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Conserving rare breeds since 1977

THE LIVESTOCK CONSERVANCY™ NEWS

Know Your Egg Shed

By Patricia Foreman

I first heard of the term “egg shed” while chatting with Karl Hammer, owner of the Vermont Compost Company (VCC). We were standing on a hillside overlooking mountains of compost. These compost piles were made from food residues collected from about 49 institutions including schools, restaurants, company cafeterias, and any other organization or business that produced enough food scraps to merit collecting. Vermont has a zero-waste policy, so instead of calling food leftovers “waste”, they call the biomass “residuals.”

What is unique about the Vermont Compost Company is that they employ about 1,200 free-range chickens to help create their organic compost and potting soils. The chickens turn and aerate the fermenting piles, while keeping the insect and rodent populations down. The chickens glean food scraps off the road and other places, keeping the operations tidy. They also grace the piles with their manure and feathers, adding valuable nitrogen. The fermenting compost piles had none of the putrid, garbage-like smells that landfills do. They smelled mostly of dark, chocolate colored, musky humus in the making.

The VCC’s 1,200 chickens work every day – and not even for chicken feed! They get all their food completely off the compost piles. The chickens’ combined efforts are equal to the work of about four tons of heavy equipment – but they work fuel-free, 365 days a year, rain, snow, or shine, without any other inputs.

Karl explained to me that his “clucking composters” lay, on average, about 1,000 dozen eggs a month (144,000 organic



The Vermont Compost Company employs about 1,200 free range chickens to help create their organic compost and potting soils. Photo by Matt Wondra.

eggs/year). Karl went on to explain that these eggs helped fulfill the “egg shed” for Montpelier, the state capital of Vermont. The Vermont Compost Company could not be better located for their urban egg shed. The VCC’s address is 1996 Main Street in Montpelier.

Since that conversation, I have been considering how the possibilities of communities becoming protein self-sufficient by developing local egg sheds could be a huge benefit in navigating these transition times. First, how to define an egg shed? Let’s look at the definition of watershed to give the egg shed concept more shape. A watershed is defined by the Environmental Protection Agency as “The area of land where all of the water that is under it, or drains off of it, goes into the same place.”

Based on the definition of a watershed, an egg shed could be defined as “The eggs produced within a certain distance that go

into a specific place.” That place could be your kitchen.

The concept of egg sheds becomes real once we can calculate the average number of eggs humans eat within a specific area, and how many hens are needed to produce those eggs. Let’s refine our definition of egg sheds as:

“An egg shed is the number of eggs a person, household, group, or community, consumes that are produced within a specific distance, within a period of time – usually a year.”

How to Calculate Your Egg Shed

Having a definition of egg sheds, we can establish a formula to make it practical. The US Poultry and Egg Association estimates that the average per capita egg consumption in 2012 was 249 eggs/person. For our egg shed formula, let’s round that average up to 250 eggs/person.

continued on page 6

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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.

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D. Phillip Sponenberg, DVM, PhD, Technical Advisor



Feature Your Breed at the Livestock Conservancy Conference!

Among the most memorable highlights for attendees of the national conference are the Friday night kick-off banquet and Saturday Networking Breakfast featuring heritage breed meats and products. Providing products for these events is a terrific way to showcase your favorite breed among the diverse group of foodies, farmers, scientists, and others who attend the conference. These meals offer a perfect opportunity for attendees to learn more about rare breeds through sampling their products.

The Livestock Conservancy is once again offering rare breed meat and product contributors the opportunity to send business cards and flyers that can be shared with attendees during the meals. Your name and contact information will also be included in the conference packets that all attendees receive at check-in. If you would like to contribute

to the Conservancy's conference success and promote your farm or ranch through a product donation, please contact Angelique Thompson at athompson@livestockconservancy.org or (919) 542-5704. We look forward to hearing from you!



Here are some easy ways to raise money for The Livestock Conservancy! Just start using Yahoo! powered Goodsearch.com as your search engine and they'll donate about a penny to us every time you do a search! Just choose The Livestock Conservancy as your charity to support. In addition, do all of your shopping through their online shopping mall, Goodshop.com, where you can shop at more than 2,600 top online retailers, and a percentage of your purchases will go to The Livestock Conservancy. You pay the same price as you normally would, but a donation goes to us! If you also enroll in the Gooddining program, when you eat at over 10,000 participating restaurants nationwide, you can earn up to 6% of every dollar spent on the meal can as a donation to The Livestock Conservancy. Just sign up at www.goodsearch.com and link your credit or debit cards if you would like to participate in the shopping or dining program. Each time you pay for your purchase, The Livestock Conservancy gets a small donation!



Recycle Your Newsletters

We recently received a nice suggestion from Life Member Ann Staples of Huntsville, Texas: After you are finished reading issues of The Livestock Conservancy's newsletter, consider passing it along to your local university or college agriculture department, extension office, or high school agriculture department to help introduce more agriculturalists to heritage breed conservation. If you are raising, have raised, or plan to raise heritage breeds, take the opportunity to explain your enterprise, too. Thanks for the great suggestion, Ann!

FROM THE DIRECTOR



By Eric Hallman

In this newsletter issue, I have good news and bad news. The Livestock Conservancy has a great track record when it comes to saving heritage breeds. We've never lost a breed listed on our *Conservation Priority List*. Sadly, however, we can't save the farmers and ranchers who are responsible for this success.

With the median age of farmers in the US now at fifty-six years old, a large number of experienced breeders are retiring or dispersing their herds. These "master breeders" are becoming as endangered as our heritage breeds. This summer, we lost another true champion of heritage breeds, Debbie Hamilton. We celebrated her contributions in the last newsletter.

The insights and experience our master breeders accumulate are irreplaceable. The Livestock Conservancy has made it a priority to capture this knowledge to ensure that the "art" they have worked so many years to perfect continues in perpetuity.

