

ASI Let's Grow Narrative Summary: Midwest Commercial Sheep Production Workshops

The Midwest Commercial Sheep Production Workshops were held at the Iowa State University Hansen Center and the ISU Meat Lab on June 17th. The nearly 40 attendees were from four different states. The three main points of emphasis were accelerated lambing, determining market readiness for lambs and integrating sheep production with row crop production.

The list of the topics and presenters are below. A more detailed list of the topics and speaker bios can be found in the schedule enclosed with this document. The workshops acknowledged the support from the ASI Let's Grow Fund in several ways. The ASI Let's Grow Coordinator Alan Culham opened the event explaining the significance of the ASI and the Let's Grow Program. We also acknowledged the ASI Let's Grow Fund sponsoring the event in our printed materials and website.

Maximizing Resource Use by Extending the Lambing Season Logistics of Grazing Cover Crops and Crop Stover

Richard Ehrhardt: Michigan State University

Identifying Profitable Sheep: How to Grow Your Profits and Reduce Labor:

Dan Persons: Rafter P Ranch and Shearwell

Evaluating Finish of Live Market Lambs

Brad Anderson: Mountain States Lamb

Mark Henry: Centralized Ultrasound Processors Lab

Dan Morrill: Iowa State University

Evaluating Finish of Lamb Carcasses

Brad Anderson: Mountain States Lamb

Dan Morrill: Iowa State University

Producers Share Experiences with Integrating Livestock and Crop Production

Clark BreDahl: Mormon Trail Farm

Richard Ehrhardt: Michigan State University

Dan Persons: Rafter P Ranch and Shearwell

How the NSIP Can Benefit Sheep Flocks of Differing Sizes and Goals

Rusty Burgett: National Sheep Improvement Program (NSIP)

Attendees were given surveys to determine what type of producers attended the event, to assess the applicability of the topics, and to evaluate what impact the workshops could have on their operation. Based on the surveys that were returned 100% of attendees indicated the workshops were valuable and would attend again.

In the survey, attendees were asked to indicate how large their flock was. Based on the feedback there was a wide range of producers at the event ranging from large commercial flocks to people considering getting a start in the sheep industry. One of our goals was to make the event appealing to a wide range of producers, and based on the data the event was a successful in accomplishing that.

Flock size	Percentage of Attendees
0 (new producers)	25%
1-49 ewes	25%
50-199 ewes	17%
200+ ewes	33%

Attendees were asked to rate each individual workshop component at the Midwest Commercial Sheep Production Workshops. Ratings were based on a scale of 1 to 10. A '1' score indicated that component of the Midwest Commercial Sheep Production Workshops was not informative or helpful to their business and a '10' rating indicating that it was maximally informative and helpful to their business.

Topic	Rating
<i>Maximizing Resource Use by Extending the Lambing Season</i>	8.3
<i>Identifying Profitable Sheep</i>	8.1
<i>Evaluating Finish of Live Market Lambs</i>	7.2
<i>Evaluating Finish of Lamb Carcasses</i>	8.1
<i>Logistics of Grazing Cover Crops and Crop Stover</i>	8.8
<i>Producers Share Experiences with Integrating Livestock and Crop Production</i>	8.3
<i>How the NSIP Can Benefit Sheep Flocks of Differing Sizes and Goals</i>	8.3

Based on the ratings, only one of the topics received an average rating of less than 8. The highest rated topic provided producers with new insights on how to integrate sheep production into the row crop landscape commonly seen in the Midwest.

Attendees were also asked to estimate what percent increase in efficiency these workshops likely would have on their farm or business. All attendees indicated that the workshops would have a positive impact in efficiency at their operations. The large number of attendees that indicated that the Midwest Commercial Sheep Production Workshops likely would increase the efficiency of their operations by 2-5% or greater than 5% indicate that the workshops aligned with the ASI Road Map and were very applicable to producer needs.

Increase in efficiency	Percentage of Attendees
0%	0%
1-2%	25%
2-5%	42%
+5%	33%