

Vermont Sheep and Wool Festival 2005
Animal Pens and Breed Display

April 15, 2005

Dear Shepherds, Goatherds, Camelid-herds, etc.,

In an effort to make this year's festival bigger and better than ever, and to bring more balance between our being a great fiber event and a wondrous place to learn about keeping sheep and goats for meat, dairy, and fiber, and other fiber animals, we have set a goal this year to bring more animals to the festival than ever before to show people the marvelous diversity and great satisfaction which can come from living one's life with these animals. The workshops and demos will also include offerings to assist people in beginning such an adventure, and in continuing their education, while they farm.

AND, in an effort to have accommodations that please all people regardless of their feelings about how these animals should be housed, we offer the following possibilities:

Pens inside the Miller Exposition Center, with the vendors: we are hopeful that all dairy animals and the featured type (not breed!) of sheep this year, **hair sheep**, will be willing to be housed in this building. It is a heated building, which is locked up tight at 6 p.m. each night. You can get access to your animals through the person holding the key. Animals will be checked and watered in the night and early morning hours. There is a cement floor in this building, and plastic will be put down in the pens, so that you will need to bring lots of absorbent bedding to up reduce ammonia from the urine and soak puddles! If you are uncomfortable with these arrangements, you may, of course, opt for the second housing arrangement, as follows:

Pens in the open barn where they were all housed until last year. This building has dirt floor, (bring your own bedding). It has open window areas on the sides, and though we will not allow anyone but people with pens and vendor spaces into the barn at night, those people will have free access. Elaine Clark and I will sleep in our trucks so that we can see the animals at all times and we'll check frequently. It is our hope that shepherds bringing sheep and fiber goats for the breed display will be comfortable housing their animals in this building. Of course, you may opt to be in the closed, heated building if you prefer. (To encourage people to come to the barn, we are doing a "door prize" thing, where people will be given a ticket to fill out and will need to put that ticket into a receptacle IN THE BARN, in order to qualify for the prizes. That should bring them out at least once. AND, the prizes will be awarded from the barn, so that's twice.)

Neither of these spaces is perfect, we understand, but what in life is? Nevertheless, we hope that by offering these two different choices, more people will be confident enough to help us in our vision of having many different breeds on display.

In either case, vendors can opt to be directly across from their pens so that they can answer questions about their animals as well as their goods, and hopefully, sell both!

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Instate Sheep and Goats:

The State of Vermont requires sheep and goats going to shows to have **rabies** shots at least 30 days before the show. It is NOT required that a veterinarian give these shots, but should you choose to give the rabies vaccine yourself, so that we are practicing due diligence and being responsible, you must fill out the form enclosed, and for your own sake, have someone witness the vaccinations and sign as witness. You must bring this form to the festival in order for your animals to be unloaded. You also need a **health certificate** from your own vet, **or have our vet inspect the animals Saturday** before unloading for a small fee. If your vet inspects the sheep, s/he will identify them on the form by tag number, gender, age, and record rabies shots. AND, the federal government requires **scrapie tags** on all animals going to shows, regardless of whether you follow the mandatory or voluntary scrapie program.

Interstate Sheep and Goats:

There are different requirements for sheep and goats coming into Vermont, depending on what state they are coming from. All breeders bringing sheep or goats from other states should **check with the state vet**, Dr. Mike Wood, at 802-828-2421. Animals from out of state will not be admitted without the proper credentials and tests.

Camelids:

All alpacas and llamas need particular tests to participate in shows. **Check with the state vet**, Dr. Wood, 802-828-2421, for specifics.

In addition, our vet will inspect all animals on site Saturday morning. We reserve the right to refuse animals admission on the advice of our veterinarian. S/he reserves the right to exclude any animal not meeting our standards, as well as the federal and state regulations. The VSGA and our appointed veterinarian will be the sole judge of the fitness of any animal and his/her judgment shall be final.

Please read the enclosed pen rental agreement, fill it out, sign it, and return it, by June 1 to be listed in the program. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call the coordinator of pen rentals, Betty Berlenbach, 802-263-9345, or lambfarm@sover.net.

See you the first weekend in October, along with some of your animals. Remember, when I've brought animals, I've never gone home without having sold at least one! And I've always had people call me during the year and buy more animals, as a result of having been there, and had the opportunity to tell people about raising sheep in general, and why I raise my particular favorite breeds.

Sincerely,
Betty Berlenbach