



BLACK SHEEP HANDSPINNERS GUILD
P.O. Box 6701
Ithaca, NY 14851

Newsletter 62 - July/Aug. 83
Editor: Marianne Horchler
RD # 1, GENOA, N.Y. 13071

NEXT BSHG MEETINGS

- SATURDAY MEETING: September 3 at Ellie May's house, 1360 Slaterville Rd., Ithaca. Dish to pass; come in the morning after 11AM; bring dye pots or skeins to dye. Dye pots will include natural dyes, indigo and perhaps some chemical dyes.

Directions to Ellie's house: it is on the corner of Slaterville Rd. (Route 79) and Honness Lane. If you get lost call 272-8224.

- MONDAY MEETING: September 12 at Marianne Horchler's, 1193 Stewart's Corners' Rd., Genoa. The program will be on RAISING SHEEP. Marianne Horchler will give tips on "starting right with sheep" and Gretchen Sachse will speak on "getting good wool production from your sheep". Dish to pass; come at or before 10AM. Bring a chair (unless you don't mind sitting on a hay bale!). The meeting will be held outside or, in case of rain, in the barn.

Directions to Marianne's house: from Ithaca take Route 34 North towards Auburn. Stay on Rte 34 for about 18 miles; turn right on Rte 90 and take first left off 90; Stewart's Corners' Rd. House is $\frac{1}{2}$ mile up the road, 6th on the left hand side: 2-story yellow house with barn behind it. If you get lost call 315/497-1542.

- OCTOBER MONDAY MEETING: Oct. 10 at the Varna firehouse, 10AM. Edith Johnston, Chairman of the Upstate Crafts Fair, will tell us about marketing and selling our work.

BEGINNING SPINNING WORKSHOP

The workshop was successful with 13 people attending - some of these were real beginners and some were familiar faces who were refreshing their skills or who, after many years of peripheral activity with the Guild, were finally learning to spin! We had a good day and the "new" spinners all did extremely well! These spinners are all members of the Guild for the rest of the year. The list of new members includes:

MEMBERSHIP LIST

Attached to this newsletter is a supplement to the Membership List. If you find an error in it, please let Mary Ann Sumner know so that we can keep our records and the mailing list correct. By the way, the mailing labels have been retyped and if there are errors in your address, please let Jean Currie know. Mary Ann's phone is 257-5754 and Jean's is 564-9346. Thanks!

STATE FAIR

Ruth Holroyd (Rochester area) was the judge for handspuns this year. She is a superlative weaver and lacemaker. Those placing that we know of so far, are Suzie Hokanson, Nancy Morey, Jean Warholic and Jean Currie

SHEEP FIELD DAY

Sheep Field Day hosted by the Schuyler, Chemung, Tioga BOCES will be held September 17, 10-4pm at 431 Philo Rd., Elmira. Call 607/739-3581 for more info.

FALL-IN FESTIVAL

Remember the Fall-In program sponsored by the Cornell Plantations on October 1. We are committed to having some spinners to demonstrate that day - working on something to do with plants, either spinning cotton, flax, ramie, or plant-dyed wool, or, if you want to help with dyeing, Kay Ross (844-8050) could use some help. Please come; this will probably be one of our major demonstrations this year and is likely to take the place of the demonstration part of Wool Day, if we discontinue that in its old format.

