Fair on June 27, 2015 at the historic Alexander Schaeffer farm in Schaefferstown, Lebanon County, Pennsylvania.

Members of the Lebanon Valley Poultry Fanciers displayed 15 breeds of heritage poultry at the Cherry Fair:

- Rhode Island Red (single comb), Barred Holland, Dominique, Light Brown Leghorn (rose comb), Colored Dorking (rose comb), Old English Game, Mottled Java, Ancona (single comb), and Silver Laced Wyandotte chickens.
- Rouen, Black Cayuga, and Runner ducks.
- African, Gray Saddleback, and Pomeranian geese.
- Black turkeys.



Dana Lape, President of the Lebanon Valley Poultry Fanciers, standing by some of the birds displayed at the historic Alexander Schaeffer farm.

Heritage breeds + hoop house + hot grill = happiness!

By Caroline Abels, founder/editor of Humaneitarian.org

On June 28, 2015, more than 50 people gathered on a Burlington, Vermont farm to celebrate heritage-breed meat and the farmers who raise it. The idea was simple: encourage Vermonters to find sources of heritage breed meat by asking them to bring a raw cut or two to the event. There, a chef would prepare everyone's cuts on a grill, and we'd all feast on the meaty samples.

The cooking, however, was not a simple task – a few dozen cuts had to be perfectly prepared on the fly. Which is why we were fortunate to have the assistance of chef Luke Stone of The Hindquarter food truck. Luke – a master grillster – astonished everyone by cooking each cut to perfection and keeping track of the breed of each cut. As folks munched on potluck hors d'oeuvres, Luke began bringing out the cooked meats he had just prepared behind the farm's hoop house.

There was a lot of Tamworth pork and Devon beef. Highland beef was popular, too, as was Tunis lamb. One farm even brought Tamworth-black currant bone broth. The complex flavors of heritage meat came through in the finished products. And as we feasted, heritage breed farmers stood and talked about the rare breeds they raise and why heritage breed animals are important. Much applause ensued!

Slow Food Vermont and Humaneitarian organized the event because we believe there isn't enough awareness of heritage breed meat among today's foodies. We were eager to convey to people the superior taste of heritage breeds, as well as the fact that slower-growing breeds can be a key component of humane farming. We're not sure how many people we converted to heritage breed meat at our dinner, but we feel the participants will always have good memories of heritage breed meat, thanks to their experience at Half Pint Farm in Burlington's Intervale.

If you'd like to plan a similar event to raise people's awareness of heritage breed meat,

feel free to contact Slow Food Vermont or Humaneitarian. We'd be happy to answer specific questions about how such an event can be organized successfully. ❖



Left: Attendees enjoyed dinner under the cover of a hoop house. Above: Gloucestershire Old Spot ham steak on the cutting board. Photos by Caroline Abels.



King of Porc Crowned

Grand Cochon, the epic finale to a 10-city touring culinary competition, crowned its King of Porc at the Viceroy Snowmass during the week of the Food & Wine Classic in at Snowmass in Aspen, Colorado on June 20, 2015. The heritage pork event brought together the ten winning chefs of the regional competitions and ten pigs for a nose-to-tail culinary showdown to celebrate family farming. More than 30 dishes were served to the sold-out crowd of more than 600 pork-loving epicureans and 20 celebrity judges who voted for their favorite bites. Together they crowned Chef Thomas Boemer the King of Porc. Amongst his prizes, the winner walked away with a four-day wine experience in Rioja, Spain's most prominent wine region.

Chef Thomas Boemer is Executive Chef and co-owner of Corner Table and Revival Restaurants in Minneapolis. He was born in the Twin Cities, and raised in Lexington, North Carolina and Simpsonville, South Carolina. He has been nominated twice for People's Choice for Best



The newly crowned “King of Porc,” Chef Thomas Boemer of Corner Table, in Minneapolis, with Livestock Conservancy members Angela Johnson (Lucky George Farm) and Misty Langdon (Our Green Acre) after winning the Grand Cochon competition.

cantile dining & provision (Denver), Danny Lee of Mandu (Washington, D.C.), David Bazirgan of Dirty Habit (San Francisco), Lindsay Autry of Fin & Feather (Miami), Nicole Pederson of Found Kitchen (Chicago) and Grand Cochon winner Thomas Boemer of Corner Table (Minneapolis). The chefs prepared show-stopping dishes using whole heritage breed pigs but it was Chef Thomas’s plating that won the event with a heritage Large Black pig raised by the Johnson Family at Lucky George Farm in Iowa, a Livestock Conservancy member farm. This breed, rumored to be a species brought to England in the 1800s from China, is an exceptional breed known for overall hardiness, short muscle fibers, marbling, moist meat and Old World flavor. The

Chef Midwest by Food & Wine Magazine, also the 2014 Eater Minneapolis Best Chef and The Charlie Awards Emerging Food Professional.