Our newest book, *An Introduction to Heritage Breeds*, is part of the Conservancy's effort to pass along the "art of breeding" heritage animals. The authors, D. Phillip Sponenberg, Alison Martin, and Jeannette Beranger, combine technical information with the recorded knowledge and insight that only comes from years of on-the-farm experience. It is another way in which we preserve and share the knowledge of master breeders with the next generation of heritage breeders.

Although the Conservancy can capture and pass along much of this knowledge to new generations, it cannot maintain

all of the animals that make up the herds and flocks of master breeders. If you raise heritage breeds, remember that your farm's contingency plan is as important to a breed's long-term survival as maintaining a breeding program is.

Take a minute and think about what you will leave the next generation of farmers. After years of contributing to the survival of heritage breeds, how will you perpetuate this important work when you are gone? The Livestock Conservancy offers a way to ensure your legacy through our Planned Giving Program.

Consider one or more of the following ways you can leave a legacy and keep alive your work with heritage breeds.

1. Cash Gifts. This is a donation of a specific amount made from your estate. It may allow your heirs to reduce the taxes on your estate. (As with this and the suggestions below, please seek professional guidance.)

2. Stock Gifts. This type of donation offers you an excellent opportunity for a tax deduction. The transfer of appreciated stocks may enable you to avoid the capital gains taxes you might incur if you sold the stocks. Please contact us for more information.

3. Life Insurance. If you have a life insurance policy, you can name The Livestock Conservancy as the beneficiary or co-beneficiary of your policy. Your insurance agent can help you with the paperwork.

4. Retirement Accounts. Like a life insurance policy, The Livestock Conservancy can be named as the beneficiary or co-beneficiary of your account. Heirs other than a spouse pay significant income taxes on inherited retirement accounts. Making a gift to The Livestock Conservancy from your retirement accounts can help limit these taxes. To get started, request a "change of beneficiary form" from your retirement account administrator.

5. Gifts of Real Estate or Personal Property. You can deed your home(s), undeveloped property, or a commercial building to the Livestock Conservancy. Valuable items such as automobiles, antiques, artwork, jewelry, and other treasures in your estate plan can also be bequeathed to a worthy charity like The Livestock Conservancy.

6. Charitable Remainder Trusts and Charitable Gift Annuities. A charitable remainder trust or a charitable gift annuity is an arrangement in which a donor's

assets provide a regular income stream to the donor until that income is no longer needed. The assets of the trust or annuity are then passed on to a charity like The Livestock Conservancy.

7. Charitable Lead Trusts. A charitable lead trust is designed to reduce the beneficiaries' taxable income by first donating a portion of the trust's income to a charity like The Livestock Conservancy. After a specified period of time, the remainder of the trust goes to the beneficiaries. The concept is to reduce taxes upon the estate left by the deceased by donating to charities from the estate until the taxes are reduced. Once that is accomplished the estate is then transferred back to the beneficiaries.

8. Memorial Gifts. By designating the Livestock Conservancy as the beneficiary of memorial gifts in your name, your friends and family can make donations to honor your commitment to rare breed conservation.

You don't have to have a large estate to pay it forward. Even a small bequest to The Livestock Conservancy makes a difference. As you consider your legacy, consider a gift to the next generation through the Livestock Conservancy's Planned Giving Program.

It is important to schedule a meeting with your attorney and add the correct legal language when updating your will. If you wish to name The Livestock Conservancy in your will or estate plan, we should be named as: The Livestock Conservancy, Inc., Tax ID #03-0270281, a nonprofit corporation established under the laws of the State of Vermont, with principal business address of 33 Hillsboro Street, Pittsboro, North Carolina, 27312.

If you have any questions about Planned Giving to The Livestock Conservancy, I invite you to email me at ehallman@livestockconservancy.org, give me a call at (919) 542-5704, or write to me at The Livestock Conservancy, Attn: Eric Hallman, PO Box 477, Pittsboro, NC 27312. Here's wishing you a healthy and happy life, and the comfort of knowing your work will continue with the next generation. ❖

Know Your Egg Shed

Continued from page 1

The American Egg Board estimates the average commercial laying hen produces about 265 eggs/year. Heritage laying hens lay fewer eggs from about 200 to 250 eggs depending on the breed. For our egg shed formula, we'll assume an average hen lays 250 eggs/year.

That works out nicely so that 1 laying hen will produce enough eggs for 1 person each year.

Now let's calculate how many eggs an egg shed requires. Let's use a population of 30,000. How many eggs would a population of 30,000 consume each year? Here is the formula:

Egg shed = (population)(250 eggs laid per hen per year) = total number of eggs consumed/year.

Just plug in the numbers:

Egg shed = (30,000 population)(Each person consuming an average of 250 eggs/year) = 7,500,000 eggs.

Yolks! Seven and a half million eggs for 30,000 people! That seems like a lot to produce! But let's run the model again with different flock sizes.

What if just 10% of the population kept 10 hens in family flocks. For our population of 30,000, 10% would be 3,000 family flocks.

Egg Shed = (3,000 family flocks)(10 hens each flock)(producing 250 eggs/year) = 7,500,000 eggs. That meets the egg shed!

What if backyard chickens are not legal in your community? Then you could support local farmers.

If 1% of the population – 300 farmers – kept 100 hens each laying 250 eggs/year, they would yield 7,500,000 eggs = the egg shed.

If 0.5% of the population – 150 farmers – kept 200 hens, each laying 250 eggs/year, they would yield 7,500,000 eggs = the egg shed.

If 0.2% of the population – 60 farmers – kept 500 hens, each laying 250 eggs/year they would yield 7,500,000 eggs = the egg shed.

Of course, in green, chicken-friendly, local food-supportive, low-carbon-footprint communities, there are backyard

Uncle Sam Expects You To Keep Hens and Raise Chickens



Two Hens in the Back Yard for Each Person in the House Will Keep a Family In Fresh Eggs

EVEN the smallest back yard has room for a flock large enough to supply the house with eggs. The cost of maintaining such a flock is small. Table and kitchen waste provide much of the feed for the hens. They require little attention—only a few minutes a day.

An interested child, old enough to take a little responsibility, can care for a few fowls as well as a grown person.

