



Romney Ramblings

December 13, 2021

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Dear Fellow Romney Breeders,

When I bought my first Romney, I was brand new to raising sheep; I was a knitter who became a spinner, and who thought it would be cool to have two sheep (one white and one black) so I could have my own fleeces to spin.

I did my homework, and started out by reading "Raising Sheep the Modern Way" where I found a picture of a sheep that looked the way I thought a sheep should look. The same breed also had excellent hand-spinning fleeces, excellent mothering tendencies, and did well in small flocks. Of course I was reading about Romneys.

That was over 25 years ago, and I have never questioned my decision in choosing Romneys. I have learned that in addition to the traits listed above, they are also easy keepers, pretty mellow, pretty tasty, and have great personalities. Over the years my involvement in sheep has changed quite a bit: breeding for wool quality, and selling yarn and meat, are key parts of our farm operations that I didn't plan on when I bought my first sheep; but Romneys have proven to be the perfect breed. And of course: #nothingcuterthanaRomneylamb!

As you read through this edition of the Romney Ramblings, I hope you enjoy the answers from all the members who have answered the question "Why Romneys?" – there are many answers, just like there are many reasons to raise our wonderful breed! I especially appreciated reading about all of our juniors from across the country who are raising and showing their sheep, and I share the sentiment expressed by our V.P. Charlene Carlisle, wishing that I too had started raising sheep at an earlier age, and was as poised in the show ring as our juniors!

I wish you all safe and happy holidays, and a healthy new year with lots of beautiful Romney lambs in your future!

In our thoughts and prayers:

Condolences to Willis Plank and his entire family who suffered the recent tragic death of his brother, Brian. Brian was well known by many in the livestock arena and especially the cattle industry. It has left a big hole in the family's heart, the agricultural community and so many others that the full ripple of its effects has not begun to be realized. During this time of grief, Chris and some other family members tested positive for COVID, requiring Chris to be hospitalized 2 hours from their house. Willis was up north trying to help with fall harvest and to manage the Michigan State Bull Test 100 bulls located on their family farm while Caitlin and Ethan managed the farm at home and took care of hospital duties for their mom. Needless to say, NAILE had to take a back seat this year because family always comes first. Willis is the Romney Sheep Show Superintendent, as well as the Wool Show Superintendent, so of course, that was one more worry for him. I can't imagine how many phone calls he made but somehow the shows all went on, wool got transferred from his truck to others and arrived for the show, prizes and awards got dispersed and wool check-in happened. You guys were missed immensely but you were where you needed to be. The green shavings will be there next year. Wishing you all the best, hoping that the worst is over and that the memories can make the hardest days a little better.

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1912 - 2012 : "100 Years of Serving the Romney Breeders of America"
American Romney Breeders Association

Mentoring Program

Mentors are available to assist breeders with questions, discuss upcoming events, chat sheep and help promote the membership. ARBA members have signed up as mentors, and this list is posted on the website.

Welcome to our New Members:

Marie Brown (junior)
Julia Cohen (junior)
St. Nina Monastery

As always, the board is no further than a phone call or email away.

ARBA on Facebook Check out the American Romney Breeders Association Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/americanromney> to see events, news, and reminders about the association.

ARBA on Instagram ARBA now has an Instagram account for sharing events and news about the association. Its handle is: @americanromney.

Gaggle An online email group was formed as a way for members to share information about their sheep, management practices, events, etc. with each other more easily and be up to date on what the ARBA Board is working on. It is hosted through Gaggle Email. For more information and how to join if you have not already received an introductory email, contact Carol Pasheilich, District 5 Director.

ARBA Website The ARBA website, americanromney.org, has information to assist with many of your association and production needs. You can advertise your products and animals, read about management tools, review animal health needs, locate members in your region, read minutes of the board meetings and keep up to date with news submitted by your directors and district representatives.

Coming in the next Issue:

Please answer the following question - Directors and all members are asked to send in replies.

Question: How do you determine which lambs you keep, sell and cull each lambing season?

Romney Ramblings The Romney Ramblings is the newsletter of the American Romney Breeders Association. The purpose of the Ramblings is to provide sheep industry news, high light the efforts of ARBA, announce events and activities, provide an outlet for promotion of your sheep and wool products and recognize the accomplishments of the membership.

Advertising in the Ramblings

Full Page \$100
1/2 Page \$75
1/3 Page \$60
1/4 Page \$35
Card Ad \$20
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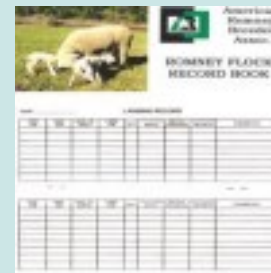
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Flock Record Book:

Provides General Sheep Information and space to record lambs born and raised for 1 or several years.

Price: \$3.00 postpaid.