This year’s tour winners and competing chefs included Francis Derby of The Cannibal (NYC), Mark Decker of Down House (Houston), Jody Adams of Rialto/TRADE (Boston), Matt Vawter of Mer-

mouthwatering texture and taste of this animal was used by Chef Thomas to create a winning menu of three delicious bites. Starting the journey for both judges and guests was Pate en Croute with Mostarda and Pork Gelee. The main course was a Smoked Pork Jowl with Hominy Grits and Pickled Watermelon Rind, and dessert was a Crackerjack’d Chicharron with Tasso and

Apple Lard Puff Pastry.

The heritage pork event also included the 30 dishes that won the chefs their regional competition and passage to Snowmass to compete at Grand Cochon, as well as many other tastings and demonstrations.

The Cochon U.S. Tour executes a variety of unique, local food events that are focused on raising enthusiasm for supporting family farms with the world’s first environmentally conscious nose-to-tail pig competition. Created in response to the lack of consumer education around heritage breed pigs, this epic pork feast visits 20 major cities in North America annually. The tour also features a multitude of live-event expressions including Heritage BBQ (global cultures), Heritage Fire (live-fire event), EPIC Cochon (hyper-premium), and Cochon Island (agri-tourism). The events feature top chefs preparing whole heritage breed pigs and other locally raised proteins. Together with winemakers, brewers, distillers and craft food makers they create authentic culinary events celebrating champions in the good food movement. Since its launch, the tour has supported responsible family farming by allowing 50,000 people to taste heritage pork for the first time and by donating more than \$450,000 to charities and culinary schools, and more than \$750,000 directly to farmers. For more details about the events, visit www.cochon555.com or follow @cochon555 on Twitter. ❖

Backyard Poultry Day

The Livestock Conservancy traveled to Arkansas recently to provide expert support for the Heritage Poultry Conservancy’s “Backyard Poultry Day.” The Heritage Poultry Conservancy was founded by heritage poultry conservationist, author, and television personality P. Allen Smith to preserve and support all threatened breeds and strains of domestic poultry through the encouragement of education, stewardship, and good breeding practices. Attendees learned from the experts about how to get a flock started, plus topics such as expanding your flock from eggs and heritage breed conservation.



Heritage Poultry Conservationist P. Allen Smith poses with The Livestock Conservancy’s Jeannette Beranger and a Light Sussex chicken at Backyard Poultry Day.

Board Elections

The Livestock Conservancy is governed by a Board of Directors. This Board sets policy and priorities for the organization. Directors are elected by the membership and serve three-year terms. These positions are of great importance – directors assume responsibility for leadership in the conservation of rare breeds of livestock and poultry in the United States. Below is a slate of candidates that have been nominated to stand for election to the Board of Directors. Nominations were received from the Board and general membership. Please help shape the direction of the organization by casting your vote.

Derek Emmerson, Ph.D.

Although he grew up in an urban environment, Derek was attracted to agriculture from an early age through the legacy of his grandfather who was an agronomist and plant geneticist with the USDA. He first became interested in animal genetics through hobby breeding of rabbits, birds and other small animals. Derek feels very fortunate that this early interest led to a career in genetics in animal agriculture.

Derek received his B.S. and M.S. degrees in Animal Science and Poultry Science from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and his Ph.D. degree in Poultry Science from The Ohio State University. He has worked in the poultry industry for over 20 years, primarily in the breeding sector. Derek has managed both chicken and turkey breeding programs and is currently VP of Research and Develop-



Derek Emmerson

ment for Aviagen Inc. In addition to his work developing commercial strains of chickens and turkeys, he has extensive experience maintaining research lines and developing breeds for specialty and niche markets.

Derek has recently started a project to develop a rare color variety of rabbit as a hobby. He is a member of the Poultry Science Association and a life member of the American Rabbit Breeders Association, and has recently been named as an Ambassador for the HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology. In his spare time, Derek plays the trumpet in a wind ensemble, sings in a choir, and enjoys landscape and vegetable gardening, including maintaining a collection of “family heirloom” plants.

