



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Pictured are, from left: KC Condon (Coach), Bill Chauncey, Cassandra Chauncey, Cheyenne Edelman and Ashley Currence.

4-H Horse Quiz Bowl Team Places 8th

BROOKINGS — The South Dakota 4-H Horse Quiz Bowl Team coached by KC Condon, placed eighth overall in the Western National 4-H Roundup Horse Quiz Bowl Contest held at the National Western Stock Show in Denver Jan. 5-8.

The Western National 4-H Roundup Horse Quiz Bowl Contest is one of the nation's most challenging competitions for youth interested in horses, attracting top young people from throughout the United States each year. A highly competitive event for young people ages 14-18, the contest provides participants with an opportunity to develop skills in evaluation, decision-making, communication, self-discipline and responsibility.

The South Dakota 4-H Horse Quiz Bowl Team includes; Bill and Cassandra Chauncey, son and daughter of Chad and Jody Chauncey of Mission; Cheyenne Edelman, daughter of Brenda Edelman of Menno; Ashley Currence, daughter of Jeff and Amy Currence of Sisseton. These youth earned the right to represent South Dakota at this national contest after winning the South Dakota State 4-H Horse Quiz Bowl Contest in July.

The team took eighth place among several teams and individuals. The South Dakota 4-H Horse Quiz Bowl Team was sponsored by the South Dakota Livestock Industry Trust Fund.

For more information on how to become involved in the 2012 4-H Horse Quiz Bowl contact Rod Geppert at 605-773-8120.

Experiment Farm Annual Meeting Jan. 31

BROOKINGS — Southeast South Dakota Experiment Farm Corporation invites the public to attend its annual meeting Jan. 31 beginning at 1 p.m. at The Bridges Event Center in Beresford.

This annual event disseminates information to the public about current year's activities at Southeast Research Farm and highlights cutting edge ag-related topics presented by featured speakers.

Featured speakers this year include; Dwayne Beck, Dakota Lakes Research Farm Manager, Pierre, who will discuss ways cover crops, including perennial species can dramatically benefit various cropping systems and Mark Terpstra, president of Marks Seed Company, Perry, Iowa who will explain how to achieve phenomenal soybean yields, 80-plus bushels per acre, by using technology to manage cyst nematode populations and help control other diseases.

Highlights of field research conducted at the station will also be presented. Ben Holland, Extension Feedlot Specialist at SDSU, will speak about beef cattle research results and this summer's feedlot expansion. Bob Thaler, Extension Swine Specialist at SDSU, will talk about lowering nursery barn utility costs, antibiotic effect on gut microbe populations and the effect of reducing particle size on pig performance. Bob Berg, Southeast Research Farm Manager, will summarize experiments designed to maximize corn and soybean yields, evaluate performance of a wide range of soybean maturity groups at various planting dates, plus an integrated crop and livestock project using forage sorghum and corn silages and an Animal Waste Management System designed by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service.

For more information contact, Bob Berg at robert.berg@sd-state.edu, or Ruth Stevens at ruth.stevens@sdstate.edu or call 605-563-2989.

SDSU Extension Announces iGrow Horses

BROOKINGS — An exciting new service for horse enthusiasts launches Feb. 1 — iGrow Horses is courtesy of SDSU Extension. "iGrow Horses" is a web portal for up-to-date news and information about the equine industry.

Visit www.iGrow.org/livestock/horses to stay current about horse health and production; local, regional and national equine events; emerging equine issues; and news from the SDSU Equine Program.

To serve the numerous horse owners who own or rent properties for their equine partners, iGrow Horses will feature a "Small Acreage" tab to address general acreage ownership issues, including; natural resource management, goal setting, facility design and common acreage practice how to's.

Specific topics will include: materials for corrals, shelters and fences; buying quality, affordable hay; grazing management; forage and water quality testing; manure management; and a look at other acreage enterprises such as niche livestock opportunities.

Articles written by industry experts will also cover helpful hints for caring for horses and, the latest scientific research and what it means to you and your horse. New information will be available weekly, so plan to visit often and learn with us.

For more information about iGrow Horses, contact SDSU Extension Equine Specialist, Rebecca Bott, leader of iGrow Horses, at 605-688-5412 or rebecca.bott@sdstate.edu; or Extension Small Acreage Field Specialist, Mindy Hubert, leader of iGrow Horses: Small Acreages at 605-394-2236 or mindy.hubert@sdstate.edu.

