

# VERMONT SHEEP & GOAT



Shearer Philo Marcotte and his son, Aiden, practice shearing positions on the lambs at Shelburne Farms during the Shearing Clinic on April 26.

Photo by Mary Lake

FROM THE EDITOR

## Remembering the big picture?

By Mary Lake, Bethel, VT

If you are anything like me, this time of year is hectic, thrilling, slightly overwhelming. Lambing is done and grazing just beginning. And, while the sheep are ready to take to the fields to enjoy warm nights under the stars and long days in the shade of apple trees, I will likely be fretting. Fencing, breeding, shearing, culling, worming, butchering, selling, buying, the list goes on. These are the moments I need to think of the big picture.

Every aspect of farming is hard work, but there are certain tasks that might inspire you to ask, "Why am I doing this again?" In March, I asked Gwen Hinman to help me shear sheep at Neil Urie's Bonnieview Farm in Craftsbury. On our lunch break, someone asked how we got into shearing. Gwen and I looked at each other and Gwen replied, "Well, my dad was a shearer and he taught me." She gestured toward me and smiled, "I don't know what her excuse is."

I'm not sure I know either, to be honest. But, I think it has something to do with place, culture and legacy. Farming – especially raising sheep – has a rich history in Vermont. I'm proud to tell the story of that past and I hope I can have a positive impact for the future. What I want more than anything is to share the joy farming has given me with my community and family.

I hope you all take part in some of the great community events the VSGA offers and supports. Maybe you will be as lucky as I was to catch the sweet moment pictured here of shearer Philo Marcotte teaching his son Aiden the shearing positions on some lambs at the shearing clinic at Shelburne Farms on April 26. Jim McRae and Chet Parsons led a group of beginning shearers with the help of five or so other professional shearers. It was a fun day full of hard work and humor. Check out the calendar on Page 11 to find upcoming events, and stay tuned to our Web site, [vtsheepandgoat.org](http://vtsheepandgoat.org).

## MID 2014

### IN THIS ISSUE

#### HEALTH

*Herbs for increased well-being*  
Page 2

#### FIBER

*Jessica Dillner shares fiber tips in the form of a series of articles. In this issue: How to sell your wool*  
Page 3

#### GETTING STARTED

*New farmer starts a column on lessons learned hobby farming*  
Page 4

#### PROFILE

*Joe Emeneiser: UVM Livestock Specialist*  
Page 6

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Newly elected officers and directors*  
Page 7

#### ON THE FARM

*Strafford Border Collie breeder shares some tips for better dog training*  
Page 8

#### COMMUNITY

*Carol Johnson Collins tells the story of her central Vermont spinners guild*  
Page 9

#### CALENDAR

Page 11

The Vermont Sheep & Goat Association Newsletter is edited by Mary Lake ([mary.m.lake@gmail.com](mailto:mary.m.lake@gmail.com), (802) 338-2250), and is a venue for sharing stories, images and reports related to sheep and goats. If you enjoy writing, reporting or photography and have content of your own or are looking for an assignment, contact Mary. Send submissions, comments or questions to the e-mail above.

## HEALTH

# Adding herbs to feed regimen may help improve stock health

Sites, books list plants as preventative treatments and healing remedies

By **Serena Fox**  
Stowell Farm, Waitsfield

As a shepherd of a small flock in central Vermont, I am constantly meeting new folks and learning new ways to improve the overall quality of life here on the farm. I was delighted to discover the benefits of natural remedies and foraging the wild things.

Historically, sheep have intuitively helped themselves to the bounty provided by our natural environments — and they grazed and moved to new pastures, achieving their own natural rotation system. Free-range animals will pick and choose what they need for optimum health.

Twentieth century farming methods, however, control forage and can increase health risks and susceptibility to parasites.