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North American International Livestock Exposition 2021

By: Charlene Carlisle

I (and many others) missed attending NAILE last year due to the COVID pandemic and all the restrictions that it entailed. This year, it was so nice to be out in the world again, seeing old friends, making new ones while walking through those green shavings. Many exciting things happened this year and I will try to relay them all but if I forget or overlook anyone, please let me know. The sheep extravaganza starts with showmanship where Romneys held their own. In the 15-year-old group, Madison Feehan (OH) received First Place and then went on to win Reserve Champion in the Intermediate Showmanship Division. I neglected to record how many were in the class but some were upwards of 30+ in each class with really stiff competition.

Andrew Feehan (OH) was focused and did some of his best showmanship skills ever in the 11-year-old group. I was very impressed with how far Andrew has come, he just gets better and better with time. He's always ready to lend a hand and offers his help at every opportunity. Did I mention that he carried all of our ice cream tubs for the ice cream social, his help to me is always appreciated!

Catherine Hromis (NH) and Megan Higgins (CT) were strong competitors in the 18-year-old group and secured the First & Second Placings. Both showing skills with beautiful yearling ewes and rising to the top of a very large class. These top showmen are frequently seen in show rings together in the Northeast show circuit. Often times the placings may be switched but they always rise to the top and NAILE was no different. The Reserve Champion Showman in the senior showmanship Class went to Catherine Hromis. Lots to be learned from these girls, not just for the young but for the more mature showman as well.

In the 20-year-old showmanship group, Teresa Hromis (NH) skillfully rose to the top and landed the second spot. So proud of all of our Romney youth. The smoothness and ease when you show is what I wish I could be. As you flawlessly float around the ring, it makes me wish I had started at a younger age and it brings such joy to those watching ringside or from home. You are all winners to me!

The Romney Junior Spectacular Show was well supported with deep classes. There were 11 youth exhibitors from 5 states with 32 head of sheep. Champion Ram went to Teresa Hromis (NH) with her Natural Colored Ram Lamb and Reserve Champion Ram went to Claire VonBehrens (IL) with her White Ram Lamb. Catherine Hromis (NH) received the Champion Romney Ewe with her White Yearling Ewe and Claire VonBehrens (IL) received the Reserve Champion Romney Ewe with her White yearling Ewe. All 4 of the awards for the Champions and Reserves were stools with leather inserts with the award lasered into the leather. See pictures of these awesome stools here in this edition of the Ramblings. The Best Headed Ram went to Teresa Hromis with her NC Ram Lamb from the Intermediate Class (Winding Wicks 2115) and Best Headed Ewe went to Catherine Hromis with her White Yearling Ewe (Winding Wicks 2016). Best White Fleece on the Hoof went to Lindsey Schmoll (WI) with her white yearling ewe, Schmoll 1937 "Goldie. Best NC Fleece on the Hoof went to Teresa Hromis with her February Ewe Lamb (Winding Wicks 2113). Gift Certificates from Twist of Fate Spinnery were given for these 4 special awards. The biggest bright spot with the Junior Show was that a Romney owned by Catherine Hromis was awarded the highest accolades...Supreme Champion Ewe overall in the Junior show. Out of 28 breeds, the Romney, Winding Wicks 2016, with Catherine Hromis & Family by her side, and very large check in hand, did the Romney breed proud.

The Romney Open Show had 8 exhibitors from 6 states with 37 head of sheep. For more detailed results, check out NAILE's website but the high lights include the following. Champion White Ram went to Catherine Hromis with Reserve Champion going to Little Hooves Romneys (NJ). Champion White Ewe went to Catherine Hromis and Reserve Champion went to Emma Morton Rogers (CT); both were beautiful Yearling Ewes. White Best Fleece went to Little Hooves Romneys. White Premier Exhibitor went to Catherine Hromis. The NC Romney Champion Ram went to Little Hooves Romneys and Reserve Champion Ram went to Jacen Wilinski (WI). The NC Romney Ewe Champion was Little Hooves Romneys with the Reserve Champion going to Teresa Hromis. Ainsley Porter (IL) received the best NC Fleece award. NC Premier Exhibitor was Teresa Hromis. Great pictures are scattered throughout FB, website and here in the Ramblings. Not many pictures were available for the Open Show as we were all busy in the show ring.

Our numbers were a bit short this year so we will be on probation for next year. In 2022, we will need to rally and get higher numbers there so start planning now to be in Kentucky in November, encourage others to come so we can continue to display our breed in the green shavings!



Special Thank You - our Juniors really appreciate the support - and so do we!