Every back yard in the United States should contribute its share to a bumper crop of poultry and eggs in 1918.

**In Time of Peace a Profitable Recreation
In Time of War a Patriotic Duty**

For information about methods of Back-Yard Poultry Keeping suited to your location and conditions, write

Your State Agricultural College

or

The United States Department of Agriculture

Washington, D. C.

This Space Donated by the Publisher

A USDA poster from 1918 encourages “every back yard in the United States” to contain chickens as they require only a few minutes a day attention, while providing food for the family.

flocks and small family farms producing eggs.

The take-away message is that egg shed needs for a family, or a community are relatively easy to meet. In the next newsletter issue, we'll explore how egg production in family flocks compares with factory farm production. May the flock be with you!❖

Patricia Foreman has degrees in Pharmacy and Agriculture from Purdue University and a Masters of Public Affairs from Indiana University. She has kept

poultry for over 20 years, including owning and operating a small-scale farm with free range, organic layers, broilers, and turkeys. She is an avid sustainable agriculture and heritage breed advocate. Pat is the co-author of several books including Chicken Tractor, Day Range Poultry, Backyard Market Gardening, A Tiny Home to Call Your Own, and City Chicks and is the Founding President of the Gosamer Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to global sustainability and local foods.

New Findings on the Gait of Akhal-Teke Horses

By Dr. Molly Nicodemus, Mississippi State University & Jeannette Beranger, The Livestock Conservancy

As an ongoing part of a collaborative study on the gaits of rare breed horses, Dr. Molly Nicodemus, of Mississippi State University's Gaited Locomotive Research Program, and Jeannette Beranger, of The Livestock Conservancy, have been working together to collect and analyze video clips of the endangered breeds of horses on The Conservancy's *Conservation Priority List* (CPL.) The most recent findings in this effort are on the Akhal-Teke breed, which is currently listed as "Threatened" on the CPL. Breeds previously studied have been the Marsh Tacky, Wilbur-Cruce, and Banker horses. Studies of the gaits of the Irish Draught and the Choctaw are currently under way.

The Akhal-Teke study was conducted with the help of long time Akhal-Teke owner/breeder, Phil Case, and two of his trainers, Sabine Desper and Liz Morgan. Phil and his wife Margot were the first to bring this unique breed of horse to America in the 1979. Sadly Margot has since passed but Phil still maintains a large herd of these horses on their farm in rural Virginia. For the study, Sabine and Liz rode a number of Phil's horses in the training ring while Jeannette took video and photographs of each horse as they were put through their different gaits of walk, trot, and canter. Individual and physical information on each horse was recorded and then sent along with the film footage to the university for study.

Dr. Nicodemus found that while the physical characteristics are what the breed is typically known for, the movement of the North American Akhal-Teke horse is noteworthy, having what is referred to as a smooth, elastic stride. Gait analysis, previously not performed on this breed, offers researchers an opportunity to understand what allows for a breed to perform its distinctive gait. A recent study performed at Mississippi State University analyzed video supplied by The Livestock Conservancy of North American Akhal-Teke horses performing the trot. The study reported that rather than using the two-beat rhythm of the typical trot, this breed steps down individually with each hoof, alternating between periods of a single limb



Sabine Desper on Akhal-Teke "Kurina" owned by Phil Case.

supporting the body to two limbs, the diagonal limbs, supporting the body. While the gait has a diagonal footfall sequence (left hind-right fore-right hind-left fore) similar to the basic trot, by disassociating the diagonal pairs the gait loses a period of suspension, thus making the gait less concussive. Similar gait characteristics are seen in other breeds, but the velocity of the gait performed by these other breeds is slower than that of the Akhal-Teke horse. In most breeds with an increase in velocity, suspension will appear as the diagonal limbs move as pairs, and thus, a faster velocity performed by the Akhal-Teke horse may allow the breed to perform a two-beat, leaping trot. Nevertheless, the preference of the Akhal-Teke horse to perform this adapted trot allows the rider to sit more comfortably, which, in turn, relieves some of the concussion the horse may feel if the rider were bouncing due to a more jarring, leaping gait. Although the suspension allows for a more efficient gait, for the Akhal-Teke horse, due to their very distinctive longer back, which is typically undesirable for most breeds, this gait may also allow the horses to remain sounder across the back as they age. Additional research concerning conformation and gait in the Akhal-Teke Horse is further needed

to test this hypothesis.❖

The study's findings were recently published in the Journal of Animal Science, volume 92.

Welcome to Our Newest Life Members!

The Livestock Conservancy would like to give a special thanks to these members 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.

Mary Ellen Nicholas
Boyce, VA

Lou & Kelly Gonda
Thousand Oaks, CA

Metzer Farms
Gonzales, CA

Colcha Embroidery: A Hispanic Connection to Navajo-Churro Sheep

By Don Bixby

The rescue of the Navajo-Churro sheep breed has been an important conservation success. The Livestock Conservancy has had a critical role in recovering this breed and returning it to agricultural productivity. The historic emphasis generally has been on the role of Navajo-Churro sheep as the center of a herding and weaving Native American culture. In addition, this breed and its wool have been central to the restoration of Native weaving as an art form.

Less well recognized is the role of the Navajo-Churro breed in early Spanish settlement of the Southwest and a purely Spanish Colonial art form. In the 1500s, priests, explorers, and settlers brought the sheep and other Iberian stock to what was then New Spain or Mexico, a colony of Spain. The churros were the peasant sheep of Spain and their rusticity allowed them to become well adapted to the climate they encountered in what is now the arid Southwest of the United States.

The Camino Real, or Royal Road, stretched over 1000 miles from Mexico City to Santa Fe, a long journey for importing goods for the colonists. As a result colonists learned to utilize local resources in novel ways to enrich their lives on the frontier. One of these adaptations is colcha embroidery. I first learned about col-

cha embroidery a few years ago in a handsome exhibit at the Albuquerque Museum of Art and History and also at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque.