At our farm, we administer CD&T and Rabies vaccinations, and Bose and Vitamin B supplements. We have also benefited from chemical dewormers, but we are excited by the prospect

“When the misty vapors  
start to freeze  
and the sheep and goats  
do sneeze and wheeze,  
then, quick!  
With herbs ward off  
disease: Hollyhock root  
and raspberry leaves,  
peppermint and  
chamomile if you please.”

*From Lavender Fleece Farm's Web site:  
[Lavenderfleece.com/herbals](http://Lavenderfleece.com/herbals)*

of incorporating herbs to heal and boost immune systems. Increased health allows a flock to more successfully combat parasites and illnesses.

I list a few good herbs to consider and some Web sites to visit if you choose to research further. For those of us who are not inclined to use the Web, *The Complete Herbal Handbook for Farm and Stable* by Juliette de Bairacli Levy was recommended to me.

**GARLIC:** Kills bacteria and

parasites. Enhances immunity

**DANDELION:** Improves digestion

**MINT:** Aids digestion. Sniffing essential oil is effective for bloat and digestive upset

**YARROW:** Ideal for wounds: astringent, cleansing. The scent repels flies

**ECHINACEA:** A great cold remedy and immune booster. Also reduces inflammation

**GOLDENSEAL:** An antibiotic.

*As a side note concerning natural remedies, cider vinegar can be sprayed on hay daily to boost the overall health and well-being of your herd.*

## Learn more on herbs for sheep and goats

### Web sites:

- [Lavenderfleece.com/herbals](http://Lavenderfleece.com/herbals)
- [Darnitchars.com/Herbstoya.html](http://Darnitchars.com/Herbstoya.html)
- [Skylinesfarm.com/parasitecontrol.htm](http://Skylinesfarm.com/parasitecontrol.htm)
- [Fiascofarm.com](http://Fiascofarm.com)
- [Reedbird.com/articles/page13/page13.html](http://Reedbird.com/articles/page13/page13.html)

### Books:

- “*The Complete Herbal Handbook for Farm and Stable*” by Juliette de Bairacli Levy
- “*Raising Animals by the Moon*” by Louise Riotte.

## FIBER

# How to sell your wool

A series of articles exploring the ways to make money from your fleeces by **Jessica Dillner**, fiber artist and sheep and goat breeder, of Dillner Hillside Farm in Montgomery Center.

## #1: Raw Fleeces for the handspinner

Yes, you can sell your wool - *right off the sheep* - for good money. Does \$5 to \$20 a pound sound good?

You don't have to invest in expensive mill-made products to sell. The wool off your sheep can be valuable to the handspinner market if you take care of it. Maybe you don't think you have the knowledge or have the time to manage your wool production, but some consideration on several factors can make a big difference making YOUR WOOL worth extra \$\$/lb.

Setting aside what specific breeds of sheep handspinnners love, we begin with: how to sell the wool from a "regular sheep".

The sheep should be sheared at a time appropriate for a proper length and strength for the wool. Shearing around lambing, either just before or just after, makes certain the potential "wool break" (stressed and weakened wool growth) is not in the center of the wool fiber. The fleece length should not be too short or too long for the

breed. This is 2 to 3 inches for fine wools, around 4 inches for down wools and 5 to 7 inches for longwools. A fleece that is too short can be totally unusable to a handspinner. A wool too long may be too matted or damaged on the tips causing processing limitations. A good shearer is always very important. Second cuts are annoying to a handspinner and a waste of good wool.

Once the fleece is off, it should be skirted ASAP to get rid of anything nasty. Here we are talking about anything a spinner does not want to spin: manure, heavy grease tags, short belly wool, leg wool with massive burdocks, etc. When in doubt, do not include it in a fleece to sell. Maybe set it aside for another purpose. Now, in the handspinner market "VM" is a very important word. It stands for vegetable matter: HAY! Hay is very time consuming to remove as you are spinning. And, hay in your sock yarn will make your feet itch. This is a challenge to anyone who raises sheep in Vermont since we depend on feeding hay for so many months. The easiest way to deal with this is to remove the wool with the most hay so it does not contaminate the rest of the fleece. The worst parts are the back of the neck and

maybe down the back. Smaller sheep farms may try putting coats on their sheep in the winter to keep the hay off. This is very effective and handspinnners will pay top dollar for covered fleeces because they are so clean.