Steve Kerns

The Kerns operation includes Kerns Farms Corp., a breeding stock operation supplying great-grandparent genetics to breeders domestically and internationally; Mangalitsa Estates, the second largest Mangalitsa herd in North America; Heirloom Swine Farms, a purebred Heritage Berkshire herd supplying genetics and market pigs to Heritage Pork International; and International Boar Semen, North America’s oldest artificial insemination center. They market their Mangalitsa Gourmet Pork on the internet to consumers and to white tablecloth restaurants around the country.

The Kerns produce Mangalitsa, Berkshire, Landrace, Large White, Duroc, and Musclor nucleus boars, gilts, and pigs for niche markets. Kerns’s 450 sows are kept



Steve Kerns

in open pen gestating after mating, with an additional 50 sows in a hoop structure. Ninety percent of the matings are AI. They have been in the swine business since 1966, when it started as a 4-H project. Nine employees assist in the operations, which include 80 acres of row crop, 75 acres of alfalfa hay, 100 acres of pasture for 45 Reg. Angus cows and approximately 200 boars in stud producing fresh and frozen semen for domestic and international markets. In recent years, heritage breeds of pigs such as Mangalitsa, Large Blacks, Red Waddle, Tamworth, Meishan, Gloucester Old Spots, and English Berkshires have been added to the stud. Breeding stock has been sold to 43 states and over 22 foreign countries.

Steve’s wife, Becky, maintains all of the financial records for the different operations, oversees the farrowing operations, and raises and sells Border Collies. Steve consults with swine producers from several foreign countries as well as producers in this country.

Steve has held numerous leadership positions in the Iowa Pork Producers Association, including a term as president in 2005. He’s attended IPPA international marketing trips and serves on various committees on the National Pork Board and National Pork Producers Council. In 2000, he and Becky were honored with the IPPA’s Master Seedstock Producer Award.

In addition to serving on the ISU animal science department’s external advisory board, he’s been a screening committee member for animal science faculty hires, and in 2009 was honored by the Iowa Pork Industry Center for his support as a member of the IPIC Advisory Board. Kerns also serves on an advisory research committee for the ISU College of Veterinary Medicine.

He was inducted into the Iowa State University Animal Science Hall of Fame April 25, 2010. “Steve Kerns has provided outstanding leadership for the livestock industry in Iowa and is a strong supporter of animal science programs at Iowa State,” said Maynard Hogberg, animal science department chair. “He has been an entrepreneur, an early adopter of technology and a leader in swine seedstock production. We greatly appreciate his support and contributions to Iowa State.”

Brian Larson

Brian comes from a family long connected with livestock breeding (sheep and cattle) and production. All his ancestors were sheepmen from Norway for many generations. His mother was the primary shepherd for the family's flock in Minnesota during his childhood and he made numerous trips to the lambing barn before he could walk. Brian purchased his first two breeding ewes at the age of nine and has continued ever since with purebred and commercial sheep. Brian's Lincoln Longwool flock has been in existence for 34 years, starting with three foundation ewes from Oregon. They have kept about 20 white-fleeced mature ewes and a supporting cast of rams and young stock. The Larsons have bred LAI to three rams for the past four years that he had collected in the United Kingdom to enhance the traditional Lincoln characteristics in the United States' genetic pool. Their emphasis has been promoting traditional Lincoln fleeces and the big volume Lincoln body type. They have promoted Lincolns at shows, exhibitions and fiber festivals and social media is becoming a larger part of their promotion efforts. Both Brian and his wife, Jennifer, are PhD nutritionists originally trained in ruminant nutrition. Both are currently working as consultants focusing on agriculture and nutrition (animal and human) with global agricultural, food/ingredient companies and non-governmental organizations. Brian is the recent past president of the National Lincoln Sheep Breeder's Association. He has been associ-



Brian Larson

ated with The Livestock Conservancy (and its several prior names) since the early 1990s.

Mark Williams

Combining a passion for two of the greatest pleasures in life, fine food and beverages, has been a recipe for success for Mark Williams, Executive Chef at Brown-Forman, one of the largest American-owned wine and spirit companies, based in Louisville, Kentucky.

Growing up in the South in a family whose background includes restaurateurs and cattle farmers, Mark began his formal culinary training with an American Culinary Federation apprenticeship at the Atlanta Athletic Club. During his apprenticeship, he also attended Georgia State University, receiving a Bachelor's degree in Hospitality Administration.