OCTOBER WORKSHOPS

Remember Linda B. Walker will be here on October 28-30 to give presentations on small flock management, spinning for design, and alternatives in wool processing. More information is on its way soon.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- * ANNUAL MEETING OF NATIONAL COLORED WOOL GROWERS ASSOCIATION: Sept. 2 & 3, Future Farmers of America Center, Trafalgar, Indiana. If you happen to be in the area don't miss it; the event will include many exhibits, contests, colored sheep show, fleece show, sheepdog demonstrations and more. A Sheep Symposium is also scheduled for Sept. 4 & 5 at nearby Franklin College. For more information see Marianne Horchler.
- * FIRST ANNUAL SHEEP TO SHAWL CONTEST: hosted by the New York State Fair and Cherry Valley Country Spinners, Sunday, Sept. 4, 1-5PM in Sheep Barn. For info. call Tisha Lock 315/697-7341.
- * SILK WORKSHOP: Sept. 9, 10 & 11 at Stone Ridge, N.Y. (near Kingston). Write Judith Greenfield, R.D. 1, Box 510, Stone Ridge, N.Y. 12484
- * FOLK ART IN NEW YORK STATE: Workshop to be held Sept. 9 & 10 at The Fenimore House, New York State Historical Association, Cooperstown. Registration fee for 2-day workshop: \$20 for members of ROHA or NYSHA; \$30 for non-members; one day: \$10 for members, \$15 for non-members. Write Regional Conference of Historical Agencies, 314 E. Seneca St., Manlius, N.Y. 13104.
- * SHEEP FIELD DAY: sponsored by the Allegheny Plateau Sheep and Wool Growers Coop, Inc. Will include various exhibits, sheep show & sale, fleece show, spinning demonstrations, a sheepdog demonstration and clinic (still in the planning) and a spinning competition. This will be held at the Fairgrounds in Norwich Sept. 17, 10-5PM. Entries for the spinning competition must be in by Sept. 17. For entry forms see Marianne Horchler.
- * Open House at Mount Saviour Monastery in Elmira: Sept. 18 from Noon-4PM. Our Guild has been asked to demonstrate spinning during the afternoon. If you can volunteer please call Jean Currie 564-9346.
- * "SHAKERS: Aspects of the Culture of an American Religious Society": A Conference to be held in Albany Sept. 15, 16 & 17. Write Shaker

The BLACK SHEEP HANDSPINNERS GUILD OF ITHACA and TIOGA COUNTY SHEEP GROWERS
presents three workshops with

LINDA BERRY WALKER

WORKSHOP I: SMALL FLOCK MANAGEMENT

(One evening: Friday, October 28, 1983 -- 7:00-10:00 p.m.
Cooperative Extension Office, 56 Main St., Owego, New York
[second street in, parallel to the river].)

A workshop on raising sheep in a small flock and for wool quality. Discussion of breeds best suited to this locality, as well as good husbandry and management practices. [There is no materials fee for this workshop.]

WORKSHOP II: WOOL AWARENESS AND PROCESSING (Limit: 30 people)

(One day: Saturday, October 29, 1983 -- 9:30-4:00 p.m.
Varna Community Association, Rt. 366, Varna, New York [near Ithaca].)

Exploration of the many different wools available to handspinnners and the uses for which each wool is best suited. Many examples will be available to spin. Alternatives to handcarding will be touched upon briefly and there will then be a detailed discussion of various forms of commercially processed wools and a chance to spin them. [Materials fee included in workshop costs.]

WORKSHOP III: SPINNING FOR DESIGN (Limit: 30 people)

(One day: Sunday, October 30, 1983 -- 9:30-4:00 p.m.
Varna Community Association, Rt. 366, Varna, New York [near Ithaca].)

Yarn design with emphasis on designs which handspinnners can most effectively and efficiently use. Techniques covered are blending, plying, dyeing, and especially different spinning techniques, using a variety of fibers. [Materials fee included in workshop costs.]

** ** *

PLAN TO BRING...

For Workshop I: Whole fleeces to be critiqued.

For Workshops II and III: Bring your wheel (oiled and in good working order, of course!), several bobbins, lazy kate, handcarders, notebook. For discussion purposes, bring fleece and/or handspun yarns you are having trouble with, garments and/or yarns for show and tell. There will be many wools and fibers to experiment with as well as equipment to try. **COME PREPARED TO WORK HARD** and try many new things -- fibers and techniques! (Please note: some spinning experience desirable; on a Bo Derek scale of 10, you should be at least a 2 and on your way to a 3!)