If you raise longwool sheep, you will shear twice a year - in spring and again in fall. This gives two types of fleeces. The spring shearing may have some hay and could be processed more to help clean it. "Summer wool" from the fall shearing can be very clean since the sheep was on pasture and not eating hay. These fleeces could be kept to sell raw.

It is possible to grow wool for a whole year in Vermont without too much hay in it. Care taken in how the hay is fed is also helpful. After a proper skirting, the fleece should be as dry as possible before storage so it does not mold. Put the fleeces in bags and boxes and protect them from insects and direct sunlight for long-term storage.

After determining that the wool is healthy, is an appropriate length and relatively free of VM, the spinner is looking for characteristics pertaining to the breed: fineness, crimp style, uniformity and color. Handspinnners do love colored wool, but white is always important. A uniform fleece is one where the wool on the hind leg is as nice as the wool on the neck. This trait is

Continued on Page 5

## GETTING STARTED

### Goat or sheep?

*The first in a series about hobby farming by **Bobbi Rood** of Warren, VT.*

When people ask me why I have goats and now sheep, I haven't got a good answer. I had never been interested in goats, in fact claimed to dislike them. We had Icelandic Horses for several years, nearly 30, and we had enjoyed them and being part of that community. When I stopped riding because of a health issue, and the last horse was gone, I was trying to figure out a way to manage our pasture without machines. I had read about using goats to clear brush. Without any hesitation my husband pointed out that the brush hogging we do once a year is the cheapest solution.

He's right. But I didn't drop the thought there. I was daydreaming about goats or sheep in our pasture and he gave me a book by Brad Kessler, *Goat Song*, which I think was supposed to dissuade me by demonstrating all of the hard work involved. Silly man, didn't he read the warning on the cover: "Be forewarned: reading this book will probably make you want to get goats." After reading Kessler's book, I was enthralled and started to think seriously about whether I wanted milk, meat or fiber goats. I was considering milking goats because I have lactose intolerance and people told me that I might digest goat milk better. I found a source of wonderful fresh goat milk in Hinesburg and experimented by drinking a quart of it one week. Still got a bellyache. Turns out that goat milk has more lactose than cow milk, but I digress.

I encountered Lavender while en route from Hinesburg to Waitsfield about the time I was

finishing reading Kessler's book. Un-named and un-identified at the time, she looked like a scraggly Icelandic sheep. In the Icelandic horse world, anything Icelandic has its appeal. I had been considering Icelandic sheep and this clinched it. I would get sheep despite having been impressed by the intelligence, personality and dog-like qualities of goats. After several days of passing Lavender in my car, and being disappointed and heartbroken when she wasn't there, tethered by the side of the road, to

commune with, I decided to stop and have a better look. We had made eye contact several times and she often had two chickens around her. She seemed to be lovely and docile.

Upon closer viewing, I drew back in confusion. There was something different about her and I was suddenly no longer sure that this was a sheep. My intuition told me that this might be a goat. But I wasn't sure. Feeling like a fool, I researched the difference and learned that others have shared my

confusion. One difference between goats and sheep is the position of the tail. Tail up is a goat, tail down is a sheep. Was it possible that my beloved Lavender was a goat?

I was love struck. I left a note for Lavender's owner and he called me to let me know her name and that she was indeed a goat, a colored Angora goat. A fiber goat - mohair. So, I could have my goat and knit it, too. Ah, I reasoned, I will have an unending supply of yarn for the knitting projects I never finish. By now I was hooked. We had 10 acres, lots of brush, a rocky sloping hillside back pasture, an empty hay barn and stalls, and my growing curiosity. A backyard fiber goat farmer was born.