I-29 Dairy Conference Set For Sioux Falls

BROOKINGS — The Seventh Annual Dairy Conference will Focus on Global Dairy Issues under the theme, "Now and in the Future." The I-29 Dairy Conference will be held Feb. 8-9 at the Ramkota Inn in Sioux Falls.

Producers should complete the online registration form at www.sdstate.edu/sdces/resources/animals/dairy/i-29.cfm by Feb. 1 to ensure room availability at the Ramkota. The event is coordinated by dairy extension specialists from South Dakota State University, North Dakota State University, Iowa State University, University of Minnesota and the University of Nebraska. Additional partners coordinating the conference include Midwest Dairy Association and Southwest Minnesota Dairy Profit Group.

Speakers and topics with global impact headline this year's conference.

Registration for the full conference includes the dinner and the keynote presentation on Feb 8 and sessions on Feb. 9.

For more information, contact Melinda Bennett: 605-688-4116, email at melinda.bennett@sdstate.edu or Jim Paulson, jcp@umn.edu More information and the full program schedule is available at: www.sdstate.edu/sdces/resources/animals/dairy/i-29.cfm.

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Nothing Sheepish Here

Emery Farmer Meeting Mutton Demand With Genetics

BY LORETTA SORENSEN
P&D Correspondent

EMERY — When Rex Laufmann started raising sheep more than 25 years ago, the Emery, farmer's goals were modest: keep livestock on his farm place and raise animals both he and his family could enjoy.

During the past five years, as domestic demand for mutton has continued to strengthen, Laufmann has developed genetics that are maximizing his production potential. With ewes that raise three and four lambs each spring, Laufmann is helping meet the need for feeder lambs.

"Marketing experts tell us there's no way we'll ever saturate the feeder lamb market," Laufmann says. "The demand for mutton in the U.S. has been growing steadily for the past 10 years. Sheep require a lot of hands-on attention, which means it's unlikely that you'll see large sheep herds. That's good news for producers like myself who have about a hundred ewes. In the past, we were selling our feeder lambs for 40 and 50 cents a pound. Now we're realizing \$2.10 a pound. And there's no indication that market prices will be going down anytime soon."

Laufmann's core sheep herd possesses Polypay genetics. His first attempts at improving genetics led him to do some linebreeding, cultivating the best genetic characteristics of his ewes.

"That alone improved productivity," Laufmann says. "I started seeing some black lambs from the Polypays. When I found the Romanov buck that I've been using, it was like adding dynamite to my genetic program. He had almost all triplets in his background for three generations. That's almost unheard of for sheep."

Laufmann says he "stumbled" across his genetic program in his search for a purebred buck. When he read about some impressive offspring statistics of the Romanov buck owned by a producer in Iowa, he investigated the claims. His research revealed that the buck had been used at an Iowa Research Station in a USDA research program designed to create a new sheep breed.

Romanov sheep originated in northwestern Russia and were imported to the United States in 1985. They're used mainly as meat animals and also produce some wool/fur. When they're born, they are covered with hair. When they're a few weeks old, the hair falls off and is replaced by wool. Romanovs can also be used to help manage vegetation. Laufmann has found that his buck also introduced high reproductive rates to his herd.

"The first year I used the Romanov buck, the 12 ewes he bred all had twins," Laufmann says. "Those same 12 ewes produced a total of 30 lambs the following year. Because Romanovs are so hardy, I've only lost one or two lambs every year. The lambs are really vigorous. It may sound rather odd, but they seem to be smarter than some other sheep breeds because they figure things out more easily."

In addition to their high fertility rates, Romanov sheep will mate year round. Purebreds are black when they're born and turn gray as they mature. Carcasses are very lean. The thick wool is often used for rugs, mats and wall hangings.

Laufmann also introduced some Montadale genetics in 2008 to increase hardness and carcass qualities in his lambs. To overcome a slight disadvantage of the Romanov breed, lower average daily gain, he plans to develop a small herd of Clun Forrest ewes because they produce significantly higher percentage of milk fat for lambs.

