

Texas Sheep & Goat Expo

Final Report for “Lets Grow” Grant

The 2017 Sheep and Goat Expo was another very successful educational program, similar to the three prior years. The primary objective of the Expo is to offer an educational event that meets the current needs of sheep producers and enhance the adoption of management practices and technology that will improve productivity and profitability. Funds received from the “Let's Grow” grant were used to help with facility cost and bring in presentations from across the US to offer new ideas and techniques that can be used by Texas wool sheep producers. Presentations on out of season lambing, use of quantitative genetics, wool marketing initiatives, and integrated management systems aimed at maximizing lamb production encouraged and motivate Texas wool sheep producers to adopt practices that will improve productivity, profitability, and increase breeding sheep inventory in the short term and into the future.

The Texas Sheep & Goat Expo addressed the following goals of the Productivity Improvement Committee of the Sheep Industry Roadmap.

- Support the adoption of quantitative genetics by the U.S. sheep industry.
- Support a national initiative to establish and support producer groups that are committed to improving producer productivity and increasing producer profitability. This shall include adopting new technology and using best management practices.

2017 Texas Sheep and Goat Expo Impact Summary:

Over 350 people attended the 2017 Texas Sheep and Goat Expo. There was a significant increase in participation from producers and exhibitors the previous year. The participant survey results were as follows:

- 87.34 percent of respondents rated the expo from good to superior on a four-point scale.
- 91 percent indicated that they gained knowledge in production areas that will benefit their operations.
- 82.67 percent plan to adopt at least one management practice or technology taught during the Expo.
- 2017 participants manage over 15,000 head.
- 79.73 percent anticipate an economic benefit from their participation.



A **Performance Ram Sale** was conducted at the conclusion of the Expo and only rams with credible performance data were offered in the sale. This was the first time that Texas ranchers had access to rams with EBVs. Rams with breed specific index EBVs above breed average sold for \$300 more per head than rams with below average EBVs for the breed index. In addition, all rams with above average EBVs sold; whereas, only 50% of rams without EBVs or below average EBVs received a \$500 minimum bid.

Presentations during the 2017 Texas Sheep and Goat Expo addressed the wool sheep producer's needs and targeted the Sheep Industry Roadmap goals:

Importance of Performance Data in Breeding Animal Selection

Dr. Dan Waldron

Using Genetics to Manage Parasites

Dr. Joan Burke

Wool and Mohair Industry and Market

Dr. Ronald Pope

Understanding Premium Niche Markets

Dr. Dawn Brown

Guardian Dog Demonstration

Dr. John Walker & Bob Buchholz

Nutrition Basics: Condition Scores, Supplemental feeding, What hay should I buy?, and Alternative Feeds

Dr. Reid Redden, Dr. Larry Redmon & Dr. Travis Whitney

Live Animal Evaluation and Performance Data Analysis

Dr. Dan Waldron, Preston Faris, Marvin Ensor

Health Management Tips

DVM Panel

Strategies to Increase Production Efficiency

Producer Panel: David Fisher, Grant Giles, Barry English, Dan Persons, Craig Demere

Finewool Breeders Consortium

Producer Panel: John Helle, Ben Lehfedlt, Matt Benz & Dr. Reid Redden -AgriLife
Extension Sheep and Goat Specialist

Benefits of Being a Part of a Producer Group

Producer Panel: John Helle, Ben Lehfedlt, Dan Persons, & Mike Jernigan