Photo courtesy of Bobbi Rood

The author's sheep and goats enjoying hay during this past winter.





Bobbi Rood watches as Mary Lake shears one of her Angora goats in April at her Warren, VT, farm. Carol Collins, who took the photo, was there to help Bobbi with skirting and determining the destination and function of her fiber harvest.

There are many decisions involved in inviting small ruminants to your farm. I learned most of these after I got started, but this is me, always wanting to dive in head first. I suggest that anyone considering sheep or goat farming take all of Chet Parson's Master Shepherd classes a year or two in advance of taking this step. Farming is farming, whether you are a hobbyist or considering this as a vocation. As Chet reminded me at the Famacha class I attended, I am in this for fun. There have been a lot of parts that are fun, but there has been some heartache, too. This has been a year of learning about fencing, pasture management, parasites, fiber, spinning, barn management, breeding and the fragility of life. In the next few issues of this newsletter, I plan to cover some of what I have learned and share my experiences. I welcome readers to send me their questions and comments and hopefully be a resource to those backyard farmers like myself. Readers can reach me via [brood@madriver.com](mailto:brood@madriver.com).

The author's horse watches as a goat licks up some minerals.  
Photo by Bobbi Rood.



## From Page 3

# How to sell your wool

desirable and is dependent on the sheep's genetics. Sometimes coarse britch wool is not suitable to a handspinner's project.

After surveying handspinners on the social networking site Ravelry, here were some of the most desirable sheep breeds. Romney and Shetland were two definite favorites.

**Fine wool favorites:** Cormo, Merino, Corriedale

**Down wool favorites:** Dorset, Montadale, Southdown

**Longwool favorites:** \*Romney\*, Blue-faced Leicester, Coopworth

*Primitive:* \*Shetland\*

Do not overlook crossbred sheep, they can have some amazing fleeces and often have some unique qualities. One of the most beautiful fleeces I have ever seen was a four breed cross at the New Hampshire Sheep and Wool Festival, the price was \$125 and it sold quickly.

In conclusion, spend a little more time on those fleeces and you can ultimately get paid for it. Be thoughtful of the needs of the spinner and charge an appropriate amount for the fleece.

## Wool resource books

*The Fleece and Fiber Source Book* by Deborah Robson and Carol Ekarius, Storey Publishing

*The Field Guide to Fleece* by Deborah Robson and Carol Ekarius, Storey Publishing

*In Sheep's Clothing* by Nola and Jane Fourier, Interweave Press

## PROFILE

# Vermont welcomes new livestock specialist

Joe Emenheiser joined UVM Extension in January and has been making the rounds getting to know local producer groups. Lucky for us, he has a soft spot for sheep. **Serena Fox** sits down with him at her Stowell Farm in Waitsfield.

**Joe shows up right on time - 4:30 Monday afternoon.**

He has been in Montpelier participating in an Act 148 discussion at the Vermont College of Fine Arts. Now, he is wrapping up his day with a visit to our farm. He knocks, enters the farmhouse, sheds his shoes and sits with us at the kitchen table to discuss our farm and flock, Vermont, agriculture and UVM Extension.

His gracious and genuine demeanor is apparent. He is comfortable, approachable and pleasing — with clear green eyes, an honest face, and bright smile. He is clearly passionate about livestock: their well-being, purpose, efficiency and productivity. He has paid his dues in academia and is now eager to help folks in Vermont farm more knowledgeably and effectively.

“We can do a proper job,” he says.

Joe grew up in the small town of Felton, PA, with his parents and three brothers: Jon, Jake and Jeff. Together, they ran a small farm on 15 acres, raising just enough livestock and produce for their own table. They had pigs, chickens, Holstein steers, and goats to keep the weeds down. His work with sheep began as a 4-H project. He started with market lambs, and then built a breeding flock by shearing for ewe lambs instead of cash. This gave him experience with just about every breed imaginable. From 4-H, he learned the importance of keeping meticulous records and evaluating performance traits. He became active with both livestock and meats judging and was successful at the national level.