Special thanks to all the supporters that allow this show to happen every year. Not only does it take financial support, but it also takes extra hands, time, and effort. Thanks to Ethan Kennedy for helping in the show ring during the Junior Show and all the support that he and his family have given to the Juniors over the past years. Thanks to Willis Plank (Show Chair) for all of his planning throughout the year. Thanks to all the parents who support the youth, our Junior program and provide unlimited help to get things done. Also, much appreciated is the little things like helping dip ice cream during the ice cream social, carrying the ice cream tubs, helping haul water due to the distance of the water hydrants, and the list goes on. I am indebted and it is you all that make the hard work worth it. In addition, this year I would like to thank Rick Trojanoski from Twist of Fate Spinners, located in CT, who presented 4 gift certificates for the special awards in the Junior Show (2 for Best Headed and 2 for Best Fleeces). Also, I would like to give a big shoutout to Heidi Riessland of Pleasant Valley Creations, located in Nebraska, for her work on the Champion and Reserve Champion Stool awards. She provided so much help to me to get this award made. She did the leather engraving (lasering) and then they were attached to wooden stool seats. Pleasant Valley Creations also did the tumblers for the Futurity awards. Pictures of the awards can be seen on FB and here in the Ramblings. Pleasant Valley Creations is very livestock oriented, does great work and offers a wide range of possibilities when it comes to awards especially focused on Juniors.

Both of these small, livestock knowledgeable businesses are easy to work with and eager to please. I cannot recommend them enough. They can easily be found on FB and Instagram.



WOW - Wool News from NAILE

Wool Show from NAILE 2021

White Romney Class Penny Swearingen had First & Second Place

Natural Color Long Wool Ram Class – Penny Swearingen had First & Second Place with Romney Ram Fleece

Natural Color Long Wool Ewe Class – First place went to Penny Swearingen with Romney Ewe Fleece

Division Natural Color Champion: Penny Swearingen's Natural Color Long Wool Romney Ewe Fleece



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American Sheep Industry Update:

This years convention, “Where There’s a Will, There’s a Wave” is being held in San Diego, CA
January 19 - 22, 2022.

Register by December 29th for best hotel and conference pricing.

Visit: sheepusa.org for more information

EDUCATION COMMITTEE:

Is there something you would like the directors to answer in a future issue of the Ramblings? Just reach out to your director, the president or the editor of the Ramblings to submit your questions.

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Rambling Roads: District Director Reports

District 1: Marianne DiTaranto:

Greetings and Happy Holidays from District 1! Now that the Fall show season is behind us, we are preparing for lambing as due dates draw near. During the later part of the show season, Romneys took the spotlight at several events. At Big E, Emma Rodgers and Melissa Cunningham won first and second honors in the fleece show. Cadence Higgins won Natural Colored Champion Ewe. Teresa Hromis won Reserve Champion Natural Colored Ewe and Natural Colored Best Fleece. Melissa Cunningham won Natural Colored Reserve Champion Ram. For the Whites, Catherine Hromis won Champion White Ram and Champion White Ewe and Emma Rogers won Reserve Champion Ewe with her intermediate ewe lamb and Best White Fleece. Emma was the Premier Breeder for the white show. At Deerfield Fair in NH, Kenny and El Briggs won Supreme Ewe, and Lizzie Bliss won Supreme Ram and Overall Supreme Champion in the 4-H show. Tim Walker had the winning Best Fleece. At Fryeburg Fair, Catherine Hromis won Supreme Ewe. At the North American International Livestock Expo, New England was represented by Megan Higgins, Catherine and Teresa Hromis and Emma Rogers. In the open show, Emma Rodgers won Reserve Champion White Ewe. Catherine Hromis won Champion White Ram, Champion White Ewe and Premier White Breeder. For the Junior Show, Catherine Hromis won Champion Ewe and Teresa Hromis won Champion Ram. The Supreme Champion Ewe of the Junior Show was won by Catherine Hromis. Congratulations to all who promote the Romney breed through showing.

As the weather cools and the nights grow longer, once the sheep are cared for, we shift our efforts to wool processing and products. Sock making has kept me busy most nights. Evening conversations in our home could be on flock health, breeding strategies, showing or wool prep. We also look for any online events we may wish to join. Following the ARBA Facebook page is a great way to learn about any upcoming online educational sheep events. This Tuesday, December 14th, we will be tuning into the Zoom talk presented by Tufts on Maximizing Success of your Lambing and Kidding Season. I am curious and would enjoy hearing about the sheep related activities other District 1 members might do to keep busy.

Stay warm, enjoy your families, friends, the holidays and sheep!



Clockwise from top left:

- Overall Champion 4-H at Deerfield Show
- Emma Rogers—Reserve Champion White Ewe
- Supreme Ewe NAILE Jr. Show—Catherine Hromis
- Deerfield Fair Supreme Ewe



District 2: Amy Miller

Happy Holidays from District 2! Congratulations to District 2 Junior, Alivia Blum on her Champion White Ewe in the Romney Ewe lamb futurity. See full article about all of our junior futurity kids below.

This month's question: What is the reason you decided to raise Romneys?

The reason we decided to raise Romneys is very straightforward. I said to my then 9-year-old Annabelle, I think you would look really cute in the ring showing Romneys. Her response was ok, let's get some. We started talking with Romney breeders at shows and found a great group of people that support their juniors really well. The sheep have been a fun addition to our flock and Annabelle has really enjoyed showing and raising them.



Annabelle - more than a few years ago. We just had to share this throwback picture!

District 3: Penny Swearingen

Hopefully Seeing the End of a Rough Fall Season!