The following year I was involved with the Albuquerque BioPark Fiber Festival and met a group of creative “Colchitas” who were plying their craft as part of a demonstration. Colcha embroidery is like crewel but is done on a background of churro wool, preferably hand spun and woven. The designs are worked in brightly colored yarns dyed with vegetable dyes to produce bed hangings and coverlets, draperies, table covers, wall hangings, and beautiful articles of clothing.

According to the website www.spanish-colonialblog.org/traditional-arts/colcha/:

“The Spanish word *colcha* means coverlet, but New Mexicans typically call any bed covering a colcha. Textile enthusiasts use the word colcha to identify an embroidery stitch or a finished piece of embroidery in which the colcha stitch is extensively, if not exclusively, employed. *Sabanilla labrada*, or wool-on-wool colcha embroidery work, is distinct because it may be one of the few textiles developed and made in New Mexico during the Spanish Colonial period. The colcha stitch is similar to the *stitch*, an embroidery stitch used by Jewish women making fine silk altar cloths, and to the *bokhara* stitch, an

embroidery stitch used in Turkey prior to the Muslim conquest. The colcha stitch is described as a long stitch in wool yarn, caught in the middle by a short, horizontal (or diagonal) stitch. The needle is pushed through from the underside of the fabric, passed across the top of the design, and pulled back to the underside, leaving a long straight line. Then the needle is brought to the middle of the stitch and passed over it at right angles in a short “step-over” (tie-down stitch) to hold the long stitch flat. Sometimes more than one “step-over” is used to fasten very long stitches.

“There are many theories as to how colcha embroidery evolved. The colonists may have been inspired by the flowers and leaves they saw on East Indian chintz, or *indianilla*. Such was the case in Spain, the floral designs of almost any Spanish spread can be traced to the printed Indian cotton hangings that came into the country in the late 17th century. Also it is possible that the Oriental silk shawls imported to isolated outposts of Spain’s new kingdom inspired the settlers to imitate the pretty floral shapes using available, albeit coarser, materials. Many of the designs used in New Mexican colchas, including the double-headed Hapsburg eagle, are found in Spanish and Mexican embroideries.” ❖

Don Bixby is a former director of what is now The Livestock Conservancy and divides his time between the Eastern Continental Divide in Blacksburg, Virginia and in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He can be reached at debixby@verizon.net.



Colcha embroidery is used in bed hangings and coverlets, draperies, table covers, wall hangings, and beautiful articles of clothing. Photos by Don Bixby.

Can Crossbreeding Save Rare Breeds?

By D.P. Sponenberg

Crossbreeding is the reason many breeds have become extinct. The usual sequence is that a local or rare breed is mated to a commercial production breed, the resulting offspring are excellent, and the owners of the local breed then progressively replace the local breed by further crosses to the introduced breed. Unfortunately the subsequent generations are usually inferior to the first cross, but by the time this is discovered the well-adapted purebred local resource is long gone.

In light of this, does crossbreeding have any role in breed conservation?

Strategic crossbreeding can indeed provide rare breeds with a secure production niche. In fact, many rare breeds were developed specifically for their role in crossbreeding. Breeds used for producing crossbreeding sires have usually been rare, because relatively few males can provide sufficient numbers for the crossbreeding role of the breed. Examples of breeds that have been used almost exclusively for crossbreeding include American Mammoth Jacks (used for mule production—the ultimate crossbred!), and the Finnsheep (at least in the USA). Without a role in crossbreeding, these two breeds would be much more rare than they are!

Other breeds can sometimes benefit from strategic crossbreeding to take advantage of the adaptation and other unique traits of the rare breed, along with hybrid vigor and the complementary traits of a more mainstream commercial breed used for crossbreeding. Some very productive systems can be developed that assure purebreeding as well as taking advantage of crossbreeding success.

Decades ago my college roommate and I had a herd of Texas Longhorn cattle. These were run on his ranch, bordering the Guadalupe River near Victoria, Texas. The land could support 100 commercial Hereford-Brahma crossbred cows, or 120 Texas Longhorn cows. Commercial cows would calve at 12-month intervals, Texas Longhorns at 10.5- or 11-month intervals. Unfortunately, the market discounted



The American Mammoth Jack is an example of breeds that have been used almost exclusively for crossbreeding. Photo by Jeannette Beranger.

the purebred Texas Longhorn calves, so a strategy was needed to take advantage of the adaptation and efficiency of the Texas Longhorn cows while at the same time outsmarting the buyers at the local stockyard.

The solution was to mate part of the cow herd pure (and in fact, this was the herd that sparked the development of the conservation breeding protocols that The Livestock Conservancy still uses). The other part was mated to an Angus bull.

This cross grew well, the Angus took the horns off, took most of the white off, and crossbred and purebred calves could very easily be distinguished so that no misidentification was possible. Fine-tuning the system involved mating heifers to Texas Longhorn bulls (for calving ease), then switching to Angus bulls for several calves while noting which cows excelled at calf production. Those top-end cows could then be mated to Texas Longhorn bulls, assuring that the best of the herd was the source of the purebred replacements.

This system took advantage of crossbreeding for commercial production, but in addition allowed the crossbreeding to identify the animals most important to mate for purebred replacement stock.

Other potential systems abound. For example, Cabbage Hill Farm crosses Large Black hogs with Berkshires, but also mates the Large Blacks pure so that replacements can be raised. Heritage chicken breeds can take advantage of the hybrid vigor associated with first crosses of Cornish or Asiatic breeds with European breeds (in this case both sides of the crossbred are rare—commercial broiler stocks would not work very well due to inability to mate naturally).

As long as sufficient purebred replacement is taking place, well-planned crossbreeding is no threat to rare breed conservation. The trick is to make sure that the top end of the pure rare breed is providing purebreds for the next generation. ❖



Cabbage Hill Farm crosses Large Black hogs with Berkshires, but also mates the Large Blacks pure so that replacements can be raised. Photo courtesy of Cabbage Hill Farm, Mt. Kisco, NY.



Conference Sneak Peek!

