

Michigan Shepherds Weekend

January 5-7, 2024 | Crowne Plaza Hotel
925 S. Creyts Rd, Lansing, Michigan 48917

Schedule of Events – Friday, January 5th

- 7:00 PM Young Producer & Flock Grant Presentations - Ballroom ABC
Young Producer Finalists will share their presentations with the audience and answer questions. Winners of the Flock Grant program will also share their successes and challenges with their purchases over the past year.
- 8:00 PM Panel Discussion with Michigan Young Producers - Ballroom ABC
An informal panel discussion with a diverse group of young sheep producers from all over Michigan. This should be an excellent opportunity to learn from each other!

Schedule of Events – Saturday, January 6th

- 7:30 AM Registration & Trade Show Opens - Lobby & Royale Atrium
- 8:00 AM Early Bird Coffee - Lobby
- 8:30 AM Young, New & Beginning Producer Meet & Greet - Ballroom ABC
Come grab a donut and some coffee and learn about what MSPA has to offer, as well as how to make the most out of the Michigan Shepherds Weekend.
- 9:00 AM Opening Session - Ballroom ABC
Jason Scramlin, MSPA President
- 9:30 AM Sheep Farming Innovations in Michigan during 2023 - Ballroom ABC
Dr. Richard Ehrhardt, Small Ruminant Specialist, MSU. A review of lamb markets and innovative new practices and ideas gleaned from the field in 2023.
- 10:00 AM Keynote: Marketing American Lamb - Ballroom ABC
Join Nick Forrest, an Ohian and shepherd with over thirty years of experience in the sheep industry, to learn about unique ways to market your American Lamb. Nick will use his expertise of over 45 years in the retail and wholesale deli and butcher business to bring a unique perspective to your current marketing strategies.
- 11:45 AM Lunch - DeSoto Foyer
Mingle with vendors. Lunch on your own or purchase tickets in advance.
- 12:00 PM Ram Session - Ballroom A
An open discussion on current trends in sheep production.
- 12:00 PM Michigan Club Lamb Association (MCLA) Meeting - Ballroom B
- 12:00 PM Michigan Lamb Feeders & Shearers Meeting - Ballroom C
- 1:30 PM Breakout Sessions
Details of each session are described on the following page.

	Room A	Room B	Room C	Offsite
1:00 PM				Veterinary Diagnostic Lab Tour - Round 1
1:30 – 2:15 PM	<p>What are Loan Deficiency Payments & How Do I Use Them?</p> <p><i>Aimee Swenson & Leslie Warner - FPCA-FSA</i></p>	<p>What do I do with my Wool?</p> <p><i>Panel Discussion</i></p>	<p>Basic Carcass Breakdown for the Home Butcher</p> <p><i>Dr. Richard Ehrhardt - MSU</i></p>	<p>1:00 PM - 2:00 PM</p> <p><i>20 People Max First Come First Serve Transportation Not Provided</i></p>
2:20 – 3:05 PM	<p>Sheep Vaccines</p> <p><i>Dr. Todd Wolff - Cambridge Technologies</i></p>	<p>National Sheep Improvement Program</p> <p><i>Panel Discussion</i></p>	<p>Simple Methods to Improve Your Pastures</p> <p><i>Dr. Kim Casissda - MSU</i></p>	<p>Veterinary Diagnostic Lab Tour - Round 2</p> <p>2:00 PM - 3:00 PM</p> <p><i>20 People Max First Come First Serve Transportation Not Provided</i></p>
3:10 PM	<i>Ice Cream Break</i>			
3:30 - 4:15 PM	<p>Contract Grazing Opportunities</p> <p><i>Lauren Burns - Tending Tilth</i></p>	<p>Ask-a-Vet</p> <p><i>Panel Discussion</i></p>	<p>Tips to Improve Out-of-Season Breeding Success</p> <p><i>Dr. Richard Ehrhardt - MSU</i></p>	
4:20 - 5:15 PM			<p>2022 Commercial, Club Lamb, and Purebred Producer Award Winner Presentations</p>	

Breakout Session Descriptions

Room A

- 1:30 – 2:15 **What are Loan Deficiency Payments & How Do I Use Them?** - Presented by knowledgeable staff from the Farm Service Agency and Farm Production and Conservation Business Center, this session will shed light on the intricacies of these funds and provide valuable insights into their application within the sheep industry sector.
- 2:20 – 3:05 **Sheep Vaccines** - Join Dr. Todd Wolff of Cambridge Technologies & Team Wolff Veterinary Services to explore the world of sheep health and immunization options. There will be a special focus on autogenous vaccines, and their potential to expand in the sheep industry in the future.
- 3:30 – 4:15 **Contract Grazing Opportunities** - Come learn from Lauren Burns, owner of Tending Tilth, about their contract grazing business. Learn the ins and outs of this unique sheep business venture. Come with questions and leave with answers about this growing opportunity for our industry.