Greetings from District 3!

As I write this, members in District 3 are finally getting the harvest finished, barns cleaned out and cleaning up from the latest blast of wind and storms. Our prayers go out to the folks in Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky and Arkansas who were blasted by Tornadoes in December. Agriculture is and livestock operation particularly, can be perilous so please be SAFE out there!!

Funny these sheep people, optimists all as we are no sooner finishing show season and packing up our inventory from the last fiber festivals, we are already planning and plotting for 2022. Those fall lambs, expected lambs coming and all the fresh shorn or soon to be fleeces already have a plotted event!!

As Christmas and the New Year come in bringing Hope for the Future, we do see excitement and hope in the Romney world as well. Specifically in District 3 we had Youth made the trek with parents in tow to NAILE (North American International Livestock Exposition). As we are aging out several Youth who have been great ambassadors for Romneys we are ushering in new young children into the breed. District 3 sent I know of 5 Juniors from Ohio, Illinois and Wisconsin (maybe more if I read the list wrong) to NAILE! Not known as a stronghold for Romneys, this is great news!! Really exciting to me is we have 3 families with Youth from my home state of Illinois. Also exciting are new breeders that started up flocks in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

In addition to the lambing and shearing that the next three months will bring we do have opportunity to support our breed and sheep and wool in general through state sheep organizations and American Sheep Industry Events. In Michigan the Michigan Sheep Producers Annual Shepherd's weekend is a go! We have been asked to Present one of the sessions on "Best In Show: How to Prepare your Fleece for Competition". There will be plenty of Romney fleeces supporting this session. Folks both in Michigan and surrounding states are welcome, you do not have to be a member to attend. There is a lot more offered over the whole weekend.

Interested in joining us:

Michigan Shepherds Weekend
January 7-9, 2022
Lansing, MI
www.misheep.org

Wishing All a Blessed Holiday Season and Exciting and Safe Start to 2022 Lambing!

Penny Swearingen

District 3 Director

District 4: Sue Kalina

Green grass is back again after a long drought and the Romney's are happy! They would rather be out in the field any day rather than the barn. November lambing went great, reminding us how cute Romney lambs are and how great the moms are at raising lambs.

Oregon Romney Breeders are in the planning stages of the National ARBA Show next August 2022 at the Oregon State Fair. Start planning now to participate if possible. There will be White and Natural Colored Shows for adults and for youth separately. Also, a wool show, you could send a fleece to be a part of the National Show. A sale is still in discussion. And the Annual Meeting plus silent auction. Come for some fun and see beautiful Romney's and Fleeces.

I am happy to be back on the Board and the Board Members are super to work with. It is great to have connections with Romney breeders from all over the United States. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sue Kalina

District 5: Carol Pasheilich

Things are very quiet in District 5. We are still in the process of finding someone willing to serve as Director. This is a very large district with a rather small Romney population. Since we are all so far apart, it is hard to get the word out. I will continue to make phone calls. In the meantime, if you are interested in representing your district on the Board of Directors, please call me or Anne McIntyre-Lahner, our president.

Once again, I urge all of you to read the minutes of the Board's meetings so you are aware of how the Board is serving its members.

The question for this issue is why did I choose Romney sheep to raise. This is such a wonder breed, there are many reasons. The two main ones are 1) Their gentleness and size. I was in my 60s when I first bought sheep. I did not need to cowboy large, aggressive animals and risk getting hurt. 2) They are dual purpose: outstanding meat and beautiful fleece. Easy choice.

Carol Pasheilich, Director, District 5



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District 6: Betsy McPherson

Hello from District 6 !

There is not much new to report from the South. All of us are finishing up breeding, preparing for the holidays and looking forward to the 2022 lambs that are coming!

Living in Virginia and not too far from Jamestown VA, I began to look up the history of the breeds of sheep that made it's way there from England. The first sheep to reach the colonies were brought to Jamestown in 1609. I read that between 1620-1630 more sheep arrived from England and they were thought to be Old Leicesters, Romney Marsh and Southdowns. By 1648 there were 3,000 sheep and the sheep that appeared to be the most prominent in the colonies, were usually the types most valuable in England. These were the fine wooded breeds referred to as the " the English Longwool ".

As I researched more articles on Romney sheep I came across some very fascinating history of Romney Marsh/ Kent England at the time of The Second World War!

" In 1939 there were around 200,000 Romney sheep on the Marsh, but during World War II the sheep were sent away to the hill farmers in Yorkshire and the numbers of the sheep were halved. They did this so that the Marsh could be fortified to protect the coast from an impending German invasion that Hitler named " Operation Sea Lion". Interesting side note is that the sheep were evacuated before women and children, which speaks to the great value placed on the Romney ."

Finally yet importantly, Operation Sea Lion was postponed and never did take place due to the waning strength of the Luftwaffe. But how interesting that our Romneys are recorded in history as being something special to protect!