REFRESHMENTS AND AMENITIES... Coffee will be available at Workshops II and III at 9:00 a.m. Bring your own lunch (a refrigerator is available, if needed) or

plan to head for a restaurant -- drinks and fruit provided. There is plenty of space at the Varna Community Association building for us to spread out and work in, but if you are not comfortable sitting on a folding chair, bring your own.

PARKING. A reminder for Workshops II and III, we are next to the fire hall. We will insist that you do not block the big doors for obvious reasons!

REGISTRATION INFORMATION (Read carefully!)

<u>Basic costs:</u>	Workshop I	\$ 10.00	(This is if you take <u>one</u> only.
	Workshop II	25.00	Combination registrations get a
	Workshop III	25.00	price break -- see below.)

Members of Black Sheep Handspinners Guild and/or Tioga County Sheep Growers:

Workshop I + II + III	\$ 50.00
Workshop I + II or III	30.00
Workshop II + III	45.00
Workshops I or II or III	basic costs above

Nonmembers of Black Sheep Handspinners and/or Tioga County Sheep Growers:

Workshop I + II + III	\$ 60.00
Workshop I + II or III	35.00
Workshops I or II or III	basic costs above

REGISTRATION PAYMENT must accompany your form below. No refunds after October 21. Members will get registration preference until October 7. (Membership in the Black Sheep Handspinners Guild as of September 15.)

FURTHER INFORMATION, if needed: For information about Workshop I, please contact Nancy Knight at (607) 659-5275, evenings. Workshops II and III, please contact Jean Currie at (607) 564-9346, evenings. For more registration forms, call or write Jean Warholic, 280 Ringwood Road, Freeville, N.Y. 13068 (607/539-7648 evenings). Registration questions: Mary Ann Sumner, (607) 257-5754.

DEADLINE for registration: October 21, 1983.

LINDA BERRY WALKER WORKSHOPS

Date _____

I will attend the following workshop(s). I am a member of BSHG ___ and/or TCSG ___. I am not a member of either ___. My check (payable to Black Sheep Handspinners Guild) is enclosed.

WORKSHOP I: Small Flock Management _____
 WORKSHOP II: Wool Awareness/Processing _____
 WORKSHOP III: Spinning for Design _____

Amount of check _____ Send with this form to: Mary Ann Sumner 107 Neimi Road Freeville, N.Y. 13068
--

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE () _____

Heritage Society, Trustees Office, Albany Shaker Rd., Albany, N.Y. 12211, or see Marianne Horchler.

- * "Community Industries of the Shakers: A New Look": now through January 8, 1984; exhibit held at the New York State Museum, Empire State Plaza, Albany, N.Y. 12230. Open daily 10-5PM; free admission.
- * CENTRAL NEW YORK HANDSPINNERS SEMINAR: Sept. 24 & 25 at the Sheraton Inn, Liverpool, N.Y. Sponsored by the Golden Fleece Spinners Society. Saturday's program includes "Spinning Wheels and Related Equipment" by Dora Swart, "Wool Fibers Source and Finished Product" by Edna Blackburn, and a Fashion Show. On Sunday there will be 4 workshops: Carding & Spinning Woolen & Worsted, Skirting & Preparing a Fleece, Breed Fleeces, & Natural & Commercial Dyeing. Registration fee for each day is \$15; Saturday hours: 9:30AM - 9PM; Sunday: 9:15AM - 4PM. Send registration to Golden Fleece Spinners Society c/o Carol Bell, 5530 Piazza Lane, Clay, N.Y. 13041. Deadline is Sept. 1.
- * "FIBER: ART AND FUNCTION": Eastern Great Lakes Fiber Conference, Sept. 30, Oct. 1 & 2, Pittsburgh Expo Mart, Monroeville, Pa. Sponsored by the Weavers Guild of Pittsburgh; many workshops offered; of interest to spinners: Design in Single Spun Yarn, Plying - The Novelty Yarns, Handspinning Silk, and Dyeing Wool & Cotton with Natural Plant Materials. Registration fee: \$55; deadline is Sept. 2. Write to Joy Herren, 101 Washington Ave. #3111, Oakmont, Pa. 15139 - (412)828-3267.
- * Handspinning Workshops: at the River Farm in the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia. Beginner Spinning: Sept. 30, Oct. 1 & 2. Instruction: \$84. Intermediate Spinning: Oct. 28, 29 & 30. Instruction: \$84. Intensive Study (Beginner Spinning, Dyeing, Uses of Wool Yarn): Nov. 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7. Instruction: \$150. Intensive Study (Intermediate/Advanced Spinning, Dyeing & Finished Products): Jan. 26, 27, 28, 29 & 30, 1984. Instruction: \$150 + \$15 fibers fee. Bring carders & spindle for each session. Write The River Farm, Rt. 1, Box 401, Timberville, Va. 22853.

