

LAMB & WOOL

Volume #4

A Newsletter for the Iowa Sheep Industry

July/August 2018

Retiring Director Claudia Putnam's Short Note to Members and Friends

So far my free time has been spent in the garden, harvesting garlic scapes for a delightful pesto, picking and processing strawberries and raspberries, and of course, weeding! I am also a pretty skilled manure mover; I use the enriched bedding as mulch in the garden. It is just me, the pitchfork, shovel and wheel barrow. I make multiple trips back and forth in the early morning before it gets too hot; thus I get to watch the fog lift and the sun rise.

I have always had a small flock of crossbred sheep and some purebred Shetlands. But, as I am growing older, I am looking for something a little bigger than the Shetlands, smaller than the Suffolks, something easy to handle, and appealing to my eye. I was able to purchase ten registered Clun Forest ewes and a ram from a nearby breeder who is dispersing his flock. I will focus on raising this versatile breed, known as multi-purpose animals, kept for meat, wool, and milk. I have always wanted to try my hand at making sheep cheese, hope the ewes will cooperate after lambing next spring, how hard can it be to milk a sheep? My neighborhood fiber mill, High Prairie Fibers, will process my fleeces into roving or yarn, which will be made into rugs, either braided or hooked. I will enjoy eating lamb and having the pelts made into warm lambskin throws for my chairs and my couch.

I am planning to put up Premier ElectroNet fences and allow the sheep to work in the landscape of my yard. I have several beds that I am eliminating this year, an overgrown raspberry patch and a thornless blackberry patch that was planted in a sunny spot 30 years ago and now is in the shade of a maple. The sheep and the guard llama will clean up those spaces for me very nicely, making it much easier to mow.

I am hoping, too, to spend more time with my family, especially my grandchildren! Plus, I will continue as the clerk at the Kalona Sales Barn where I get to see hundreds of sheep every Wednesday, and network with other shepherds!

As the Director of Industry Relations for the Iowa Sheep Industry Association, I made many new connections and learned many new things. The Iowa Lamb Foodstand at the Iowa State Fair is a great concession you just don't want to miss. The Iowa Sheep and Wool Festival really showcased the industry's many facets. I will always appreciate the knowledge garnered from the webinars offered by the ASI, the great recipes available from the American Lamb Board, and cognition and the kindness of the members of the ISIA board.

Thank you,

Claudia



Claudia Putnam and Marsha Spykerman, former Directors of Industry for ISIA at the Sheep and Wool Festival in Ames June 2018.



*Claudia Putnam, retiring director, enjoying garlic in the garden.
Putnam enjoys creating new recipes from her gardens.*

Scrapie: What You Need to Know

Scrapie is a fatal, degenerative disease affecting the central nervous system of sheep and goats and is one disease in a group of diseases known as Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE's). Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE or "Mad Cow Disease") in cattle, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in deer and elk, and Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease in humans are also in this group of diseases. Neither Scrapie nor CWD cause disease in humans and Scrapie has been present in the United States for over 50 years.

Scrapie is a slowly developing disease that takes several years to cause clinical signs after an animal is infected. Clinical signs of Scrapie include: scratching and rubbing, loss of coordination, weight loss, biting of feet and legs, changes in behavior or temperament, head-pressing, lip smacking, and gait abnormalities, including high-stepping of the forelegs, "bunny-hopping", and swaying of the rear end of the animal. Eventually, the animal is unable to stand and dies.

Why do we have a Scrapie Eradication Program?

The National Scrapie Eradication Program (NSEP) began in 2001 when the Sheep Industry believed Scrapie was a disease that could and should be eradicated and proposed the eradication of Scrapie to the USDA.

1. Animals moved from infected flocks may spread Scrapie to other flocks.
2. It is estimated that the presence of Scrapie in the US costs sheep and goat producers \$10-20 million dollars per year. These costs are from lost export

of breeding stock, semen, and embryos to other countries, increased disposal costs, and losses in productivity.

3. The presence of Scrapie in the US could also be a consumer confidence issue. It is good to remember that at one time it was thought that BSE didn't cause disease in people but was later found to cause variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, a fatal TSE disease in people. A lot of us remember when the BSE positive cow ("the cow that stole Christmas") was found in the US and how it devastated the cattle market. Imagine the cost to sheep and goat producers, if consumers believed that Scrapie affected people in the same way as BSE!