Betsy McPherson
District 6 Director
betsymcp711@gmail.com

Jr News - became a lot of fun for everyone:

Kahoot! What a fun trivia game! What started off as a youth activity during the weekend of the American Romney Breeders Association's Annual Dinner/Meeting developed into so much more. Many thanks to Georgina Anderson for using her very technical skills to get it up and running.

The games started on October 13th and remained open until October 17th at 11pm. There were four levels of skill with questions running from 10 questions for the Junior, and 15 in the other three levels. Scores were based on correctness of answers but also, there was a time factor involved. Positive feedback was received from our youth, as well as, more mature sheep folk. No prizes were given, it was there just for the thrill of the adventure and bragging rights if you scored high. When signing in for Kahoot! A nickname was required, so the identities are not easily known but if any individual scored high, they were quick to share their identity with whomever would listen!

The Junior section had 21 games played, the Intermediate had 20, 27 for the Seniors and 43 for the Professionals. A total of 111 games were played. It provided much fun and laughter and some discussion the who was right! The game was planned to be a fun and educational experience, and I think it was a hit. Many encouraging comments were received and I hope you all had as much fun as we did.

Any fun or education activity for Juniors that can be shared with ARBA's youth committee would be much appreciated. Sometimes you need a fresh suggestion so as not to become stale.

Looking forward to seeing all of you soon, in the show ring or elsewhere, it's always nice to see fellow shepherds.

2021 National Sale Online Futurity Show

By Charlene Carlisle

The American Romney Breeders Online Futurity Show 2021 concluded on October 15th. ARBA's Futurity program was a little different this year and will return to its previous format for 2022. Do to the many unknowns from Covid this year, it was decided that we would try something out of the norm. For the first time ever, ARBA had their National Sale online, hosted by Integrity Livestock Sales. Any Junior that purchased a ewe in the sale could then enter our Online Futurity Show without incurring any entry fees. The only catch was that the rules were very specific as to how pictures needed to be taken and that sheep and youth should be show ring ready.

Nine juniors purchased eleven head in our sale that qualified for entry into our show. Nice cash prizes were offered to the Champion and Reserve Champion Ewes, as well as, prizes for the first placing animal in each class. T-shirts were also awarded to each participant. The breeders of the champion and Reserve Champion ewes also received a cash award. The Futurity program has been set in place to encourage breeders to consign their very best animals to sales (both private and public) and motivate junior members (and their families) to purchase high quality breeding stock.

Ed Julian from Ravenna, OH was the official judge of our online show. Ed is a longtime sheep breeder, livestock producer, agricultural and youth supporter, and well versed on Romney breed standards. He raised Romneys for many years so his experience and knowledge is invaluable. Each youth was given a copy of the judges' comments with some suggestions on where they might improve. The placings were as follows:

Alivia Blum (MD) placed first in the White Winter Ewe Lamb Class with Winding Wicks 2103 and then went on to receive Champion White Ewe. She received a prize for her first place and the \$100 cash prize for showing the Champion Ewe.

Caitlin Plank (MI) placed first in the NC Spring Ewe Lamb Class with 3L&S 2115 and then went on to receive Champion NC Ewe. She was rewarded with a prize for her first placing and \$100 cash for showing the Champion NC Ewe.

Sadie Bonyng (IL) placed first in the NC Winter Ewe Lamb Class with E/C Plank 2111 and was Reserve Champion NC Ewe. Her cash premium was \$50 plus her prize for first place.

The Breeders of the Futurity Ewes were also awarded a cash prize. Winding Wicks from NH was the breeder of the Champion White Ewe and received \$50. 3L&S (Penny Swearingen) from IL was the breeder of the Champion NC Ewe and received \$50. The Reserve Champion NC Ewe was bred by E/C Plank of MI and received a \$25 cash prize.



Much appreciation for the youth and their families for purchasing these very nice ewes with special thanks to the breeders for putting such good ones in the sale. Looking forward to 2022 and continued success with ARBA's Futurity Program.



Left: Alivia Blum

Center: Sadie Bonyng

Right: Caitlin Plank

Responses to the question:

What is the reason you decided to raise Romneys?

I raise Romney sheep as a continuation of our family sheep business. Romneys were introduced to my father's flock as an improved breed in 1941, with stock purchased from Oregon purebred breeders. The wool production, mothering ability, temperament and survival on pasture made the breed a good choice for the southern Oregon coast. Romneys were raised as purebreds, and as replacements for the white faced commercial flock.