NOTES

- The Guild's August 8 meeting was held at Joan Johnston's house. Jean Currie demonstrated carding with a drum carder and Joan showed all the different things her carding machine can do.
- Linda Dyett, a New York-based writer, is preparing a book about hand-knitting supplies. It will contain mail order resource information about handspun yarns. Interested spinners are welcome to contact her, send samples, information on price, shipping, fiber & dye content, etc. Write her at 170 Second Ave., New York, N.Y. 10003.
- Recent additions to the Library include the following:
Fleece in your Hands, by Beverly Horne;
Fibre Facts, by Bette Hochberg;

Hand Woolcombing and Spinning, by Peter Teal;
 Handspinner's Handbook, & Handspindles, by Bette Hochberg
 Handspinning Cotton, by Olive and Harry Linder
 The New Dyer, by Sally Vinroot & Jennie Crowder
 Spin, Span, Spun, by Bette Hochberg
 Silk, a brief history (pamphlet)

Magazines:

The Web, March 1983;
 Shuttle, Spindle & Dyepot, Winter 1982 & Spring 1983
 Spin Off, Spring 1983
 Handwoven, March-April 1983
 1982 Suppliers Directory, Handweavers Guild of America.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Mohair Adult \$5, Spring Kid \$6.50, Fall Kid \$8 per pound. Washed and picked \$2 extra per pound. Drop spindles \$10. You pay shipping. The Dragon Farm, P.O. Box 431, Elgin, Texas 78621. 1/3

For Sale - Black French Angora Rabbits - \$15.00 or trade for fleece or yarn. Wanted - used drum carder. Both items, contact Helen Kiker, 14 Redwood Lane, Ithaca, NY 14850. Tel. (607)273-3124. 1/1

New at the WOOLERY: The Support Spindle: it fits in your pocket; just set it on your lap and spin! \$26. Ron Parker's "The Sheep Book", just published, an excellent book on raising sheep, 344 pages full of practical advice, \$19.95. "Spinning and Weaving with Wool" by Paula Simmons, \$12.95. New fibers: Tussah silk sliver, honey color, \$3.85/2 oz.; vicuna down (Llama family, beige color, very fine & soft), \$5.25/3 oz.; brown alpaca top, \$4.50/4 oz.; mohair top, off-white, \$4/4 oz.; grey mohair top, very lustrous, \$4.50/4 oz.; ramie top (a good plant fiber for the Cornell Fall-In!), lustrous white, \$2.50/4 oz. Free delivery to Ithaca. The WOOLERY, R.D. # 1, Genoa, N.Y. 13071. 315/497-1542. 1/1

One charcoal grey ewe lamb for sale. Finn with Targhee and Romney. Fine soft fleece. A twin from an excellent mother. \$95. Joan Johnston, 272-2697. 1/3

Way Station Yarns & Fibers, Greene Depot, Greene, N.Y. Imported and Domestic Yarns & Fibers for knitting and spinning. Louet spinning wheels. Accessories, tools, dyes, books, quilting supplies, including 100% cotton prints and broadcloth. Classes in knitting, spinning and quilting. 607/656-7669. Open Mon.-Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-3. 1/3