All sexually intact sheep departing from the farm, whether for change of ownership, marketing/slaughter*, or any other sale or lease**, or to attend an exhibition are required to have Scrapie ID. This includes adult breeding animals and ewe lambs and ram lambs of any age. Wethers under 18 months of age do not need Scrapie ID. Official Scrapie ID for sheep in Iowa is a Scrapie ear tag. Tattoos are not recognized as official Scrapie ID in sheep in Iowa.

*Animals under 18 months of age moving directly to a slaughter facility (not through an auction market or dealer) do not require official ID. **Males which are leased out must be identified to the owner's flock, and the owner must keep records as to the males' movements.

When selling animals that require official ID: If the animal does not already have an official Scrapie ID ear tag, then place your

official Scrapie ID eartag in the animal before moving from the farm, and it is recommended that you link the Scrapie ID eartag number to your other production records on the animal. If the animal was not born in your flock, and still has the original official Scrapie ID ear tag from the previous flock, then you do not need to apply your ear tag. If the original tag has fallen out, apply your Scrapie Flock ear tag and make a record showing the tag you applied. Scrapie Identification is mandatory when animals leave flocks and where and when you acquired that animal. Never remove official ID. Create a record of all sales showing the number of animals sold, a description of the animal, the date, and the market or buyer. It is recommended that you also record the official Scrapie ID of the animals sold. All sheep and goats sold privately other than to slaughter require a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) issued by an Iowa licensed, accredited veterinarian. (You do not need a CVI to sell through a licensed livestock market or dealer).

To order FREE Official Scrapie Flock ID Ear Tags, or Register Your Goat Tattoo, call toll free: 1-866-USDA-TAG (1-866-873-2824). Please note: Ear tags take 3-4 weeks to be delivered. Stay prepared and organized.

Please report sheep and goats in Iowa that are showing clinical signs that are suspicious of Scrapie to Dr. Sharon Fairchild @ 515-669-3727 or Dr. Greg Schmitt @ 515-669-5633 or a State or Federal veterinarian near you.

Information used with permission from American Sheep Industry and Iowa USDA websites, 2018.



Jacob Ram

The Jacob is a unique breed. Their most striking features are their four horns, two vertical center horns and two side horns curling along side of the head, and their spotted black and white fleece which is prized by hand spinners and weavers. The Jacob is an old, unimproved breed whose origins are obscure to say the least. Some say they are the result of the earliest recorded selective breeding as referenced in the Bible. Others claim they descend from Moorish sheep brought from Spain or Africa or from Norse sheep from Scandinavia and the northern Scottish islands. Jacobs came to Britain via the Iberian Peninsula and have been raised there for over 350 years. Until recent times, Jacobs were kept at only a few large estates in England and thought to be in danger of extinction, but they are making a comeback. The Jacob is classified as a "rare" breed by the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy. *Information used with permission from Sheep 101.info, photo courtesy of Hansen Agricultural Student Center staff.*

Japan Reopens Market to U.S. Lamb

By Peter Orwick, American Sheep Industry

Effective July 11, Japan reopened its market to U.S. exports of meat and meat products from sheep (including lamb) and goat for the first time in 14 years. Products eligible for export to Japan must meet the requirements described on the USDA website referenced in this report. Japan's market for imported sheep and goat meat was valued at \$169 million in 2017.

Japan Now Open to American Lamb

Nearly 15 years after Japan closed its borders to American lamb during the cattle BSE issue in 2003, the country has reopened to imports from the United States. And, it couldn't come at a better time.

"Retail sales of lamb and mutton are on the rise in Japan," read a story on the Global Meat News website earlier this year. As is the case in the United States, lamb consumption is relatively small compared to other proteins in the country, but continues to grow. Japanese consumers have tended to eat lamb mostly in restaurants, "but supermarket sales of lamb and mutton nationwide are on the rise," the report continued.

Last year, Japan imported \$169 million in sheep and goat meat, primarily from Australia and New Zealand,

to supplement domestic production. But now Japanese consumers will have another option. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service issued notice of the new market for American lamb on Wednesday, July 11.

"We've been aggressive in calling for the re-opening of this market to American lamb for years," said American Sheep Industry Association President Mike Corn of New Mexico. "Trade is such an important issue all around the world right now, and it's important for American lamb producers to be able to compete in a global market. With the opening of Taiwan and Japan in the last three years, we're increasing our producers' ability to do just that."