I registered my first Romney ewe in 1956, exhibited her at the county fair, and have been continuing to breed and promote registered Romneys since that beginning. My flock has ranged from two to sixty ewes, with twenty five bred to lamb in 2022. I continue to manage the sheep and pastures, and sell breeding stock locally and across the country. (JoAnn Mast - OR)

I got them because of their faces and lustrous wool. (Jeff Heineman from NJ)

I got them for several reasons, and to me Romneys are the best all around sheep. They have good wool (even if it's not the best), they taste good and grow well, and they are decent milk producers. In addition, they are resistant to hoof rot and do well even in muddy or damp conditions. I also think they look good! I think sheep that are bald from the shoulders or neck up, they aren't as attractive. I love my Romneys and wish I'd started raising sheep earlier. (Russell Jennings - RI)

Our daughter wanted a 4H sheep project when she was 12 and there was a 4H family promoting Romneys in South Jersey that were very encouraging and active in local county shows. We went and looked at their sheep and talked with them, our daughter read everything she could about Romneys and then we took the plunge. We knew nothing about wool but were very livestock oriented (but to bovines and not ovines). We wanted something productive with good feet and legs...figuring we would have to figure out the wool stuff on a learn as you go basis. The first year we overfed them, as there was a learning curve going from big ruminants to small ones, but soon after things started to fall into place. We started going to more shows and expanding the flock, learning so much from several mentors. Eventually, our daughter went off to college, and she assumed that we would sell the flock but by that time I was already hooked on the Romneys and the sheep world. We had already established wool and meat customers and I was not ready to stop. The Romneys have the most marketable faces which initially drew me in, followed by their dual purpose attributes, and now, I have learned to truly appreciate their wool. They are a great breed with many wonderful, friendly folks involved. And if it hadn't been for the local breeder that reached out to us and mentored us, who knows what breed we might have ended up with. Or suppose the breeder sold us 3 ewes and then never followed up with us, we might have been discouraged and quit. I always tell my customers, especially if they are new to sheep...I am always available and "there is service after the sale"

(Charlene Carlisle, ARBA Vice President - NJ)

My family has been raising sheep for many generations. They have raised Hampshires, Southdowns, Cheviots, Montadales and probably others that I am forgetting. I personally began with my first sheep in 1999, which was a Hampshire bottle ram lamb. After a couple years of showing Hampshires, my mom and I decided to explore other breed options. The first time I saw Romneys was at Woodstock Fair and I remember my mom saying "aren't they so cute." Guaranteed their cuteness was not the sole reason Romneys were chosen, but as a preteen that is what sold them to me. (Emma Rogers, Director at Large, CT)

Our family raises competitive Southdown and Hampshire sheep which has been led by my sister beginning her show career in 2014 and my mom's experience growing up. I wanted to have something that was Ainsley's and different from my sister. I enjoy lead line and began talking with Ethan Kennedy to work with natural color Romneys as part of my leadline goals. However, everyone knows once you get started in Romneys, even if you aren't a wool sheep person they are addicting and our family fell in love with Romneys and the great people who are inviting and always willing to share advice. I look forward to being a part of the Romney family and having an opportunity to grow with the breed for many years. (Ainsley Porter, Romney Jr., IL)

We decided on Romneys when evaluating our property and the fact that it was quite wet. Romneys not only looked like the sheep you see in story books but also had the traits required for wet pastures. I have loved raising Romneys. They have great meat, they are great mommas, and they have great wool. (Patty Sanville, MD)

What made you choose Romneys?

ROMNEY PROFILE:

Meet Mary and Bob Pratt of Elihu Farm—Eastern New York

Bob and Mary Pratt bought their Elihu Farm in Southern Washington County, NY in 1985.

Mary met someone at a poultry meeting, who had Suffolks, and bought 5 bred ewes from him.

They also bought some bred Tunis crossbred ewes from Mimi Asbornsen, who they met at the Altamont Fair. Mimi raised purebred Tunis and had some Romneys then too.

A year later Bob and Mary needed a ram, and they bought a white Romney ram from Mimi. Bob and Mary liked him and his lambs a lot, and he taught them about fleece as well!

That prompted the Pratts to buy more Romney ewes and later new rams.

They still raise Romneys, and now have white and recessive natural colored ewes and rams.



Lead Line at NAILE 2021



Ainsley Porter (IL) participated in Lead Line in the 8-10 year old division with her NC Romney Ewe Lamb "Little Rhea". First place was nicely secured as she bounced around the ring in her very exuberant "Ainsley style". Rhea and Ainsley have a sassy style all their own and the crowd and judges loved them. Her outfit matched her personality to a "T".

Hidy Kirkpatrick (OH) won First place in the 17-21 year old group. She wore an elegant dress and coat that she made herself. She strolled gracefully around the green shavings with a Winding Wicks Natural Colored Yearling Ewe. Both were stunning and easily caught your eye.

So pleased that two Romneys rose to the top of the Lead Line Class and congrats to both exhibitors



Why Moorit Romneys—by Maggie Howard

When beginning to develop a market for our lamb meat, we produced a brochure. It was slick, informative and offered wholes, halves and selected cuts. Response was adequate but not robust. It seemed that some people liked lamb very much but that their husbands or wives had no experience with it and “only ate beef”.

So, in order to get two sets of eyes on our brochure, we did something that was very frightening to us---we bought a bull and four cows! This scary move was one of the best things we ever did. Offering two types of meat in one brochure caused both our beef and lamb sales to soar. We’ve never looked back.

