

# Michigan Shepherds Virtual Weekend

## January 8 –10, 2021

### Program

#### FRIDAY, JANUARY 8

##### **Photo Contest: Photos Due – 12:00pm**

*Format: Submit via Google Form*

This year's photo contest will include two age divisions: Youth (17 years old and younger) and Adult (18 years old and up). Pictures may be black and white, or color. Participants are limited to ONE photo per class. Both age divisions will include the following classes:

1. Portrait of a Sheep
2. Flock Scene
3. Human Interest
4. Shearer at Work

Contestant information and a digital copy of the photo MUST be submitted by Friday, January 8 at 12 PM via the following GoogleForm: <http://bit.ly/mspaphotocontest>. Contestants who have multiple submissions will have to complete the GoogleForm for each submission.

Winners will be announced via Facebook on Sunday, January 10 at 11am. An email with the results will be sent to all contestants shortly thereafter.

##### **4-H & FFA Award Recognition – 4:00pm**

*Format: Facebook Post*

Watch our Facebook page for a special announcement of the 2020 MSPA FFA & 4-H sheep award winner.

##### **Scholarship Award Recognition – 5:00pm**

*Format: Facebook Post*

Watch our Facebook page for a special announcement of the 2021 MSPA scholarship award winners.

##### **Young Producer Presentations – 6:30-7:30pm**

*Format: Zoom Meeting*

Featuring presentations by our 2020 Hannewald Grant recipients and the Young Producers Industry Innovation presentation competition. Competition is open to both High School Division (ages 14-17) and Young Producer Division (ages 18-35.) Prizes and recognition will be given to all participants, and the winner of the Young Producer Division will receive paid enrollment in up to 4 MSUE 2021 educational events of their choosing.

Full details can be found in this issue of the Michigan Shepherd News, on our website and on our Facebook page. Please contact Heather Ludlam at [drhludlam@gmail.com](mailto:drhludlam@gmail.com) with any questions and to sign up. Entry deadline is January 1, 2021.

##### **Social Hour – 8:00 PM**

*Format: Zoom Meeting*

Grab your favorite beverage and join fellow MSPA members for casual conversations and structured time to reconnect. Bring your best stories, ideas and the latest news that's happening in your neck of the woods.

#### SATURDAY, JANUARY 9

##### **Keynote Speaker: Dr. Tom Murphy – 1:00-1:45pm**

*Format: Zoom Webinar*

"Improving flock productivity and health through genetic technologies"

The sheep producer of 2021 has an arsenal of tools to improve flock profitability, but genetic improvement is the only permanent approach. In this presentation, Dr. Murphy will describe the importance of delineating the unobservable genetic value of an animal from their observable phenotype. A practical guide to using estimated breeding values, genetic testing, and crossbreeding for flock improvement will also be discussed.

##### **Ram Session – 2:00-2:45pm**

*Format: Zoom Meeting*

Prepare to share your struggles and triumphs of 2020 in this year's Ram Session with facilitator, Dave Meeuwse. This session is intended to generate casual conversation, new ideas, and perhaps solutions to the problems and hot topics within the Michigan sheep and fiber industries.

##### **Annual Meeting – 3:00-3:45pm**

*Format: Zoom Meeting*

Join fellow members and the current MSPA board of directors for our annual meeting. Business will include the approval of the annual budget and minutes, an update from our ASI Region III director, the introduction of board candidates, and the announcement of the 2021 Producers of the Year and Service to the Industry awards.

##### **Keynote Speaker: Richard Ehrhardt – 4:00-4:45pm**

*Format: Zoom Webinar*

"Current Lamb Market Conditions and Forecast, MSU Research, Teaching and Extension Program Highlights"

Join Dr. Richard Ehrhardt, MSU Extension Specialist, for updates on the current market conditions as well as what is happening at Michigan State University, including research, teaching, and the extension program highlights.

##### **Producer of the Year Presentations – 5:00-5:45pm**

*Format: Zoom Meeting*

In this session, the Scovill Family, 2020 MSPA Club Lamb Producers of the Year, and Matt Scramlin, 2020 MSPA Purebred Producer of the Year will give presentations on their current production practices and models. They will answer any questions that fellow producers may have.

## SUNDAY, JANUARY 10

### **Photo Contest: Results – 11:00am**

*Format: Facebook Post*

Watch our Facebook page for a special announcement of the 2021 MSPA photo contest winners.