ASI reiterated its desire to open the Japanese market in a letter to President Donald J. Trump's transition team before he even took office in January of 2017. The sheep industry's position on this valuable market has been emphasized in meetings with agriculture and trade officials in the administration, as well as congressional leaders.

To read more about the guidelines for U.S. meat exports to Japan, go to <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/international-affairs/exporting-products/export-library-requirements-by-country/Japan>.



Rhonda McClure's photo of twins won the adult entry as attendees' favorite. Get out there with your camera and enter next year!

2018 State Fair Food Stand Ad

Iowa Sheep Industry is pleased to announce that The Johnson's are managing the Lamb Food Stand at the 2018 Iowa State Fair again this August. Shifts are from 9am-3pm and 3pm-9pm and we are very flexible on times. Chuck & Carolyn ask for about seven (7) people for day shift and four (4) for night shift. Volunteers receive free fair tickets and will feed you incredible food during your shifts! "We have a lot of laughs and meet a lot of great people," says Carolyn Johnson. Please sign up now for your shifts and remember to stop by our stand while you visit the fair this year. Thanks everyone!

Call or text Carolyn at 515-314-9274.
Contact Chuck via call/text at 515-468-1570

Sheep for Sale

Registered Suffolk ewe and ram lambs. Fast growing structurally sound with lots of loin. All rams are RR and ready for fall breeding season. Also have a yearling ram, proven sire with several his progeny we are keeping. Stewart Family Suffolk, Newton, IA. Contact Barb at 641 521-7981

Contact Information

Please contact board members with questions.

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Regina Frahm

641-521-0086

Gina.frahm@gmail.com

Board Secretary

Duane Sprouse

319-461-5611

dupat@cloudburst9.net

Board Treasurer

Michelle Harland

515-205-9804

harlandsouthdowns@gmail.com

Please submit your name and reasons for desire to serve on the ISIA Board's open positions.

Voting occurs at the Annual meeting in October. Contact Regina Frahm for details.

Directors-at-Large

Marty Breeden

641-260-0914

Breedenfarms@netins.net

Howard Lindaman

641-752-3490

sandprairiepolypays@gmail.com

Randall Vos

641-625-4248

vosrand@windstream.net

Director of Industry Relations

Laura Carlson

515-29-15430

info@iowasheep.com

Iowa Sheep and Wool Promotion Board Chair

Carl Ginapp

19998 Vine Ave

Mason City, IA 50401

carl@cmgkatahdins.com

Bookkeeper

Lauren Petersen

jacobpetersen29@gmail.com

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Iowa Sheep Industry Association

P.O. Box 161

Newton, IA 50208

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Industry Relations Director

info@iowasheep.com

www.iowasheep.com

Outstanding Producers

By Laura Carlson

The sun slowly set in a burst of blues, pinks and reds on the horizon as Sherry and Roger Olsen walk with me on their farm, RSO Livestock, on a warm June evening. A backdrop of familiar sheep sounds drifted on the wind as the livestock managers explained their farm's history.

Dr. Sherry Olsen began the history. "We have lived in the "Randall Curve" in Hamilton County, Iowa since April 2003. Prior to then, from 1987 to 2003, we were located in northeast Ray County, Missouri just two miles north of my parents' farm. When we relocated to the present location, we sold our farm to my youngest brother and his wife where they have established their home and are raising three boys."

"Where we are located in Hamilton County has this deep, black soil devoted to crop production. We were able to purchase ground that had been in crops. We seeded down this ground and built a fencing system to that we can rotationally graze our ewes. There are seven paddocks and we rotate the ewes through the paddock every five to seven days. All other feed and hay supply is purchased from an outside source," continued Dr. Olsen. "Our focus is the production of rams and replacement females — Hampshire, Hampshire-Suffolk crosses, and Dorsets. We do sell a number of market lambs for FFA and 4H projects. Lately we've had requests for lambs that are purchased to fill freezers. For those requests, we deliver them to the Story City Locker in Story City for processing."