Romney fleece operations may face a similar problem in the highly competitive hand-spinning fleece market—fleece sales may be adequate but not as robust as desired. While Romney fleece is considered to be the easiest to spin, Romney offerings have been limited to white and various shades of black.

A third option in the Romney is now available—the moorit or brown pigment option. This Romney color class can be used to produce fleece offerings in mahoganies, cinnamons, pink beiges and rich chocolates. Suddenly, a hand-spinner can find a one-stop-shop at your booth or website because you have two pigment options (black and brown) available.

If this sounds interesting to you, I would like to share some personal thoughts on the matter:

Traditionally, the Romney has been thought to be a breed with only one pigment option—black. Just as our genetic understanding has expanded to realize that hidden, recessive color patterns could hide beneath the dominant white color pattern gene, so, too, we now realize that a recessive pigment option could lie hidden beneath the black—albeit at extremely low frequency.

The low frequency brown or moorit pigment type within the Romney gene pool was first announced in the US when Eugene, Oregon hosted the World Congress of Colored Sheep in 1989. Thus, the moorit Romney is not a new phenomenon but it does afford to the knowledgeable breeder a way to increase fleece shades offered for sale.

A breeder pursuing the inclusion of this moorit pigment option should be cognizant of a number of things:

First-----no dilution of the Romney’s black pigment base should ever be allowed to occur. ARBA has gone to great lengths to ensure that accidental dilution does not happen by directing that an “M” or an “MM” appear as part of the registration number for animals who possess or could possess the recessive, brown pigment option. This alphabetical alert follows the similar protocol of “BW” or “BB” which serve to alert the breeders to a possible or present non-white color possession.

Second-----all of the color patterns we love in our Romneys and that give to black-based fleeces their subtleties of tone are present in the moorit Romney e.g. white, light blue, intermediate blue, dark blue, midnight blue and solid/self.





Third-----As with any Romney color class that differs from white, consistent attention during breeder selection must be given to the Romney's conformation standard and to the possession of Romney fleece character. This careful attention is to ensure that full Romney character is not lost in the additional color class.

As an example, we chose b-factored and recessively patterned ewes that displayed good Romney conformation and fleece character for use in the production of our first moorit-carrier generation. Blessedly, we were rewarded for our care: the resultant moorit-carrier ewes have an average fiber diameter of 32 microns and, very importantly, a 19 average CV, (co-efficient of variation); the moorit-carrier rams average 34 microns with an excellent CV value of 17.7.

Since mean fiber diameter and its ancillary CV quality tend to be inherited in a simple Mendelian manner, having good fleece values to begin with allows a breeder to concentrate on retaining moorit and moorit-carriers that fully meet the Romney standards.

Fourth-----a breeder wishing to begin a small moorit program has a number of choices on how to start: a moorit ram with moorit-carrier ewes or a moorit ram with moorit ewes or a moorit ram that can be used to produce moorit-carriers from their own stock. The efficacy and ease of use of any of these choices should be discussed at length with a reputable moorit producer of registered moorit Romney stock.

Fifth-----Traditionally, the Romney has been bred as a "white sheep breed". Thus, the depth and breadth of the Romney gene pool is most fulsomely expressed in the white. Variety of fleece color, enhanced parasite resistance and hardiness is gifted to the Romney by the recessively patterned. The giftings of the moorit Romney are yet to be fully defined. However, at our farm, we have found the following characteristics of this color class to be true: a strong tendency to breed and produce lamb in their own "lamb year"; strong and successful mothering instincts; friendliness and curiosity.

These characteristics, combined with Romney color patterns expressed in brown pigment, have made them a very interesting subset within our flock and one that promises an expanded fleece market.

On our farm, the moorit program is small and will remain so. It serves to fill a niche hand-spinning market. By putting "two sets of eyes" on our fleece offerings, they have increased sales and produced a win-win.

Romney Wool: The Value Wool Brings to the Romney Sheep Farm

Why I Picked Romneys? Penny Swearingen, Education Committee Chair

My favorite Romney Story; it was 1985 and NAILE (North American International Livestock Exposition) I was roaming the Halls and Wings with my 2-year-old daughter waiting for our counties' 4-H Livestock Judging kids to finish the contest. I came across the wool competition display, and already a spinner and knitter, the presentation of fleeces was drawing me in. That's when it happened, I saw the Reserve Champion Fleece, a silver Romney fleece to drool over!! It was gorgeous in color, lock structure and presentation. The Oregon breeder had done themselves proud. At that point, I decided that I wanted a breed that could produce fleeces like that for me. Already a Hampshire breeder, I added Romneys three years later.

Romney wool, that marketable commodity, can also serve as an ambassador for your flock, for our breed, and wool in general when displayed in fleece competitions, sales and festivals. How many people have picked up a Romney fleece for the first time and gone on to become Romney owners?



2021 NAILE Champion Natural Color Fleece
Natural Color Romney Ewe Fleece
(North American International Livestock Exposition)

Romney successes span decades and shows
NAILE 2012 Reserve Champion



How can you use Fleece Competitions to enhance your goals for your Romney Flock?