Room B

- 1:30–2:15 **What do I do with my Wool?** - In this session, expert panelists, Ellen Zawada, Penny Swearington, and Sandra Morris, will guide you through creative and practical ways to maximize the value of your wool, from spinning and selling raw fleece to finished wool products to marketing and innovative uses, ensuring you get the most out of your wool.
- 2:20–3:05 **National Sheep Improvement Program** - In this panel discussion, learn how the National Sheep Improvement Program (NSIP) program is, enhancing the genetic potential of your flock, and maximizing your returns.
- 3:30-4:15 **Ask-a-Vet** - A panel of expert veterinarians will provide essential insights into sheep health, answer your pressing questions, and offer guidance on best practices for keeping your flock in optimal condition. Don't miss this opportunity to gain expert advice and ensure the well-being of your sheep.

Room C

- 1:30–2:15 **Basic Carcass Breakdown for the Home Butcher** - Join Dr. Ehrhardt, the Michigan State University Small Ruminant Specialist, as he shares ideas via video and slides of methods, he has learned home butchering and meat processing to make the most of your product.
- 2:20–3:05 **Simple Methods to Improve Your Pastures** - Dr. Cassida, the Michigan State University Forage Specialist, will share simple, easy-to-employ, and effective methods to improve pastures without needing a lot of equipment.
- 3:30–4:15 **Tips to Improve Out-of-Season Breeding Success** - Dr. Ehrhardt will share the ideas he has gleaned from research and working with innovative farmers on improving out-of-season breeding success.
- 4:20–5:15 **2022 Producer of the Year Presentations** - Enjoy presentations from the 2022 Commercial Producers of the Year: The Bronkema Family, the 2022 Club Lamb Producers of the Year: Kelley Club Lambs, and the 2022 Purebred Producers of the Year: The George Family.

Offsite

- 1:00–3:00 Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory Tours - Join the staff at Michigan State University's Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory for a tour of the facilities and learn about what testing options are available for sheep producers. Two tours will run, one from 1-2 pm and the other from 2-3 pm. No one under 16 will be allowed in the facility, sign-up will occur on a first-come, first-served basis at registration. A maximum of 20 is preferred for each tour group. Transportation is not provided, but carpooling is encouraged.
- 6:00 PM Social Hour and Youth Auction - Ballroom DEF
- 6:30 PM Youth Pool Party - Pool
- 7:00 PM Banquet - Ballroom - Ballroom DEF
Lamb donated by Wolverine Packing Company

Schedule of Events – Sunday, January 7th

- 8:00 AM Registration & Trade Show Opens
- 8:00 AM Early Bird Coffee
- 8:30 AM Meditation - Ballroom AB
- 9:00 AM American Lamb Roadshow Experience - Ballroom AB
Nick Forrest and his wife will put on the American Lamb Roadshow Experience for our audience by preparing a variety of lamb dishes live and sharing their favorite recipes along the way. You will want to be sure you do not miss out on this session!!
- 10:00 AM Annual Business Meeting - Ballroom AB
Jason Scramlin, MSPA President
- 10:45 AM ASI Update - Ballroom AB
Anne Crider, ASI Region 3 Director
- 11:00 AM Brunch - Ballroom CD
Mingle with vendors. Brunch on your own or purchase tickets in advance.
- 12:00 PM Labor Saving Ideas from Experienced Shepherds - Ballroom AB
Sheep production is perceived as labor intensive and in many cases this is true. Making sheep farming “easier” and less labor intensive is key to success and possible farm expansion. Dr. Ehrhardt will moderate a panel discussion where experienced shepherds will share their best labor-saving ideas in flock management.