Handspinning Fleeces - Romney's - white and black - some crosses (Tunis, Finn-Ramb., etc.) - Purebred Romney lambs, white & black, rams & ewes. 607/562-8875 or leave message try 607-733-0184). Ezra Wolcott, Deering Hill Farm, Sing Sing Rd., Box 456, Big Flats, NY 14814. 5/12

Flock Reduction: My husband says there are too many sheep. Black and white Romney and Romney crosses, many with lambs at their side. Average fleece weight was 8 lbs. as lambs. Prices are negotiable. Gretchen Sachse 607-347-4396. 2/3

FOR SALE: 22" Harrisville 4-harness floor loom. Folds up and fits in back of car. Great for demonstrating. New leathers and nylon cords. Fully assembled. \$190.00. Also Fr. Angora rabbits. Denise Nunn, R.D. # 1, Box 375, Newark Valley, N.Y. 13811. 607/642-5568. 2/3

Romney Wool: Black, white and grey. A good selection of healthy, long staple fleeces all well-skirted. A few hogget fleeces offer Romney characteristics plus softness too. Gretchen Sachse 607/347-4396. 2/3

Brother knitting Machines. Sales, Service and instruction. Bulky KH 230 and Electroknit KH910 (with computer) on display. 10% discount to guild members. Iranian & Chinese Cashmere ready to spin, natural cream color \$3/oz. postpaid. Assorted colors fine wool yarn on cones \$5/lb. Complete line of Bartlett yarns including sportweight \$12/lb. Clean fleeces in white, silver greys & black available Jan. 1st. Libby Llop, Inverness Sheep Farm, 3079 Fowlerville Rd., Caledonia, N.Y. 14423. 716-226-2788. 6/16

Black or White Ewe or Ram Lambs of Romney, Border Leicester, Corriedale, Lincoln Xbreeding. Available through Autumn with best variety now. Write to D. Clauson, Box 199C RD#1, Odessa, NY 14869 or call for location; Tel. (607) 594-3708. 6/16

For sale: 3 REGISTERED BLACK FINN EWE LAMBS, 2 twins & one triplet. ^{SOLD} Also one black Finn x Targhee ewe lamb, born a twin, and one black 5/8 Finn x Tunis-Dorset ewe lamb, born a triplet from a 14 months old 3/8 Finn ewe with reddish fleece. All lambs were sired by our regis. black Finn ram from Canada. Marianne Horchler, RD # 1, Genoa, NY 13071. 315/497-1542. 2/3

FOR SALE Reg. LINCOLN ram lambs. Also COLORED ram and ewe lambs from a Spinner's flock. Lincoln and Romney crossed on Border Leicester, Suffolk, Cheviot, to give softness, length, and luster, to the fleece as well as size to carcass. Gloria Scannell, Weavercroft Farm, Schodack Landing, NY 12156 (near Albany). 518/732-2916. 3/3

INDIGO DYING SUPPLIES to keep you in the blue! Natural indigo patties, synthetic indigo paste, and Spectralite. Will bring to Saturday group meetings, or call or write for prices and information. Jean Warholic, 280 Ringwood Road, Freeville, N.Y. 13068. (607/539-7648) 6/19

FOR SALE: Healthy, well-established madder plants. \$3.00 and \$4.00 each, depending upon size. Call or write to order. Can bring to guild meetings; small additional charge if shipping required. Don Warholic, 280 Ringwood Road, Freeville, N.Y. 13068. (607/539-7648) 2/2

Loom - 45", 6 treadle, 4 harness Nilus Leclerc with Bench & 12" reed. \$625. Call 607-539-7436. 2/3

WOOLWORKS is now open for custom carding! Shop hours are 9-12, Tues., Thurs. and 10-2 Saturday. Or call for an appointment: 607/272-2697. Special offer through June: I will tease your wool - up to 5# - on the picker for you. After that you will have to tease it (pull the locks apart) yourself. I also have available small quantities of black, white

& dyed wool you can add to your own fleeces for variety, at 50¢/ounce.