**** MORE conference workshops for 2014! ****

****Conference starts Friday afternoon November 14 at 1:00 PM ****

****Pre-Conference Clinics Friday morning November 14 ****

Friday Kick-off Banquet Keynote Speaker: Dr. Cary Fowler

Dr. Cary Fowler is a former Board Chairman of the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy. His guidance was instrumental in the 1985 move of the organization from New England into formal quarters in Pittsboro, North Carolina. Dr. Fowler has been Executive Director of the Global Crop Diversity Trust as well as Professor and Director of Research in the Department for International Environment & Development Studies at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences. He also served as a Senior Advisor to the Director General of Biodiversity International. In this latter role, he represented the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) in negotiations on the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and has presented a TED talk on loss in agricultural biodiversity.

Workshops (Nov. 14-15)

- Saving Local Landraces
- Conservation of Choctaw Horses and Pigs: One Man's Mission to Preserve his Heritage
- Diversity in Colonial Spanish Horses
- Business vs. Hobby Farm: Small Farm Taxation
- Scrapie Research and Enforcement: Unintended Consequences for Conservation Sheep Breeds
- Pickin' Chickens: How to Choose the Right Breed for You
- Urban Permaculture Food Production: Cultivating a Return to Sustainability

- Heirloom Plants for Heritage Breeds
 - A Bit of Country in the City: The History of Urban Agriculture
 - Goats in a Diversified Homestead
 - Fiber Production and Marketing
 - Producers and Processors Working Together
 - Building a Multispecies Abattoir (Slaughterhouse)
 - Silvopasturing with Pigs
 - Agritourism
 - Record Keeping
 - Marketing
 - Processing
 - Ducks
- And more!

Pre-Conference Clinics (Nov. 14)

- Texas Longhorns: Selecting Your Best – How to Choose Breeding Cattle in Your Herd ****ON FARM**** (\$95.00/person)
- Value-Added Products with Heritage Livestock (\$65.00/person)
- Carcass Fabrication: Jesse Griffiths of Dai Due Butcher Shop in Austin will cover the butchery of a hog from head to tail (\$95.00/person)
- Grazing Management and Forages ****ON FARM**** (\$95.00/person)
- Breed Registries and Associations (\$30.00/person)

2014 Exhibitor Opportunities

Includes covered and skirted table, electricity, wi-fi, and one conference registration (\$195 value). Space is limited, so please submit your application and payment by October 10, 2014. Price: \$225.00

Registration

Online registration is now open! Full workshop descriptions can be found at www.livestockconservancy.org. More information and paper registration form to follow soon!

Conference Price: \$195/person for Livestock Conservancy members, \$240.00 for nonmembers. Includes workshops, Kick-off Banquet, Saturday networking breakfast and lunch, plenary sessions, panels. Pre-conference Clinics have separate registration fees.

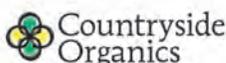
Friday Night Kick-off Banquet only: \$50.00/person

Accommodations

The Livestock Conservancy has secured a special discounted rate of \$129 (normally \$159) at the conference hotel, Austin Marriott South, for attendees who book before October 31, 2014. The Friday night Kick-off Banquet, Saturday networking breakfast and lunch will be held at the host hotel.

The hotel is centrally located between downtown and Austin Bergstrom International Airport. Take advantage of complimentary parking, then take the complimentary evening shuttle to explore downtown, where you can marvel at the State Capitol, explore the music scene of 6th Street, and much more! Book early to ensure you get a room, as rooms often fill up quick. The special reservation link can be accessed through www.livestockconservancy.org or call toll-free 1-888-236-2427.

SPONSORS



Small Farm Marketeering

By Ryan Walker

The word marketing is often seen as a dirty word. After all, one of the greatest perks of DVR is that you get to skip through the commercials, right? Pop-up blockers were invented almost instantly after pop-up ads were and nearly everyone has turned the radio dial after hearing the yelling car salesman tell us how life-changing and earth-shaking their weekend sale will be.

But marketing is much more than creating the most annoying ad possible in order to trick people into hearing what you have to say. Marketing is an integrated, multifaceted process that should be at the top of anyone's mind who is trying to sell anything. Whether you're selling breeding stock, meat, milk, eggs, fiber, or encyclopedias, reaching your full potential for success will be extremely difficult to achieve without a marketing strategy.

My job for the Conservancy revolves around marketing; therefore most people in my profession would refer to me as a marketer. I personally prefer the term marketeer, and I hope you too will for yourself. In my opinion, marketeer adds a little flare to the often ho-hum idea of



Good Shepherd Poultry Ranch uses the term "Heritage Chicken" prominently in their packaging.

marketing. Think "livestock marketer extraordinaire." Heritage breeds are inherently unique animals. They have extraordinary colors, vigor, fertility, adaptations, horns, toes, wattles, and personalities that mainstream breeds lack. They are (sometimes literally) the black sheep in a sea of others, and we as stewards should embrace these differences through our marketing. I hope the following strategies will help you set yourself and your products apart from

others and claim the attention you so rightfully deserve.

Curb Appeal

I'm not suggesting you to go mow your overgrown ditch and paint your front gate (although that could help if you do on-farm sales). I'm referring to how people see your product as they "drive by," wherever that may be. If they drive their shopping cart by in a store, what does your product packaging look like? If they drive themselves by at the farmer's market, how does your booth look? If they drive by online, does your website look like it was designed in 1996? Or was your website actually designed in 1996? Wherever potential customers will see your product, do your best to ensure it is presented to them as enticingly as possible. If you have a website, add lots of great pictures to it. If you just have a Facebook page, upload your pictures there and do it regularly. Online presence is an area where heritage breed producers have an edge because the animals, and the way they are raised are eye-candy to consumers. If you aren't great at using a computer, the neighbor's kid probably is and should be able to give you a crash course.

