

Wyoming Wool Growers Producer's Bulletin

February
2009

WWGA to meet Feb. 21

The WWGA will meet Saturday, Feb. 21, 2009 for its annual "Mid-Winter" Membership meeting. The meeting will be held in the conference room at the UW Livestock Research facility located approximately five miles west of Laramie on Hwy 230 and is set to begin at 9:00 a.m.

Featured as part of the 2009 Mid-Winter will be a tour and demonstration of the new "GrowSafe" system that has been specifically designed for use by sheep and is the first system of its kind in the world. The GrowSafe is a computerized system that operates through RFID tags that work in concert with electronic measuring devices to provide performance data heretofore either unavailable or difficult or expensive to obtain. This data includes information such as feed conversion, feed consumption, daily rate of gain, etc. UW is the first entity in the country to have a GrowSafe system specifically designed and adapted for sheep.

Other agenda items include an update on the 2009 legislative session, a review of other sheep related research currently being conducted or recently completed by UW, a report on the recent ASI national meeting in San Diego, and a discussion on current predator control efforts and activities throughout the state.

The meeting is scheduled to conclude by 12:00 p.m. so that attendees can take in the UW/TCU basketball game, which begins at 1:30 p.m. Tickets for the game can be purchased by calling 1-800-922-9461 or through the UW Mens Basketball website at <http://wyomingathletics.cstv.com/sports/m-baskbl/wyo-m-baskbl-body.html>.

For more information, call the WWGA office at 307-265-5250.

UW: Wyoming predator management program cost effective

Laramie — Wyoming's predator management program relating to livestock is cost effective, according to an analysis by the University of Wyoming's College of Agriculture.

There is a \$1.60 to \$2.30 benefit to livestock producers in Wyoming for each dollar spent controlling coyotes and other predators that prey on sheep and cattle, says David "Tex" Taylor, a professor in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics and a community development specialist with the UW Cooperative Extension Service.

The result is annual net benefits of \$3.5 to \$7.9 million to Wyoming's agricultural producers, he says.

The team examined the death loss from predation on the profitability of a typical Wyoming cattle ranch, Tay-

lor says.

Using a four percent calf loss as the average, ranch profitability declines by 20 percent if the loss increases to six percent. With an eight percent loss rate, profits decline by 40 percent, while a 10 percent loss rate results in a 65-percent decline in profitability.

"The numbers at the upper end were surprising," says Taylor, who explained that as predator losses mount, profitability declines sharply because fixed costs for the ranches remain constant.

The Wyoming Animal Damage Management Board (ADMB) awarded the department \$33,000 to conduct the first phase of a two-year project.

Phase one focuses on various aspects of predator control relating to livestock, while phase two, scheduled

for completion later this year, will examine the benefits of the predator management program in relation to wildlife.

Phase two will also examine other aspects relating to livestock predation, including effects on ranch profitability and how local economies are impacted. The ADMB awarded the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics \$34,300 to complete the second phase of the study.

Conducting the analyses are Taylor, Associate Professor Roger Coupal, Assistant Professor Ben Rashford and Associate Research Scientist Tom Foulke of the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics. They are working closely with state Predator Management Coordinator Kent Drake with the Wyoming Depart-

ment of Agriculture's Division of Technical Services.

"It is good to see that, historically, predator control has been effective for Wyoming livestock producers," Drake says. "We look forward to seeing the second-year study results regarding predator control relationships with wildlife and community economics."

In phase one, the UW team examines trends in sheep and cattle losses to predators from 1965 to 2006 using the Wyoming Agricultural Statistics. Taylor says the losses fluctuated widely, from a low of five percent for lambs in 1968 to a high of approximately 16 percent for lambs in 1993 and 1994. Losses have since declined.

Though the team wasn't able to determine possible reasons for annual increases or decreases in livestock losses due to predators, Taylor says, it may indicate increased efforts to manage predators in Wyoming are effective. His team's report states coyotes remain the primary predator for sheep and lambs in the state, accounting for 65 to 80 percent of the total loss.

2009 Dues Paid Update

The following members have paid their 2005 dues at the levels indicated, or made other contributions to the WWGA. The WWGA THANKS YOU!!!! (as of February 02, 2005- Members names, other than Business Associates, will appear only once per year) Please Note- We have made every effort to make sure all who have paid their dues or made contributions to the WWGA are recognized, BUT if you have paid your dues or made a donation or contribution and do not see your name: (1) accept our apologies and (2) let us know so that we can rectify the problem.

Business Associates- \$200.00 minimum (the WWGA wants to extend a special "THANK YOU" to the following "Business Associate" members for their contributions and encourages all of our members and industry supporters to patronize these businesses whenever possible. Without their support, many of the functions the WWGA undertakes could not be possible!! Center of the Nation Wool, Inc. • Mountain Plains Agri. Service • First Interstate Bank - Buffalo • High Plains Power Inc. • Wyoming Livestock Roundup First National Bank Buffalo • Great Plains Wool Company

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Guard dog resolution passed

During the recent ASI Annual Meeting in San Diego, Calif. several resolutions and directives were passed that have direct and positive bearing on the sheep industries of Wyoming and the West.

One directive brought by the Wyoming and Colorado delegation asked for focus and attention from the ASI Executive Board and Resource Management Council on the issue of conflicts between livestock guard dogs (LGD) and recreational users of federal lands. Several instances have arisen across the West in recent years wherein guard dogs have been implicated in injuries received by recreational users of federal lands who have either intentionally or unintentionally wandered into areas being guarded by LGDs.

The directive authorizes the ASI Executive Board and Resource Management Council to appoint a Working Group to address the issue and seek resolution and solution to the potential problems arising from these conflicts. The Working Group will be appointed soon and will meet by conference call to begin its work.

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Wyoming Wool Growers Association
811 N. Glenn Road • P.O. Box 115 • Casper, Wyoming 82602 • 307-265-5250
More News and Information online at www.wyowool.org