This machine does a great job on nice well-washed wool; when your batt or roving is finished you will want to rush off and spin it. It is also excellent for blending angora, silk, and dog hair with wool. But, two warnings: 1. Bring your good wool & you will get good batts or roving in return. Bring your crummy wool and you will get crummy batts or possibly none. 2. Wash the wool well. Use very hot water, 1 cup Joy to 5 # fleece, let soak at least 4 hours. Rinse well in warm water. Spin excess water out in washing machine. NEVER AGITATE by hand or machine. Don't use soap. You can use Obadiah Tharp's spinning & carding oil after washing. 3/3

Spin something different: CARDED COTTON, beautiful & soft, \$3/lb. White & colored Finn & Finn X fleeces, all skirted & extremely clean. For sheep lovers we have sheep books, cards, posters, stamps, potholders & T-shirts! Drum carders, wool & cotton handcarders, and a variety of spinning wheels including Ashford, the new Country Craftsman, and the little Charkha Indian wheel as seen in the movie "Gandhi" (The book-size weighs 2½ lbs. and costs only \$36 including 3 spindles and a skeiner! Attache size is \$39 including skeiner; both are made out of teak wood and are finished and ready to use!) Also ball winders, jumbo flyers, spindles, books & more... SASE for brochures & price list. We sell at the shop or via UPS. Free delivery to Ithaca. THE WOOLERY, RD # 1, Genoa, NY 13071, or call Marianne Horchler 315/497-1542. 3/3

Sent by Jean Currie:

Western Sheep Ranchers Fighting to Survive

By WILLIAM E. SCHMIDT

Special to The New York Times

GOODING, Idaho, Aug. 5 — Only three years ago ranchers grazed more than 40,000 sheep on the lush fields amid the sagebrush hills along the Snake River.

Now there are fewer than half that number of sheep here. Five of the county's major sheep ranchers have sold out, in some cases replacing their flocks with cattle herds. At least one other operator has filed for bankruptcy.

"We like to say that sheepherding is the second oldest profession in the world," said John Faulkner, a third-generation sheep rancher here whose flock of 2,000 is the largest in the state.

know if the industry can survive, at least not the way we have traditionally known it in the Western range states."

It is now, in late summer, that ranchers in Idaho normally move their fattened lambs to market. And with prices this year at barely 50 cents a pound, the lowest in five years, even those sheep operators who have hung on are now talking about getting out of the business.

Mr. Faulkner said that, barring a sharp and unexpected turnaround in the market, he, too, might be forced to sell his entire flock over the next two years.

John Peavey, an Idaho State Senator who is a sheep rancher, said he is looking for buyers for his flock of more than

"Everyone in agriculture is hurting these days," said Mr. Peavey, whose family has been grazing sheep in the scenic central highlands of Idaho since near the turn of the century. "But the difference is that most of your cattlemen and the grain growers are going to bounce back eventually. I'm afraid that sheep ranching is an industry already headed for extinction."

The sheep rancher's problems are a lot bigger than the low prices and high interest rates that have taken a sharp toll on agriculture generally.

There is competition from Australian and New Zealand exports, which now account for about 15 percent of the

domestic lamb market in this country. There is consumer indifference to lamb products. There are the rising costs of labor, including herdsmen and sheep-shearers.

Nearly all of the herdsmen have to be imported. Most of the sheepshearers, as well, are foreigners. But before World War II the sale of wool represented a big part of the sheep rancher's income; it represents less than 15 percent today as a result of synthetic fibers and imported wool.

And, the sheep ranchers assert, there are the continuing losses of sheep each year to predators, such as coyotes. Since the Federal Government banned the use of range poison more than 11 years ago.

Like their old foes the cattle ranchers, with whom they once fought bloody battles over use of the range, the sheep ranchers have a long and rich heritage in the Western states. In the 1930's there were more than 1.8 million breeding ewes scattered over the wide rolling ranges of Idaho alone, supplying natural wool for clothing and fresh lamb meat.