In 2001, Joe enrolled in Oklahoma State’s Animal Science program. It was a good fit for an agriculture enthusiast



Joe Emenheiser, University of Vermont Extension Livestock Specialist, showing one of his Suffolk rams. You can reach Joe at his St. Albans office: (802)524-6501 ext. 434 or [joe.emenheiser@uvm.edu](mailto:joe.emenheiser@uvm.edu). Photo courtesy of Joe Emenheiser.

who preferred practical livestock production to basic research, Joe notes. He continued to excel in livestock and meats judging. His honors project involved comparing carcass traits in Suffolks, Katahdins, and their crosses. In 2002, he started a purebred Suffolk flock that he maintains to this day. He kept his flock on a rented farm outside of town and used them to apply classroom learning with ultrasound, artificial insemination, and nutrition.

After graduation, he managed 250 ewes on a farm in Richfield Springs, NY, where he marketed lambs to restaurants in Manhattan, as well as through an on-farm ethnic trade.

“The more profitable the market, the more fickle,” he recalls. He also spent a year working as a butcher in Pennsylvania.

Joe received his Master’s at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in 2009, creating tools for genetic evaluation of carcass traits in sheep. He employed ultrasound and worked with computer programs for the National Sheep Improvement Program (NSIP). He scanned lambs at multiple points in their lives, collected data and developed equations to model fat and muscle

growth. Ultimately, he could offer recommendations on how to manage field data.

His next stop was managing 2,200 ewes in Avon, NY. It was intensely hard work, but Joe recalls it fondly. He gained a new perspective on production: efficiency and time usage were paramount.

Since then, his experiences have mounted and expertise has grown. In addition to contracting for NSIP and LAMBPLAN in Australia, Joe attained his PhD at Virginia Tech, working with grassfed beef. He studied pasture rotation and stockpiling strategies, mature cow size and calf creep systems, body composition, hay consumption, reproductive success, and, ultimately, the bottom line.

Joe is a research and numbers guy with a production background in Animal Science. These traits fuel his devotion to successful agriculture.

Joe says he is encouraged by the resurgence of small farms and the local food renaissance. At the same time, he stresses the importance of scientific rigor and reality. On a small scale, success or product quality is often defined by “feel good” factors, but as the scale increases, product and profits speak. Efficiency is key. Looking for balance between the two is essential.

“Things aren’t working if the farmers can’t afford to eat the products they produce,” he points out. “Heritage breeds were great for our ancestors because they selected them for their needs at the time. We have to remember that purpose still comes first. Not all animals with the same name are created equal.”

The UVM Extension Selection Committee

reached out to Joe while he was still attending Virginia Tech. They interviewed him, hired him, and waited an entire year for him. He submitted his dissertation on December 25, 2013, and joined UVM on January 2.

“There was light at the end of the tunnel,” Joe says.

Sitting, now by candlelight, having pushed away our dinner plates, I ask him two last questions:

SF: So, what would you say is your biggest passion?

JE: What I love to do on my own (and work with producers to do) is genetic selection: taking a population and shifting it to meet my needs and the needs of others. Domestication is this great thing where we have a huge responsibility to be good stewards of the animals for the betterment of humankind. Practical purpose: this should be the reason behind our production and food systems.

SF: Why Vermont?

JE: I had always heard good things about the attitude and the state in general. Before I interviewed, Vermont and New Hampshire were the only two states I’d not visited. When my interview presentation was webcast across the state, what struck me was that producers and regular community folks were listening and asking questions! That participation and enthusiasm is really important. It’s a small state that I can reach at the ground level, with less bureaucracy above me. I can take science and experience and work with people to really change stuff. That’s meaningful. Good people working together to do the right things.