When evaluating your product packaging, remember that most consumers are used to buying products that come from large companies with fancy branding, logos, and designs. Don't feel pressured to create the same type of packaging on a small-scale, but do remember to make yours consistent. If customers see consistent packaging, they assume your product quality will also be consistent and will have more confidence when buying from you. Also, if you have control over the space where your product is sold, keep it tidy and welcoming. I once visited a booth at a farmers market that had a large trash can sitting right in front of the table, blocking people from seeing what the farmers had to offer. While many people came to throw away trash here, most never actually entered the booth area, they just kept on walking. Frying up some small samples can draw people in from way across the market, plus it gives you an opportunity to educate customers on how to correctly cook your products.

Talk the Talk

Raising amazing animals and producing stellar products means nothing if

continued on next page



An attractive entrance can add curb appeal by turning a property from an open pasture into a destination. Photo by Linda Pinkul.

Small Farm Marketeering

Continued from previous page

nobody knows you exist. While it is easy for large companies to throw money at an advertising agency for TV commercials, radio spots, billboards, and online ads, small producers often rely on diversified, creative ways to advertise their products. One of the perks of being a Livestock Conservancy member is being able to post free ads in the online classifieds. The Conservancy's classifieds receive over 40,000 views per year, and individual ads often receive several hundred views each. Visit www.livestockconservancy.org to register for classifieds access if you haven't already. Craigslist is another avenue to advertise for free, although it is often trolled by spammers – avoid typing out your entire email address in ads so it is harder for spam bots to find you. Instead, include your address in the following format: `rwalker [at] livestockconservancy [dot] org`. This same advice generally applies across the web. Real people should have no problem reading your email in this different format. Also, don't forget to keep your Breeders & Products Directory listing up-to-date with your breeds, products, and complete contact information.

Facebook still leads the pack by far when it comes to social media, and telling people what you have to offer by creating a post is like a free ad in itself. Give your followers a description, price, time, and place they can pick up some of your products, or send them over to your website to make their purchase. Email lists are another way to get the word out and a sign-up sheet at events or form on your website is a great way to build your list. Companies pay big money for lists of targeted contacts to advertise to and there is no reason why you shouldn't be able to take advantage of this type of communication to let people know what you have to offer. One of the most effective email formats for small producers is the e-newsletter. Along with your amazing products, you can include short blurbs about what is going on at the farm. "New litter of pigs," "We have a new bull," and "The tractor got stuck in the mud," are a few things that may seem like non-news to you, but they allow the non-farmer community to



A heritage pork basket showing consistent packaging by Carolina Heritage Farms. Photo by Gra' Moore.

experience farming vicariously through your newsletter. Blogging is another online option that requires a time commitment, but garners one of the most enthusiastic followings you will find. It's basically an open diary that others can read to learn what you're up to. Just remember to keep it semi-professional if you're using it as a method to gain business, and try to refrain from very controversial topics unless you're okay with only selling to a certain crowd. If it gets too political, you might lose half of your customer base!

Word-of-mouth is possibly the most effective way to market, but is often the least efficient because most people rarely have the opportunity to speak to more than a few people at a time. If you have the opportunity to get in front of a crowd, take the opportunity to tell your story: why you chose heritage breeds, the importance of conservation, and where they can find your products. The Livestock Conservancy has a great PowerPoint slideshow you can use to talk about livestock conservation. (Find it in the "Get Involved" section of our website.) Church groups, schools, feed stores, fairs, and book clubs are just a few of the places our members commonly give presentations about the Conservancy's work and about their own farming enterprises. If you cower at the thought of public speaking, start out small, with a group of four or five in a more conversational style and work your way up. The more often you do it, the more comfortable you'll become.

Walk the Walk

Marketing your products is great, but if you're a small producer, marketing yourself is often just as important. Nobody wants to buy products from the person who mistreats their animals or from someone who is rude on the phone, over email, or in person. Customers looking to buy heritage breed products are paying for the story of the farmer or rancher as much (or more) as they are for the animal. A common mantra my high school agriculture teacher used to recite was for us to "under-promise and over-deliver," meaning we needed to make as sure as possible we could follow through on our promises. For producers, this is incredibly important when taking orders in advance from customers. In farming, there are many unknowns. Extreme weather, fertility lapses, disease, and freak accidents happen. Sometimes these things are out of your control, but if you're taking payment ahead of time, be sure you will have enough product to deliver. If something happens and you won't be able to fulfill an order, let the customer know immediately and refund their payment if applicable. If someone orders a heritage turkey for Thanksgiving and you tell them the week before that Tom unfortunately passed away back in August and you forgot to tell them, they won't be happy.

Our most successful producers have found the right balance of marketing avenues and are constantly reevaluating them. If one doesn't work or seems to take entirely too much time, try something else out. Marketing should be an adventure, not a dreadful task you try to avoid. Just as an organization or business often has an "elevator pitch," come up with a few sentences that allow you to strike up conversation with people about your animals and products for sale. For some, it could be a hilarious animal joke, for others it could be an interesting statistic about livestock. Regardless of how you choose to market your enterprise, do it with passion, enthusiasm, and integrity, and you'll be well on your way to mastering the art, and science, of the marketeer. ❖

Ryan Walker is the Marketing & Communications Manager for The Livestock Conservancy. For questions or feedback about this article, he can be reached at rwalker@livestockconservancy.org or (919) 542-5704, ext. 102.

CRITICAL BREED Highlights

This is the final installment of a four-part series highlighting the most critically endangered breeds on the Conservancy's *Conservation Priority List*. More information can be found on our website at www.livestockconservancy.org, or by contacting their respective breed associations.