After completing his apprenticeship, Mark joined the Buckhead Life Restaurant Group in Atlanta as the chef at The Fish Market in Lenox Square, which received five Best of Atlanta awards while he was the chef.

An interest in exploring food and wine pairing led Mark to Napa Valley, California, where he became the sous chef at The School for American Chefs at Beringer Vineyards under award-winning cookbook author and PBS television series host Madeleine Kamman. After leaving Beringer, he became chef in residence at Sonoma-Cutrer Winery and also catered events for many Napa Valley clients. He also worked as a chef for film director George Lucas ("Star Wars") at the Sky-



Mark Williams

walker Ranch in Marin County.

Since coming to Brown-Forman as Executive Chef in 2001, Mark Williams has become perhaps as well known for his environmental and community work as he is for his cooking. His position with the company provides him opportunity to share his passion for educating others about positive actions that can be taken in order to build a more sustainable society based around our food choices.

Also a Slow Food regional governor for five southern states, he was the founder and leader of the Slow Food Bluegrass convivium, part of the Slow Food international movement to support sustainable local food and celebrate traditional regional cuisine. Through his work with the Slow Food Ark of Taste committee for the Southern region, he became very involved with preserving and promoting rare and endangered breeds, especially the Bourbon Red turkey in Kentucky. This work garnered him an invitation to demonstrate cooking rare breeds at a Livestock Conservancy annual conference.

He is a founding member of the Napa Valley Culinary Alliance, and is a current member of the International Association of Culinary Professionals and The Southern Foodways Alliance. He serves on the board of advisors for Partners for Family Farms and Sullivan University National Center for Hospitality. ❖

Ballot – VOTE Now!

All Livestock Conservancy members may vote for the Board of Directors, with one vote cast per membership. There are four candidates and four open seats on the Board. You may vote for as many as you wish. Photocopies and fax ballots are acceptable with a signature. Return ballots to The Livestock Conservancy-Board Elections, PO Box 477, Pittsboro, NC 27312 or fax your signed ballot to 919-542-0022. Ballots must be postmarked no later than November 5, 2015.

- Derek Emmerson
- Steve Kerns
- Brian Larson
- Mark Williams

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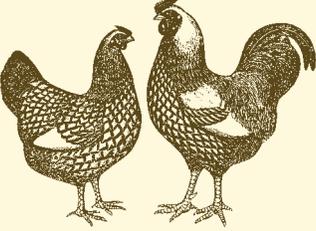
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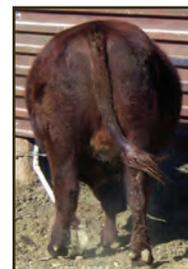
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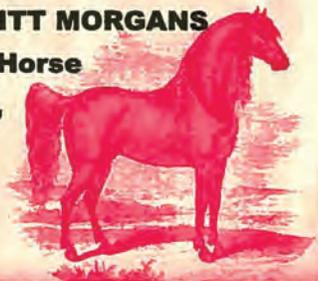
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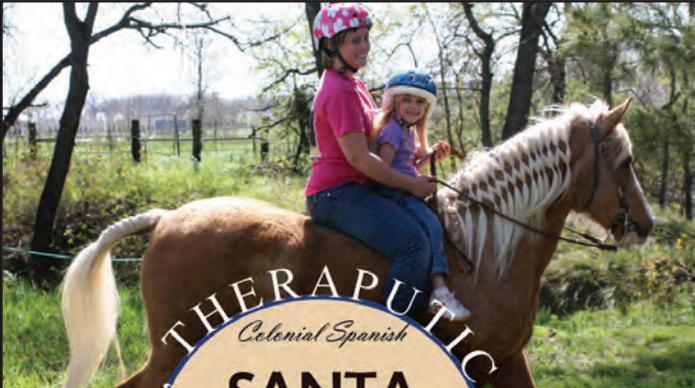