## VSGA Board of Directors

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**JOIN THE BOARD: We always welcome new board members. If interested contact Bay Hammond.**



## ON THE FARM

# Breeder shares training tips for working dogs

*Steve Wetmore has been raising, training and trialling Border Collies for over 30 years. Participating in trials develops and tests skills essential to working on the farm. Border Collies have been bred to succeed at trials, making their potential for being a handy farm companion superior. Trialling is not for everyone, but a Border Collie may still be a great fit for your farm and lifestyle. Here are some of the things he has learned from working with Border Collies.*

**By Steve Wetmore  
Strafford, VT**

I believe that a positive attitude toward people is very important to develop in a working dog. Raised and socialized properly, Border Collie pups will be friendly and trusting.

Young dogs respond well to freedom and affection, however, along with this, they need fair but consistent discipline. Corrections must be firm enough to achieve results, but not excessive. Use repetition and re-enforcement to instill the habits you want to encourage.

Border Collies need an environment that provides plenty of physical and mental stimulation. I find they learn best when lessons are positive and fun.



Steve Wetmore's Floss works a ewe. Floss is expecting her second litter of pups this spring.  
Photo by Katherine Mercier

## Staying calm and quiet will help keep the dog calm and quiet

Important commands that should be taught early on are: come/recall, lie down, and no. Dogs that understand and respond to these basic commands will be useful around stock, even as youngsters. Teach these commands in the yard away from stock, and be sure your dog knows them before taking it to sheep.

First lessons on stock are best if taught in a small corral, where things can be (somewhat) controlled. Expect the dog to forget what he learned in the yard, and be ready to interfere and make sure he realizes he must obey.

Each dog is an individual; some calm and biddable, others more excitable and intense. Staying calm and quiet will help keep the dog calm and quiet.

Short training sessions will keep the dog keen and interested.

Remember that training a stockdog means getting control of their instincts. Sometimes, the dog with stronger instincts will be harder to control.

Working with a helpful and responsive dog is very rewarding and an experience unlike any other, so don't give up!

To contact Steve Wetmore about raising, training or trialling Border Collies, contact him at [swwet@valley.net](mailto:swwet@valley.net), or call (802) 765-4466.



## COMMUNITY

### Spinning guild celebrates 32 years, founder shares the story

Fiber artist and educator, **Carol Johnson Collins**, of Singing Spindle Studio in South Duxbury, VT, recounts how she helped bring spinners together, and how the group has grown into something more meaningful than she ever expected.

#### *The Beginning*

In 1982, I attended a spinning class in Stowe with Paula Simmons, a famous leader in the field. I am glad I took the class, because there was a very friendly woman, named Dot Stein, who welcomed me to sit in the seat beside her. I told Dot that I'd been trying to start a guild since 1980, but I couldn't find enough spinners. The room was filled with spinners and wheels, so obviously there were spinners. Dot offered to come to my house every week and encourage me to call different individuals until we had a small group. Dot did what she said and came every week for several weeks. I made calls and people responded.

As the years passed our members came from as far south in Vermont as Stockbridge, as far west as Malone, New York, as far north as Williston, VT, as far east as Brookfield. We meet anywhere that a member or visitor invites us. We have met often at Sue Gleiner's shop in Stowe called Sheep Thrills and at my shop and studio in So. Duxbury, called Singing Spindle Spinnery. We also annually meet at The Trapp Family Lodge as one of our members has a very special connection there. Often we meet in members' homes, church basements, and libraries. We experimented with many different days and times that would be best for as many members as possible. Currently we meet on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. In the past, we charged dues, which we put toward speakers' fees. Currently we charge no membership dues. "Show and Tell" is our big event along with an amazing mini potluck lunch, which is very popular! Each member brings special talents and abilities to

the group and all have a great attitude about helping anyone who needs help. For several years, we did public demonstrations at The Washington County Fair and Field Days, we've even been on a Vermont Public Television show.