Dr. Olsen's foray into the sheep industry began simply: "I actually married into raising sheep, although as a toddler I can remember Dad having a few ewes that sold when we purchased another farm and moved. Roger's background in sheep began as many do: he was that youngest of four children and always got the "last pick" of the cattle and swine to exhibit for his 4-H projects. Becoming tired of that scenario, he purchased three Hampshire market lambs from the Iowa State University Sheep Teaching Farm and thus began raising sheep. Coincidentally, he named those three market lambs Doc, Don, and The Other One. "Doc" for Dr. Warner, the livestock judging team coach at Iowa State University; "Don" for Don Hummel, the sheep teaching farm manager at ISU; and then, well, 'the other one'. We still enjoy working with Don in the sheep barn every year at the Iowa State Fair. One of Roger's original three market lambs finished amongst the top ten lamb carcasses at the Aksarben 4H Livestock Show and Rodeo, in Omaha when all market lambs exhibited were required to be harvested and compete for carcass awards. At that time, over 1,000 market lambs were exhibited in this show. We're pretty proud of that effort."

"Roger and I have been married for 31 years. Initially we met at the American Royal Livestock Show and Rodeo in Kansas City. I was working for the American Shorthorn Association and he was fitting cattle and exhibiting Hampshire sheep.

The following year we met again, this time at the Minnesota State Fair, where he was fitting a string of Polled Hereford cattle and I was sent to the fair to work the Shorthorn show. On our first date I felt sorry for him and bought him supper. Little did I know that the year before he had been robbed of all of his money at the Royal. He had vowed that he would never again carry cash and if you check his billfold today, you'll find that is still true," laughs Dr. Olsen.

The Olsen's early years provided good experience in herd management. "In Missouri, we ran a 200 head flock of Hampshire and Hampshire-Suffolk cross ewes of our own. Roger was the shepherd for Houghton Hampshires in Polo, Missouri (a 750 head flock). This breeding season we will expose 70 to 80 head of ewes to begin lambing in early January. Of these, the older ewe lambs will be exposed to also lamb as yearlings. Not all producers do this, but for us it allows that ewe to raise one more lamb crop for us. We don't flush those ewe lambs; however, they regularly lamb twins and produce the milk to raise them. However, a manager must be careful to watch the condition of those yearling mothers as they milk, as they need to maintain condition to breed on time to then fit into the breeding cycle with the mature ewes," explain Roger and Sherry Olsen.

The farm tour continued through a barn where rams affectionately greeted the Olsen's. "Go ahead, feel that muscle across the shoulders, that is the meat we breed for in our sheep," encourages Roger Olsen. "Above each stall is posted the ram's lineage, we are very particular about our bloodlines."

The couple do not hire outside farm help and work as sole managers and operators. Bruce Sellers, world-champion sheep shearer from Chariton, IA, has sheared ewes for the RSO Livestock for 30 years. "I shear the rams and lambs myself," said Roger Olsen.

Explaining how their operation works, Dr. Olsen answered, "We primarily utilize natural service at breeding time, but also utilize artificial insemination on key ewes. This allows us to bring new genetics into our flock; however, we do have our rams' semen collected and stored for both personal use and available for other producers. We market our sheep via private treaty sales but do regularly consign to Spring Corporation and Black and White Sheep Sales, El Reno, OK; Midwest Stud Ram Sale, Sedalia, MO; Iowa State Fair Wether Sire and Dam Show and Sale, Des Moines, IA; and the Fall Corporation Sheep Sales, El Reno, OK. We are very particular about the structure of our sheep, as they must be able to move on acceptable feet and legs. Additionally, they must be clean fronted and up-fronted with wide racks and loins that carry to wide hips with a wide pin set. Ultimately, the carcasses of the market lambs will end up in a retail case or in a freezer, and pounds of product on a trim carcass is very important. We highly value maternal characteristics, milking ability, and docility."



The Olsen's call themselves farm managers, but they do much more. Roger Olsen is responsible for customer service and right-of-way projects for the Xenia Rural Water District out of Bouton.