LINCOLN RED CATTLE

Use: Meat

Adult Weight: 1500 - 2400 lbs

Temperament: Docile

Experience Level: Novice

Notes: Excellent temperament, growth rate, and hardiness

Breed Association: North American Lincoln Red Association (www.lincolnred.org)



MILKING DEVON CATTLE

Use: Dairy, Meat, Draft

Adult Weight: 1000 - 1800 lbs

Temperament: Alert

Experience Level: Intermediate - Advanced

Notes: Inspiration for the formation of The Livestock Conservancy

Breed Association: American Milking Devon Cattle Association (www.milkingdevons.org)



SAN CLEMENTE GOATS

Use: Meat

Adult Weight: 50 - 120 lbs

Temperament: Alert

Experience Level: Novice - Intermediate
Notes: Hardy, excellent mothers, unique genetics

Breed Association: San Clemente Island Goat Association (www.scigoats.org)



NEWFOUNDLAND PONIES

Use: Riding, Driving

Adult Weight: 400 - 700 lbs

Temperament: Docile

Experience Level: Novice

Notes: Cold hardy, strong, hardworking, versatile

Breed Association: Newfoundland Pony Society (www.newfoundlandpony.com)



CHOCTAW HOGS

Use: Lean Meat

Adult Weight: 250 - 300 lbs (male), 150 - 200 lbs (female)

Hanging Weight: 100 lbs

Temperament: Aggressive

Breed Association: Choctaw Pig Association (www.livestockconservancy.org)



LARGE BLACK PIGS

Use: Lean Meat

Adult Weight: 750 lbs (male), 650 lbs (female)

Hanging Weight: 144 lbs

Temperament: Docile

Breed Associations: Large Black Hog Association (www.largeblackhogassociation.org), North American Large Black Pig Registry



MULEFOOT PIGS

Use: Lean Meat

Adult Weight: 550 lbs (male), 450 lbs (female)

Hanging Weight: 153 lbs

Temperament: Docile, Active

Breed Association: American Mulefoot Hog Association and Registry (<http://mulefootpigs.tripod.com>)



FLORIDA CRACKER SHEEP

Use: Meat

Adult Weight: 90 - 180 lbs

Temperament: Alert, Docile

Experience Level: Novice - Intermediate

Notes: Usually polled, heat tolerant, parasite resistant

Breed Association: Florida Cracker Sheep Association



GULF COAST or GULF COAST NATIVE SHEEP

Use: Meat
Adult Weight: 100 - 190 lbs
Temperament: Alert, Docile
Experience Level: Novice - Intermediate
Notes: Descended from sheep brought by Spaniards, heat tolerant, parasite resistant
Breed Associations: Coastal South Native Flock Alliance, Gulf Coast Sheep Breeders Association (www.gulfcoastsheep.info)



LEICESTER LONGWOOL SHEEP

Use: Wool, Meat
Adult Weight: 180 - 250 lbs
Temperament: Docile
Experience Level: Advanced
Notes: Slow growing, long lustrous wool
Breed Association: Leicester Longwool Sheep Breeders Association (www.leicesterlongwool.org)



CREVECOEUR CHICKENS

Use: Eggs, Meat
Egg Color: White
Egg Size: Medium to Large

Market Weight: 5.5 - 7 lbs
Temperament: Active
Characteristics: Unique horn-like comb
Breed Association: N/A



SPANISH CHICKENS

Use: Eggs
Egg Color: Chalk White
Egg Size: Large
Market Weight: 5.5 - 6.5 lbs
Temperament: Active, noisy, curious
Characteristics: Good layer
Breed Association: N/A



SULTAN CHICKENS

Use: Ornamental
Egg Color: White
Egg Size: Small
Market Weight: 3.5 - 5 lbs
Temperament: Active
Characteristics: Great urban chicken that does little damage to grass or plantings
Breed Association: N/A



MAGPIE DUCKS

Use: Meat, Eggs
Egg Color: White
Egg Size: Medium to Large
Market Weight: 4 - 4.5 lbs
Temperament: Docile, active, can be high strung
Breed Association: N/A



SILVER APPELYARD DUCKS

Use: Meat, Eggs
Egg Color: White
Egg Size: Large to Extra Large
Market Weight: 6 - 8 lbs
Temperament: Docile
Breed Association: N/A



PILGRIM GEESE

Use: Meat
Egg Color: White
Egg Size: Large
Market Weight: 10 - 12 lbs
Temperament: Docile
Breed Association: N/A

**STEINBACHER GEESE****Use:** Meat**Egg Color:** White**Egg Size:** Large**Market Weight:** 11 - 15 lbs**Temperament:** Aggressive**Breed Association:** N/A**CHOCOLATE TURKEYS****Use:** Meat**Egg Color:** Pale cream to medium brown with spotting**Egg Size:** Large**Market Weight:** 14 - 23 lbs**Temperament:** Highly dependent on selection by breeder. Some select for aggressive, others for docile**LAVENDER/LILAC TURKEYS****Use:** Meat**Egg Color:** Pale cream to medium brown with spotting**Egg Size:** Large**Market Weight:** 14 - 23 lbs**Temperament:** Highly dependent on selection by breeder. Some select for aggressive, others for docile**Breed Association:** N/A

Critical Breeds Recap

We hope you have enjoyed learning more about the most critically endangered breeds on the *Conservation Priority List* in the Critical Breed Highlights series. All of these breeds' populations are dangerously low, as defined by the following parameters:

Livestock: Fewer than 200 annual registrations in the United States and estimated global population less than 2,000.

Rabbits: Fewer than 50 annual registrations in the United States and estimated global population less than 500.

Poultry: Fewer than 500 breeding birds in the United States, with five or fewer primary breeding flocks (50 birds or more), and estimated global population less than 1,000.

Breeds in the Critical category currently make up one-third of all breeds on the *Conservation Priority List*. Some of these breeds literally have fewer than 100 animals left in the United States. It is often recommended that first-time farmers or those with little experience try raising breeds that aren't quite as endangered before committing to an extremely rare breed. Breeding and selecting purebred stock when there is a small genetic base within the breed takes experience and must be handled with great care and precision.

An extremely important part of raising critically endangered breeds is ensuring they are registered. Although it takes time to register and may seem like a hassle to some, registries are the best way to keep track of breeders and bloodlines, and help the Conservancy keep track of population statuses for the breeds. One of the most difficult parts of the Conservancy's census process is estimating the number of unregistered purebred stock in existence. On paper, these animals no longer appear as part of the gene pool even though they would otherwise be eligible. Remember that breed associations and registries are often run by volunteers, so if you are waiting for registrations to be processed, be patient and follow up if it has been a while.