### **Make it With Wool Video – 12:00pm**

*Format: Facebook Post*

Watch our Facebook page for a special video featuring the 2020 Make it With Wool fashion show.

### **Keynote Speaker: Dr. Tom Murphy – 1:00-1:45pm**

*Format: Zoom Webinar*

"Updates from the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center's sheep program"

The USDA Agricultural Research Service's U.S. Meat Animal Research Center has been serving beef cattle, swine, and sheep producers since 1964. In this presentation, Dr. Murphy will present results of sheep research projects from the recent past as well as share the future directions of the USMARC sheep program. Topics will include breed comparisons, intensive vs. extensive production systems, Ovine Progressive Pneumonia, periparturient diseases in ewes, and many others.

### **Education Break Out Sessions – 2:00-3:30pm**

*Format: Zoom Meetings*

#### **ROOM 1**

##### **1. "Artificial Insemination - Is it for your Flock?"**

**Presenter: Dr. Todd Wolff, Wolff Veterinary Services**

Dr. Todd Wolff will take a look at why and if artificial insemination is right for your flock. He will help answer your questions as to why to do it, what it entails and the pros and cons of using AI in your breeding program. Dr. Wolff is the owner of Wolff Veterinary Services specializing in AI'ing of sheep.

##### **2. "Rare Breeds"**

*Presenter: Letty Klein, Pine Lane Farms*

Karakul breeder and author, Letty Klein, will inform attendees on a variety of rare sheep breeds. This presentation will cover the basic history, breed characteristics and current status of these breeds in the United States and across the world. Letty has been a wool sheep/fleece judge since 2000. She co-authored the book "The Shepherd's Rug" and has taught rug braiding workshops, as well as fleece appreciation workshops, across the country.

##### **3. "Wool Resources"**

*Presenters: MSPA Wool Committee Members*

Join Michigan sheep producers from across the state as they share their farms and fiber flock production practices. This session will include tours from four different producers including Letty Klein, Penny Swearingen, Christee McNeil, Mike and Sandra Morris. A hand blade shearing demonstration from Aimee Buckley will also be included.

#### **ROOM 2**

##### **1. "Ovine Progressive Pneumonia Eradication in 2020: What has worked and has it been worth it?"**

*Presenter: Dr. Richard Ehrhardt, Small Ruminant Extension Specialist, Michigan State University*

Ovine progressive pneumonia (OPP) is a chronic disease that has been challenging to control and eradicate. Over the years, skepticism has arisen over its impact on flock production and

on the economic benefit of eradication. This talk will highlight the approaches producers have taken to eradicate OPP and their perceptions of how this has impacted their flocks.

##### **2. "Cover crop grazing with sheep production in Michigan: Results of a 2-year study. Part 1: Cover crop choices and management options."**

*Presenter: Dr. Richard Erhardt, Small Ruminant Extension Specialist and Dr. Kim Cassida, Forage Extension Specialist, Michigan State University*

Cover crops have become an important part of crop production programs in many parts of the world. Often overlooked however is the potential that cover crops offer for sheep producers to increase their land base and decrease cost of production. In this talk, we will cover how cover crop grazing programs can benefit sheep production and how to manage this program to optimize animal and land outcomes.

##### **3. "Cover crop grazing with sheep production in Michigan: Results of a 2-year study. Part 2: Lamb performance and carcass quality on cover crop grazing systems as compared to grain feeding."**

*Presenter: Cat Macaluso, M.S. Candidate, Michigan State University*

Cover crops provide high quality forage that can fill in gaps in perennial pasture production. Forage quality is so high that they have potential for use in lamb growing/finishing programs. This talk will cover how cover crop rearing programs compare to grain rearing programs in terms of lamb performance and carcass quality.

##### **Keynote Speaker: Richard Ehrhardt and Erin Reckenwald – 4:00-4:45pm**

*Format: Zoom Webinar*

##### **"Evaluating the environmental footprint of US lamb production: Why it matters and opportunities for improvement."**

The environmental footprint of food production is an important consideration in meeting the needs of a growing world while preserving our resources for future generations. We have initiated a project to quantify the impact of US lamb production and we will discuss that main forces impact this footprint and how we are working to quantify impact in different lamb production systems.