Dr. Sherry Olsen earned her doctorate in meat science in 2016 from Iowa State University. "I have a Bachelor of Science in Animal Science from the University of Missouri-Columbia where I was on the livestock judging team and involved in many organizations. At Iowa State University, I earned my master's degree in Meat Science, as well as a PhD in Meat Science. Both of my graduate degrees emphasized Food Safety Education. My title at Iowa State University in the Department of Animal Science is Meat Science Lecturer and Meat Judging Team Coach and Program Coordinator. I teach Animal Science 270 Lab Foods of Animal Origin, Animal Science 475C: Junior Meat Judging, and Animal Science 475C: Senior Meat Judging. I also assist Dr. Brad Skaar teaching the following courses: Animal Science 101: Working with Animals and Animal Science 411: Addressing Issues in Animal Science. I advise approximately 65 undergraduates in our department and am the adviser for the Block & Bridle Sheep Interest Group, and co-adviser for the Collegiate Beef Team. To put my job into few words: I teach...all day long...every day!"

(continued on page 5)

Outstanding Producers (continued)

(continued from page 4)

Dr. Olsen continues, "I really enjoy working with our students in finding their passions in the livestock and meat industries. My office wall is covered with pictures of my students who have graduated and moved on to very successful careers. To me that is extremely gratifying, and I am very grateful to have an opportunity to surround myself with exceptionally talented young men and women that are making a difference in the industry, as well in their communities. I have been teaching long enough now that many of them are beginning to get married and establish their own homes, and that is so much fun to have opportunities to visit with them and meet the new additions to their families."

What does the future hold for Dr. Olsen as an educator? "My goal as an educator is to see each student that I advise, teach, or work with leave our department equipped with the tools to make him or her as successful as they want to be in whatever career they choose. We have students who come from production backgrounds who will not be able to immediately return to the family farm, so I want them to realize that they are still valuable to agriculture. The same is said for our students from nonagricultural backgrounds; they are provided

excellent education and training to also enter the work force in agriculture. I want all of them to become outstanding and productive citizens and to give back to their communities, mentoring those youth with whom they interact in helping them achieve their dreams and goals, just as they were helped along the way to become successful," says Dr. Olsen.

"Roger and I have been married for 31 years. We met at the American Royal Livestock Show and Rodeo in Kansas City, MO. I was working for the American Shorthorn Association and he was fitting cattle and exhibiting Hampshire sheep. The following year we met again, this time at the Minnesota State Fair, where he was fitting a string of Polled Hereford cattle and I was working the Shorthorn show. On our first date I felt sorry for him and bought him supper; little did I know that the year before he had been robbed of all his money at the Royal Livestock Show. He vowed that he would never again carry cash and if you'd check his billfold today that is still true," smiled Dr. Olsen.

Dr. Olsen shared her thoughts on the future. "We simply enjoy all aspects of livestock production, regardless of the specie. I am particularly relieved if we can have an uneventful lambing season, get

the new lamb crop weaned, on feed, and then watch them grow. It is very gratifying when we have new customers who purchase our genetics as well as those who are repeat customers. We like to see definite improvement each lambing season. Also, I am a professed show and sale junkie of any specie! Roger and I are provided many opportunities to work with youth as they exhibit their 4H and FFA livestock projects, and that is so much fun. We both were blessed to have parents and families who believed in the values of youth livestock projects, and we get to continue to support those youth today. We can both say that there just isn't a better place to raise kids than in a barn where they learn all of those very important personal development skills that will make them successful adults, regardless of the careers they choose."

Dr. Sherry Olsen summarized her life, "I honestly don't know what else I would rather be doing. A tough, but very gratifying business, we wouldn't have it any other way!"

The Greene County Community Barn Project

By Bill Taggart, Landus Cooperative in Jefferson, IA

Seven years ago the Greene Co Lamb Producer group looked at the numbers of livestock and young people exhibiting at the county fair and realized that the number had fallen drastically from the past. Different ideas were discussed, but the one idea that seemed like it might make a difference was creating a way for young people that wanted to show lambs at the fair to be able to do so. We needed a way to come up with a place for them to do so and a way to be mentored by one of the producer members. The 1st year there were three barns involved and

around (5) young people participating in the project. The next year there were two barns and a few more kids in the project. The project has grown almost every year. This year we have (19) young people showing (29) lambs at the 2018 Greene Co Fair. All of the lambs are now at one barn. We have all of the equipment there to help the kids break and train their lambs for show. There is a weekly training session that teach the kids what to do to be ready for the show ring. This is a family project where sometimes there are three generations of families there helping their kids catch and break lambs. The other producer groups have wanted to emulate this project and help

their livestock numbers increase as well. This year we had 150 lambs weighed in for the fair. That is a huge turn around from seven years ago. We are very excited for the future of this project. We are currently trying to recruit new you lamb producers to be on the board of directors. The Greene County Lamb Producer Group was started in the 1960's.