By 1973 the number was down to fewer than 547,000. This year there are fewer than 400,000, and the number is expected to drop even further over the next two years. Idaho is the ninth largest sheep-producing state in the nation.

The decline marks a transition in the industry, away from the traditional range operations, in which ranchers and their herders would move thousands of sheep over hundreds of square miles of Federal grazing lands, and toward smaller flocks.

Producers Are Increasing

In fact, while the sheep population in Idaho declined 12 percent in 1981 and 8 percent more in 1982 alone, the number of producers actually increased to 2,400 from 2,200 as farmers bought small numbers of the animals to graze in pastures.

For American consumers, the changing economics of the sheep industry has made little difference. The per capita consumption of lamb is less than 2 pounds annually, as against more than 63 pounds of beef, according to the Idaho Wool Growers Association.

What it has affected are the small rural communities in sheep country where the local economy has, in large part, been dependent on the sheepmen.

"Sixty percent of the industry is still a range industry," said Stan Boyd, who is the executive secretary of the Wool Growers Association. "But these days, it's just hanging on by its toenails. And when these guys go out, you are going to lose a big part of our Western heritage."

Mr. Boyd estimates the industry pumps more than \$100 million into the state's economy, although the amount is an ever smaller share of Idaho's \$1-billion-plus agricultural economy.

Trucking Rates Are Down

In central Idaho, the number of trucking companies has dropped to two from nearly 10 a few years ago. Trucking rates have also plummeted, reflecting the falling demand by sheepherders. Truckers who charged \$2.10 a loaded mile two years ago are asking only \$1.90 this summer.

Meanwhile, more and more Federal grazing allotments are going unused, which means a loss of revenue to local governments. They share in the fees paid to the Federal Government for use of the land. In the area near Gooding, barely 50 percent of the current allotments are being used.

Like others here, Mr. Boyd said sheep ranchers were in worse shape than other segments of the agricultural economy. He said that even before prices began to fall and interest rates started to climb, the industry was fighting to hang on.

One problem, he said, is that lamb is the only red meat product on which there is no import quota. Ranchers say this makes them vulnerable to what they claim is the "dumping" of lamb products on the United States market by growers in New Zealand and Australia, although the level of foreign imports declined sharply in 1982.

Production costs in those countries are cheaper than in the United States, and the industry is heavily subsidized.

In addition, New Zealand ranchers do not have one problem that sheep rancher here curse with fury: the coyote.

Ranchers say the cunning predator has had free run of the range and sheep flocks since the Federal Government banned the use of the poison, Compound 1080, in 1972. Environmental groups said the poison represented an extreme hazard, not only to coyotes but to other wildlife and even humans.

According to a recent survey in Idaho, the coyote was blamed for the loss of more than 21,000 sheep in the state last year, a loss that cost the sheep ranchers \$1.3 million. That number was more than 76 percent of the total number of sheep and lambs lost, over all to predators, including bears, bobcats, eagles and foxes.

This year, ranchers mounted a campaign to have Compound 1080 relicensed by the Environmental Protection Agency. The agency conducted hearings on the matter in several Western states last spring, but no decision has been announced.

Shepherders Are Essential

Another problem facing the industry is the rising cost of labor, especially sheepherders, most of whom are foreigners who have been imported from Peru, Mexico and the Basque region of Spain.

Sheep ranchers say that these foreign herders, who are raised in sheep-growing regions, are essential to the industry, since only they seem to possess the gentle and seemingly intuitive skill necessary to keep sheep moving easily over the range.

Mr. Faulkner, who is anticipating a loss of at least \$400,000 this year alone, said he had an annual payroll of \$600,000, most of that for herders to run his 12,000-head flock. He said he spent \$12,000 additional a month to feed his hands.

Most herders earn about \$850 a month, including room and board.