#### *Helping Each Other*

More than once we gathered a group to pick and card a great quantity of wool for one of our members who could no longer do the preparation because of a stroke, but could still spin. We've visited members who were hospitalized. We have picked berries for a member who needed our help because of family illness.

#### *Workshops and Classes*

Here are just some of the workshops we have provided for our members and friends over the years:

- Navaho Plying, How to make 'I-cord', Japanese-Style cord called Kumihimo, Hat-felting workshop, Planting, Growing, Retting, Spinning Flax.
- How to spin dog wool and Llama fiber, Commercial Dyeing and Vegetal Dyeing using Goldenrod, Sumac and Elderberries, Wheat Weaving.
- Basket-weaving with Cattail Rush, A Norman Kennedy workshop in wool preparation as it was done long ago for spinning on The Great Wheel.
- Erv Heneke taught us spinning on The Great Wheel and brought and set up several Great Wheels in my shop/studio.

Continued on Page 10

From Page 9

- Robin Russo taught us a very interesting and well-attended workshop in everything to do with Silk.
- Ward and Cheryl Heneveld of Enosburg Falls, brought their fabric collection from India, Africa and Indonesia, to teach us how the different kinds of fabrics were produced.

### **Field Trips**

As a group we have gone on many field trips: Jules and Helen Rabin's bread baking business and their amazing oven, Joe Lee's farm, in Plainfield, Nancy Schade, an artist, Marilyn Magnus' sheep and weaving studio. We visited Jane Woodhouse, in Peacham, and she showed us her weaving business and the dyes she sells. The Vermont Fiber Factory in New Haven. Sue Gleiner arranged a trip to The NY Sheep and Wool Festival. For our 20-year celebration the guild was invited to a summer home in Biddeford, Maine for a few days. While there, I led a workshop in dyeing with Goldenrod and Bayberry Leaves, which are abundant by the shore.

### **The Most Important Thing of All**

All of us have helped new spinners and each other at these meetings. We have shared our excitement for a fiber, a color, a blend, a project, a book, a new method of dyeing, a tricky knitting technique, etc., for all these years. It is what we do, and I think that these are all important functions of a group such as ours, but we're more than that.

After 32 years, one moment stands above all the others. The group had just arrived at my shop/studio for our monthly meeting. We were chatting with each other before the meeting really began. One member expressed a problem without giving details.



Photo by Carol Johnson Collins

Red from the cold, but shiny from the lanolin, participants of Chris Hall's wool skirting workshop pose for a photo.

*Get you hands in the wool!*

*Carol has also participated in a great annual tradition within the VSGA community: Chris Hall's wool skirting workshop. Chris Hall owns Flora/Fauna Farm in West Topsham, VT, and hosted this year's workshop in April. Carol Johnson Collins and Phyllis Rockwell, owner of Newfound Farm Wool Works, have both led the workshops over the past couple of years, and Carol will continue to lead into the future. Contact her for info on next year's workshop.*

As the group realized the seriousness of the concern she expressed, one by one, all the members of our guild drew closer forming a circle around the one in need. She teared-up. Gently members expressed concern, encouragement, understanding. The one in the center felt better because of the caring love of the group. I was in awe of what our group had become. This experience outstretched my greatest imagining of what the guild could be.

You can visit the VSGA Web site to read the full, much longer, detailed version of this article. If you want to contact me, Carol, to visit or join the guild you may call 802-244-8025 or send an e-mail to: [singspin@madrivern.com](mailto:singspin@madrivern.com). All are welcome!