2018 Festival Winners

FLEECE SHOW RESULTS from the 2018 Iowa Sheep & Wool Festival.

Submitted by Melissa Wubben

Congratulations to the Best in Show winning fleece, shown by Josh & Emily Brodeur!

Class placings are as follows:

DIV. 1 White Handpinning

Division Champion: Jeff & Tara Benson

Fine: 1st Kristi Pyatt, 2nd & 3rd Rhonda and Don McClure, 4th Kristi Pyatt

Medium: 1st Jeff & Tara Benson, 2nd Danielle Smith, 3rd Jacqueline Ericson, 4th Jeff & Tara Benson

Long: 1st Christee McNeil, 2nd 3rd and 4th Penny Swearingen

DIV 2 Colored Handspinning

Division Champion: Josh & Emily Brodeur

Fine: 1st Jolyn Meehan, 2nd & 3rd Katie & Abby Evans, 4th Connie Dubois

Medium: 1st Donna Schauer, 2nd Katie & Abby Evans, 3rd Jolyn Meehan, 4th Jacqueline Ericson

Long: 1st Josh & Emily Brodeur, 2nd Christee McNeil, 3rd Penny Swearingen, 4th Christee McNeil

DIV 3 Commercial

Division Champion: Mary's Little Lambs

Fine: 1st 2nd and 3rd Mary's Little Lambs

Long: 1st and 2nd Penny Swearingen

Congratulations to all of our participants! You all contributed to a great 2018 fleece competition!



The 2018 Iowa Sheep and Wool Festival was dedicated to a longtime friend and festival family member, Deb Meier. Deb lost her battle with Inflammatory Breast Cancer on June 7. Deb and her husband, Wayne Bamber have managed the festival stock dog demonstrations since 2007.

Wayne graciously ran the stock dog program again this year. Deb's love for her dogs and her sport were evident to all lucky enough to watch Deb at work.



Thank you to Troop 383 of Altoona for helping vendors set up at the Hansen Ag Center in June.

Upcoming Events:

American Sheep Industry Association Convention

2019 -- January 23-26 -- New Orleans, Louisiana | 2020 -- January 22-25 -- Scottsdale, Arizona



Painted Desert Sheep

The Painted Desert Sheep is a spotted hair sheep that received most of its influence from the Mouflon. Before being established as a separate breed, it was considered by many to be a parti-colored Corsican. Other early influence came from Merino and Rambouillet, and a few four-horned individuals stem from Jacob or Churro ancestry. Long desired by hunters because of the large horns and aesthetic, flashy looks, the Painted Desert is now popular among exotic and alternative livestock fanciers.

These sheep shed their short winter wool naturally each spring, leaving a glossy, slick coat. Colors can be very wild with mixes of up to four or five colors. They breed out of season and lamb twice a year, with twins and even triplets occurring often. They produce a carcass of lean meat without a muttony taste. Rams must show Mouflon influence by sporting a luxurious mane in addition to large, heavy horns of homonymous, supracervical or polycerate types. Some ewes may be horned. *Information used with permission from Sheep 101.info, photo courtesy of Hansen Agricultural Student Center staff.*



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bksuffolks@gmail.com

KIMM SUFFOLKS ~ Home of Balanced Genetics

30th ANNUAL PRODUCTION SALE SAT•MAY 5, 2018•5:30 PM•TIPPIE BEEF CENTER•CEDAR RAPIDS, IA
70 Ram Lambs•2 Yrl Rams•10 Yrl Ewes•100 Ewe Lambs ~ Catalog with photos on web mid April, 2018

ROB & CHRISTY ZELINSKY

Satellite Flock

Brookings, SD

(605)354-8248

robzelinsky@yahoo.com

JOE & LORI VLAZNY

Potential Satellite Flock

Farmersburg, Iowa

(563) 880-1003

jlvlazny@neitel.net

GUEST CONSIGNORS:

Bar-Zel Suffolks, SD
MacCauley Suffolks, PA
Rourke Club Lambs, IA
Ulrich Suffolks, IL
Vlazny Suffolks IA

www.breedingsheepage.com/kimm