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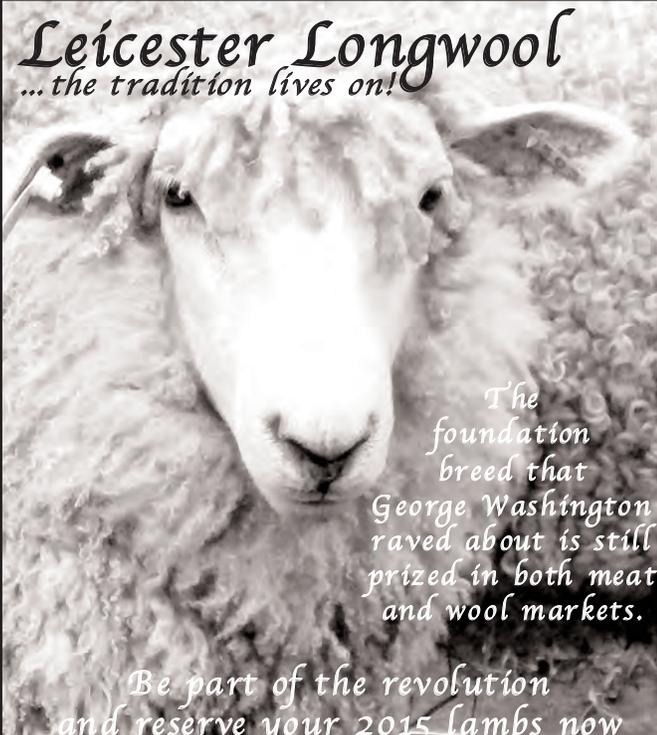
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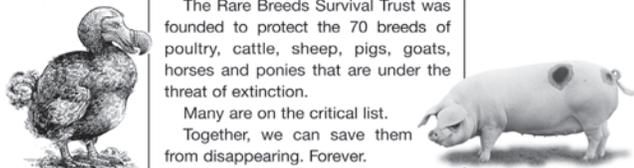


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DATED MATERIAL

CALENDAR

★★ 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.

October

October 20-21 – The Food for Tomorrow Conference, featuring *New York Times* journalists Mark Bittman, Paul Krugman, Sam Sifton, and Kim Severson, and presented in collaboration with Stone Barns Center for Food & Agriculture will be held in Pocantico Hills, NY. It brings together top food executives, food policy makers, farmers and chefs for discussions focusing on this year's topic: Toward an American Food Policy. Visit www.nyfoodfortomorrow.com/ for more information.

October 24 – Food Day will be held nationwide. Food Day inspires Americans to change their diets and our food policies. For more information, visit www.foodday.org.

★ **October 24-25 – The Mother Earth News Fair** will be held in Topeka, KS. 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.

October 29-November 1 – the 88th Annual National FFA Convention & Expo will be held in Louisville, KY. Visit www.ffa.org/events/conventionandexpo for more information.

November

★★ **November 6-7 – The Livestock Conservancy National Conference & Gala**, “*The Age of Flavor*,” will be held in Santa Rosa, CA at the Flamingo Conference Resort. Enjoy heritage breed meals as you network with other attendees and talk one-on-one with experts in livestock and sustainable agriculture. Stay after the conference to attend the Savor the Age of Flavor Gala, benefitting The Livestock Conservancy. For more information, visit LivestockConservancy.org, email info@livestockconservancy.org, or call (919) 542-5704.

November 6-8 – Carolina Farm Stewardship Association's Sustainable Agriculture Conference will be held in Durham, NC. Visit www.carolinafarmstewards.org or call 919-542-2402 for more information.

December

December 31 – DEADLINE to update information and submit ads for The Livestock Conservancy's *2016 Breeders and Products Directory*. If needed, log in to update your information online or complete the update form that will come with the next newsletter issue. Email Ryan Walker at rwalker@LivestockConservancy.org or call 919-542-5704 for more information on advertising in the directory.

January

January 8-9 – The Minnesota Organic Conference will be held in St. Cloud, MN. Activities include dozens of practical workshops, a large trade show, organic meals, and networking opportunities. Visit www.mda.state.mn.us/organic, email jessica.miles@state.mn.us, or call 651-201-6012 for more information.

January 9-24 – The National Western Stock Show will be held in Denver, CO. This event features more than 15,000 head of horses, cattle, sheep, swine, goats, llamas, alpacas, bison, yak, poultry and rabbits each year. Visit www.nationalwestern.com for more information.

January 15-February 6 – The 120th Annual Southwestern Exposition and Livestock Show will be held in Fort Worth, TX. The event features world-class 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 more information.

January 21-23 – The Northern Plains Sustainable Ag Winter Conference will be held in Aberdeen, SD. Visit www.npsas.org or call (701) 883-4304 for more information.

January 30-31 – The National Meet of the American Poultry Association hosted by the Pacific Poultry Breeders Association will be held in Modesto CA. Contacts: Bridget Riddle 406-253-7944 or email chopped50@hotmail.com for more information.