## CALENDAR

For further event details visit our Events page at [vtsheepandgoat.org](http://vtsheepandgoat.org)

### June 20

Annual Wool Pool: Wool collection for grade and yield buying through Mid States Wool Growers Association. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., VTC Vet Tech Barn at the end of Water Street in Randolph Center. Contact: Mary Lake, (802) 338-2250, [mary.m.lake@gmail.com](mailto:mary.m.lake@gmail.com)

### June 22

Master Shepherd Course: *Sheep and Goat Nutrition*. Basic nutrition and nutritional requirements based on animal needs. Nutrition for weight gain and parasite control. \$60 for VSGA members, \$75 for non-members. 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Brigid's Farm, Peacham, VT. Contact Chet Parsons, [chester.parsons@uvm.edu](mailto:chester.parsons@uvm.edu)

### July 11

Natural Dye Class: An intro to using plants and other natural material yarn. \$83. Contact: Kim Goodling, Grandview Farm, Washington, VT. (802) 685-4693.

### July 13

Master Shepherd Course: *Pasture Management*. Basics of rotational grazing, how to set up paddocks, condition scoring sheep, parasite management. \$60 for VSGA members, \$75 for non-members. 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Open View Farm, New Haven,



Photo by Mary Lake

Chet Parsons shears a sheep at April's shearing clinic at Shelburne Farms.

VT. Contact Chet Parsons, [chester.parsons@uvm.edu](mailto:chester.parsons@uvm.edu)

[chester.parsons@uvm.edu](mailto:chester.parsons@uvm.edu)

### July 25

"Plein Air" Felting: Making a felted purse with clasp. For those who have some felting experience. \$85. Contact: Kim Goodling, Grandview Farm, Washington, VT. (802) 685-4693.

### August 24

Master Shepherd Course: *Parasite Control*. Overview of common parasites and their effect on sheep, goats, and camelids. Treatment, management techniques and FAMACHA training. (\$15 extra for FAMACHA card). \$60 for VSGA members, \$75 for non-members. 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. The Parsons' Farm, Richford, VT. Contact Chet Parsons,

### September 14

Master Shepherd Course: *Sheep Reproduction and Breeding*. Genetics, breedstock selection, preparing for breeding, AI, using a teaser ram. \$60 for VSGA members, \$75 for non-members. 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Smokeshire Hill Top Farm, Chester, VT. Contact Chet Parsons, [chester.parsons@uvm.edu](mailto:chester.parsons@uvm.edu)

### October 4 & 5

26<sup>th</sup> Annual Vermont Sheep and Wool Festival: Animals, vendors, shepherd workshops, fiber arts classes, demonstrations, and more! \$6 (children under 12 - \$1, seniors - \$5) Tunbridge Fairgrounds, Tunbridge, VT. [www.vtsheepandwoolfest.com](http://www.vtsheepandwoolfest.com)



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Vermont Sheep & Goat Association is offering once again the

# Annual Wool Pool

*The date has been set and the location secured. So, bring your wool and make some money! Light refreshments provided, but be sure to have some water on hand. It's a hot job loading wool in June!*

**Date:** June 20<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Location:** Vermont Technical College in Randolph, VT.

**RSVP:** Mary Lake, (802) 338-2250, mary.m.lake@gmail.com. Let us know how much wool you'll be bringing and we'll let you know the best time to drop it off to avoid bottlenecking.

**More Info:** Visit [www.vtsheepandgoat.org](http://www.vtsheepandgoat.org)

## The Wool Pool Run Down

At VTC's Tech Barn, we will have a bagging station and a weighing station. At the bagging station, you can load your wool into large wool bags provided by Mid States Wool Growers Association if you want to, but it is not necessary. A Mid States representative and VSGA volunteers will then weigh your bags and record weights and lot numbers. You will be given a receipt of your weights and lot numbers at the wool pool. About two weeks later, you will receive a check from Mid States and an invoice matching your receipt. For more info about this grade and yield process, visit: [midstateswoolgrowers.com/marketing.html](http://midstateswoolgrowers.com/marketing.html).

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**Vermont Sheep & Goat Association**

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