Mr. Faulkner said, "In the past the rule has been, 'If you take care of your sheep they will take care of you.' But for the last three years, that has not been the case."

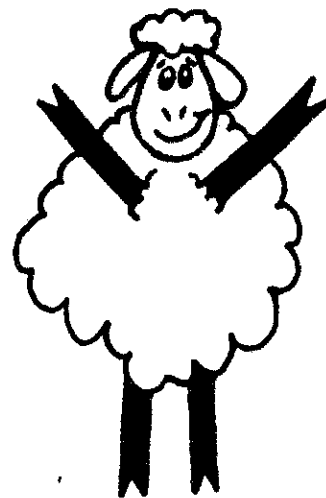
New Zealanders Do Shearing

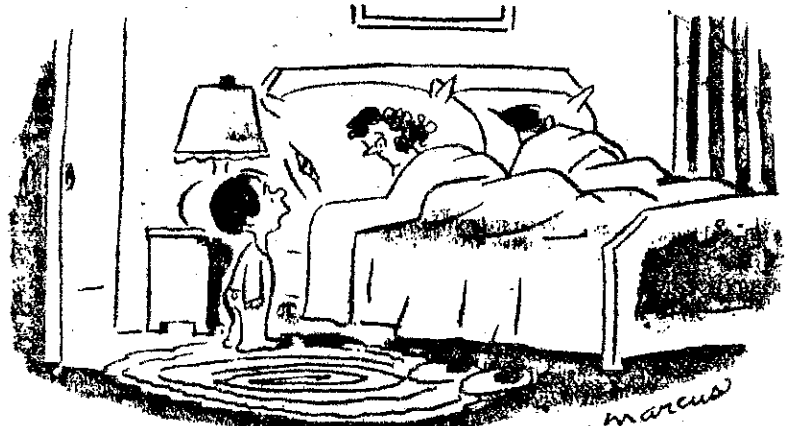
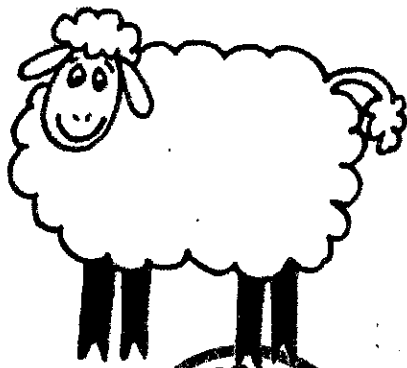
While the competition from synthetic fibers and foreign imports has lessened the value of wool over the years, ranchers also complain about a lack of trained sheepshearers. Much of the shearing these days is done by New Zealanders, who travel through the West in the March-lambing season, when ranchers gather their wool.

One attempt to reverse the slumping fortunes of sheep ranchers has been a growing campaign by sheep industry trade organizations to increase the amount of money spent on promotional advertising aimed at increasing the consumption of lamb products.

At a meeting this week in Colorado, members of the National Wool Growers Association also discussed an attempt to increase exports of American lamb products to the Middle East and the Orient.

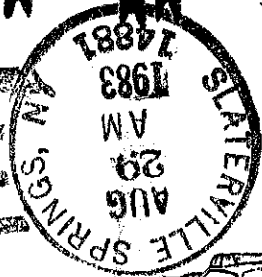
"Only 5 percent of the American public eats lamb," said Mr. Boyd. "If we could just get that number up to 10 percent, I think it could turn the whole industry around."



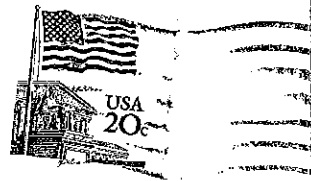


"I was counting sheep when one of them wet the bed."

From the March '83 Web



P.O. BOX 6701,
Ithaca, NY 14851



Sticksane

Kay Riddell,
~~2763 Staterville Rd.,~~
~~P.O. Box 84.~~
~~Staterville Springs, NY 14881~~

*486 Hays Rd.
Ithaca, N.Y. 14850*