"I'll probably go to Montana to find the ewes I need," Laufmann says. "I'll build up a small flock that I can use to raise some feeder lambs and breeding stock. I've been selling some of my lambs as breeding stock in the last few years. Producers who are using them have just been ecstatic with their production results."

Because raising sheep is a sideline for Laufmann, he carefully plans lambing so that only a few ewes lamb every two weeks. Before they're



PHOTO: LORETTA SORENSEN
Rex Laufmann of Emery is realizing profit on his sheep herd due to strong market demand and genetics that consistently produce multiple births.

ready to lamb, ewes are confined so both they and the lambs have adequate protection from weather conditions and the rest of the sheep herd. Those practices help him keep death loss at a minimum.

"With the multiple births that I'm seeing, I check ewes frequently to make sure the lambs are thriving in those first few hours," Laufmann says. "For someone who's just starting to raise sheep, having the multiple births may be a challenge. If a producer has a large herd out on pasture, they may have less success with multiple births. Whenever a ewe has triplets or quads, I keep her and the lambs in a pen by themselves for a week to 10 days. I think that really helps the lambs survive."

When lambs are between 40 and 80 pounds, Laufmann takes them to the Tripp-Newell sale barn at Tripp. Typically, the lambs are purchased by someone who feeds them to a weight of 120 or 130 pounds before they're ready to be harvested.

Even though Romanov breeds will produce lambs three times in a 24 month period, Laufmann lambs just once per year. He believes he realizes greater overall success by giving his ewes the extra time to recover from lambing.

With his improved genetics, Laufmann noticed

he was able to reduce input costs related to feed products. With just the Polypay genetics, he was providing a commercial supplement and extra grain at lambing time. Now he's only feeding extra grain prior to breeding season to enhance fertility.

"I used to use nurse maid to give the ewes an extra boost," Laufmann says. "That probably cost about \$5 per lamb. With the Romanov genetics I haven't had to use either the extra grain or the supplement once the lambs are born. When I know ewes are ready to lamb, I do increase their grain ration, but my overall input costs are still lower than they were."

Increased disease resistance, fewer hoof problems and elimination of wool blindness are all additional benefits of the Romanov genetics.

"I like the glossy black color of the lambs and most of the lambs have a white star on their forehead," Laufmann says. "They don't pick up all the cockleburs and mud that the Polypays did because they don't have as much wool on their legs as other sheep breeds. They seem to be cleaner in general."

"I've more than doubled my lamb crop with this genetic strategy, so I'll keep doing what I'm doing for now," Laufmann adds.

Regional Soybean Success Seminars Slated Next Week

South Dakota Soybean invites farmers to attend one of the regional Soybean Success Seminars this winter. These educational seminars will focus on management practices to help farmers increase yields and grow their production.

"The Soybean Success Seminars are an excellent opportunity to learn what's working for other farmers throughout the state. We've analyzed two years worth of soybean yield contest data and best management practices to share at our regional meetings," said Kevin Scott, a farmer from Valley Springs and South Dakota Soybean Association board member.

South Dakota Soybean will host seminars in the following regional locations:

- Yankton — Feb. 1; 10 a.m.-Noon; Best Western Kelly Inn
- Mitchell — Feb. 2; 10 a.m. to Noon; Highland Conference Center
- Sioux Falls — Feb. 2; 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Best Western Ramkota Hotel

Seminars are open to all soybean farmers, and are free to attend. Registration is not required. Each seminar will conclude with a free, hot meal for attendees.

The seminar agenda is scheduled to include:

- Best Management Practices — South Dakota Soybean has compiled two years of agronomic data through the Soybean Yield & Quality Contest. Learn what South Dakota's top soybean farmers are doing to increase yields.
- Quality Focus — Growing

better soybeans involves more than just increasing yields. Bean quality plays a key role when it comes to increasing the value of your soybean crop.

- Soybean Industry Update — Get the latest on key industry highlights, including what's happening with the soybean check-off and the South Dakota Soybean Association.
- International Marketing — Close to two-thirds of South Dakota's soybean crop is exported each year. Learn more about international customers and why they're important to business.
- Q&A Session — Agronomists, industry leaders and yield contest participants will be on hand to answer questions and discuss best practices.

For more information, visit www.sdsoybean.org or call the South Dakota Soybean Office at 605-330-9942.

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