Youth Programs & Activities

Cord Room

Saturday, January 6th

- 9:45 AM Welcome – Nick Babcock, Youth Committee Chair
- 10:00 AM Sheep Breed and Shepherd's Tools Identification Contest – Anyone 18 and under can participate and prizes will be given in junior, intermediate, and senior age divisions. Test your knowledge of breeds of sheep and the equipment used in a sheep farming operation.
- 10:15 AM Youth Round Table – Youth will have the opportunity to hear from fellow youth members, and young adults, about how they have taken their sheep operation to the next level. Youth participants will gain fresh ideas and innovative concepts to have long-lasting impacts on the sheep industry.
- 11:00 AM Refreshment Break
- 11:15 AM Introduction to Livestock Judging – Youth participants will hear from Collegiate and 4-H/FFA livestock judging team members about livestock judging, and what it takes to be on a livestock judging team. Topics will include general concepts of animal evaluation, career opportunities, decision-making, and more!
- 12:00 PM Lunch. On your own with your parents.
- 1:15 PM Sheep Breed and Shepherd's Tools Identification Contest Results
- 1:30 PM Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) – YQCA promotes the development of a common framework for youth livestock quality assurance programs that will enhance the educational experience of youth, improve the care of animals, and provide a higher level of food safety to consumers. If you would like certification, please register beforehand on yqcaprogram.org.
- 6:30-10:00 Sub/Pizza and Swimming Party - Ages 5-18.
Join your friends for a good time while your family attends the Annual Banquet. Bring your swimsuits and basketballs! The cost is \$10.00 and tickets MUST be purchased in advance and will be collected.

Sunday, January 8th

- 9:00–11:00 Junior Quiz Bowl Contest - Ages 13 and Under
will compete in teams of four. Come with a team, or facilitators will help you find a team. Prizes for all teams will be awarded at the brunch.
- 9:00–11:00 Master Shepherd Competition - Ages 14-18
This event will challenge older youth to apply their skills and knowledge about sheep. Teams of two or three will all be given a "real-life" scenario to address. Each team will have time to problem-solve and prepare a short presentation that will be given to a panel of judges. Prizes for all teams will be awarded at the brunch.

Weekend Events

Trade Show

Industry representatives from all segments of the sheep industry have been invited to participate in a commercial exhibit area that will be open throughout the weekend in the Royale Atrium.

Warm & Woolly Competition

This beautiful exhibit celebrates the variety and usefulness of the many types of wool that our sheep produce, as well as the creativity of MSPA members, both adults and youth! Handspun Yarn and all other wool crafts may be entered. A people's choice award will be presented this year in place of judging.

Entries can be delivered to the Registration area on Saturday before 10 a.m. Entry forms will be available there or can be printed from the MSPA website. Entry forms will include age category (Youth 17 or younger; Adult 18 and over) and Experience in each technique (Novice or Experienced). Entries must be created by the entrant, not previously shown in this competition, and made from wool. Entries may be picked up any time after 4:30 p.m. on Saturday.

Photo Contest

Contestants shall consist of two age groups: YOUTH - 17 years old and younger and ADULT – 18 years old and up. Photos shall be a 5x7 only. Pictures may be Black and white or Color. Both Youth and Adult divisions will include the following classes: Portrait of a Sheep, Flock Scene, Human Interest, Fairs and Exhibitions, and Shearer at Work.

Limit – ONE photo per division per contestant. Entries **MUST** be submitted on Saturday, January 4 between 10 am and 12 noon. Entries must be suitably matted and framed with secure hooks for hanging or be able to free stand.

Entries **MUST** have the following information on the back of the photo to qualify for the contest:

1. Adult's name or Youth's name with parents' name
2. Age group and youth's age
3. Class division

Winners will be announced and awards will be given out on Saturday at the banquet. There will be a special award for Best of Show. Photos can be picked up on Saturday evening. If you have further questions, please call Deb Caryl at (810) 653-1436.

Silent Auctions

There will be silent auctions this year to provide an opportunity to purchase some great items to support our youth program. Winners will be able to pay for items at the registration desk with a check or credit card.

Make It With Wool Contest

Make It With Wool participants will conduct a short style show during the banquet. The coordinator is Cindy Reisig.

Banquet

The Annual Banquet will begin with a social hour and auction at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday. Dinner starts at 7 pm. The auction will continue after dinner. The auction includes a variety of donated items and the proceeds are used to support statewide youth programs. The "Service to the Sheep Industry Award" will be presented and the Sheep Producer of the Year Recipients will be recognized. Banquet tickets are \$30.00 and **MUST** be purchased in advance and tickets will be collected at the banquet. Tickets will not be available for on-site purchase.

Sunday Brunch

A brunch will be available for symposium participants. Brunch tickets are \$15.00 and **MUST** be purchased in advance and will be collected at the brunch. Tickets will not be available for on-site purchase.