If you feel you are interested in becoming a steward for any of the breeds in the Critical category, please contact The Livestock Conservancy, refer to your Breeders and Products Directory or the online classifieds, or contact the breed association for the breed you are interested in. The Conservancy maintains a list of these associations with addresses, websites, email addresses, and fax numbers if they are available. This list can be found on the Conservancy's website or in the back of the Breeders and Products Directory. Please note that many of the breeds in the Critical category are often difficult to locate nearby because of their rarity. Be patient and ask breeders if you may be added to a waitlist for breeding stock.



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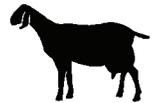
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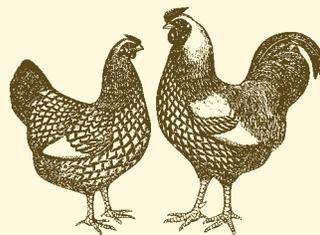
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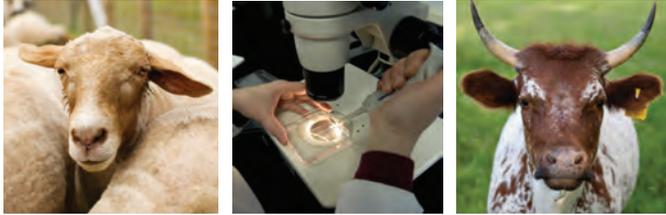


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Livestock & Poultry



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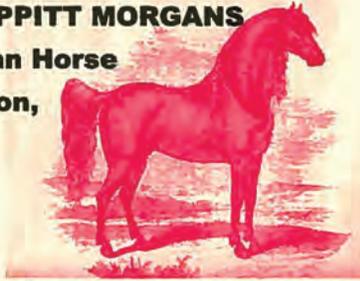
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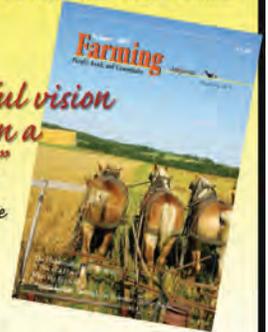
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DATED MATERIAL

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.

September

★ **September 12-14 – The Mother Earth News Fair** will be held in Seven Springs, PA. This family-oriented sustainable lifestyle event features dozens of practical, hands-on demonstrations and workshops on everything from beekeeping to using solar electricity. Visit www.motherearthnews.com/fair for more information.

September 13-14 – The Fall Harvest Fair will be held at the historic Alexander Schaeffer farm in Schaefferstown, PA. Enjoy period artisans, crafts, cooking, baking, cider-pressing, field and farm-life demonstrations, traditional entertainment, heritage breeds of poultry and livestock on display. Open Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday 11am-4pm. Admission \$5 per person; supervised children under age of 12 admitted free. For more information call (717) 949-2244 or visit www.hsimuseum.org.

September 14-19 (Fayetteville, AR) and 22-26 (Jackson, MS) – The National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) is holding a dynamic blend of farm tours, hands-on experience, and classroom instruction. Participants will learn about business

planning, budgeting, recordkeeping, marketing, livestock production, fruit and vegetable production, and more. Visit www.ncat.org/armedtofarm/ for application. For more information, contact Margo Hale at margoh@ncat.org or (479) 442-9824.

September 27 – The Great Goat Gathering will be held in Choteau, MT. Participants will explore traits in goats: What makes a productive meat goat, how we can identify what makes a great goat, how the animal and environment interact, and how to enhance the good traits. To register and for information, visit www.greatgoatgathering.info.

September 27-28 – The Oregon Flock & Fiber Festival will be held at the Clackamas County Event Center in Canby, OR. The festival includes 3 days of workshops and a weekend of demonstrations, livestock shows, seminars, and kids' activities. For information, visit www.flockandfiberfestival.com.

October

October 11 – OX WORKX GALAX. This clinic for oxen and teamsters will take place at Matthews Living History Farm in Galax, VA. Instruction from Andrew and Howard Van Ord. Bring a team or come to watch. \$85 per team/family. For information, contact Kendy Sawyer, ksawyer.2009@gmail.com, (276) 237-2605, or visit www.matthewsfarmmuseum.org.

October 12 – The Mid-Atlantic Milking Devon Breeders Gathering will be held Sunday at 2pm at Matthews Living History Farm in Galax, VA and includes a planning session to develop a bull exchange program. Beef Devon breeders welcome. Devon lunch available at 1pm, \$10 donation suggested. For information, contact Kendy Sawyer, ksawyer.2009@gmail.com, (276) 237-2605,

or visit www.matthewsfarmmuseum.org.

October 17-19 – The 2014 American Red Poll Association (ARPA) National Meeting and Sale will be held in Sedalia, MO. See www.americanredpolls.com.

October 18 – American Milking Devon Cattle Association 2014 Fall Gathering at Maple Breeze Farm, in Westbrook, CT. Includes Devon oxen at work and a discussion of conformation, breeding, and culling led by Drew Conroy, PhD. The program runs from 9-3 and includes a Devon beef lunch. For information, contact Kendy Sawyer, ksawyer.2009@gmail.com, (276) 237-2605, or visit www.matthewsfarmmuseum.org.

October 23-26 – The Society for the Preservation of Old Mills (SPOOM) Conference will take place at the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm in Rochester Hills, MI. For more information, visit: www.spoom.org.

Oct 23-26 – The Spanish Barb Horse Association's Annual Meeting will be held at Hay Creek Ranch in Oracle, AZ, and includes breakfast and dinner, trail rides and fun! For more information, visit www.SpanishBarb.org/SBHA_Current_Events.html.

November

★★ **November 14-15 – The National Conference of The Livestock Conservancy** will be held in Austin, TX at the Austin Marriott South. Attend programs on conservation, animal husbandry, food, marketing, and more, and enjoy heritage breed meals as you network with other attendees and talk one-on-one with experts in livestock and sustainable agriculture. For more information, visit www.livestockconservancy.org, email info@livestockconservancy.org, or call (919) 542-5704.