1. By entering your fleeces, they will be evaluated by Judges for presentation, yield, lock structure, cleanliness, strength, hand and breed character. It is an objective look at your management and breeding stock for fleece quality. You can also see how your fleeces stack up against other Romney fleeces or other breeds. A great calibration tool!



Judges, Letty Klein & Linda Koppel Evaluating Fleeces and Giving Reasons

2. SALES! You can increase the sales of fleeces or breeding stock through participation in fleece competitions across the country. Many of the fiber festivals and fairs offer fleece competitions. Fleece sales may also be incorporated after the Show for exhibitors. Some of them are organized and managed by the show committee. Some fiber festivals where this applies are; The Connecticut Sheep & Wool Festival, Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival, Michigan Fiber Festival, Wisconsin Sheep & Wool Festival and New York Sheep & Wool Festival (Rhinebeck). Many fleece competitions held at state and county fairs give exhibitors the opportunity to offer their fleeces for private sale through the course of the Fair. Of course, you can use your successes to promote your breeding program and on farm sale of fleeces. With all the online tools for marketing, your flock's beautiful fleeces displayed with their ribbons, plaques or banners does draw in the eye!



When your Website, Advertising or Facebook Posts include picture like these you will grab people's attention!
 2019 Romney Success! NAILE Reserve Champion Wool Breed Fleece! Michigan State Fair Champion NC Fleece!

3. Finally, Romney Fleeces, like the sheep themselves, are attractive, hug-able and start great conversations with the general public visiting the fair, fellow sheep breeders and fiber artists. We can really advance the cause of wool with the public by having fleeces for them to look at, touch and talk about. In many parts of the country the Romney is a limited in numbers and other breeders and even judges have never seen them before. This creates a great opportunity to educate! Finally, many fiber artists have been seduced by the fine wools and need to have opportunity to see that Romney is MORE than rug wool. Romney breeders being at the shows with the fleeces, pictures, displays and of course yourself to engage in conversation and answer questions greatly expands the Romney Influence. So, enter your fleeces AND Have Fun!!



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and flock joy, peace
and good health this
Holiday Season.*

Go to AmericanRomney.org and click **Join ARBA Now!**
to find the membership renewal form.
Dues can be paid by mailing a check or by PayPal.

ARBA Annual Meeting

The American Romney Breeders Annual Meeting and Dinner was held on October 15, 2021, at CJ's Italian Restaurant in Rhinebeck, New York. There were attendees from a variety of states including Michigan, New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. Dinner included a choice of delicious entrees along with introduction of attendees and silent auction. An education presentation on "Options for Controlling Internal Parasites in Romney Sheep" was conducted via Zoom by Susan Schoenian the Sheep & Goat Specialist at the University of Maryland's Western Maryland Research & Education Center in Keedysville, MD. Lots of fun was had at the New York Sheep and Wool Festival too! It was nice to socialize in person and see smiles other than on a Zoom screen. Much appreciation to everyone who attended virtually or in-person. Next year's annual meeting will be planned in conjunction with the National Show at Oregon State Fair in August 2022. Please stay tuned for more information!



See all those smiling faces? Don't miss out next year - be part of this great gathering!

Calendar of Events: EVENT	DATE	VIRTU- AL	IN- PER- SON	CAN- CELLE D	NOTES
Texas A&M Sheep Shearing School	Jan. 4-7, 2022				Jordan.moody@ag.tamu.edu
Texas A&M Wool Handling & Classing School	Jan 4-7				AgriLife.org/sheepandgoat/woolmohair
MI Sheep Prod. Shepherd's Weekend	Jan. 7-9				Visit MISheep.org
ASI Annual Convention	Jan. 19-22				Visit SheepUSA.org
UT State Univ. Sheep Shearing School	Jan. 20-22				Eventbrite.com/e/usu-sheep-shearing-school-2022-registration-168355254097
NSIP Influenced Commercial Ewe Sale	Jan 26				NSIP.org
Colorado Farm Show Sheep Day	Jan. 27				Coloradofarmshow.com
MD Sheep Breeders Beg. Shearing School	Feb. 18-19				Marylandsheepbreeders.org/activities/Maryland-shearing-school/
Missouri Sheep Shearing School	Mar. 2-3				Contact Amy Bax at (573)-681-6190
Shepherd's Cross Shearing School	Apr. 21-23				Shepherdscross.com
Tennessee Sheep Producers Shearing School	Apr. 22-23				Tennesseesheep.org
CT Sheep, Wool & Fiber Festival	Apr. 30				Ctshpepp.org
NH Sheep and Wool Festival	May—TBD				Nhswga.org
Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival	May 7-8				Sheepandwool.org
Massachusetts Sheep & Woolcraft Fair	May 28-29				Masheepwool.org
Maine Fiber Frolic	June 4-5				Mainemade.com
All American Junior Sheep Show	June 30-July 3				Allamericanjuniorshow.com
Northeast Youth Sheep Show	July 8-10				Nesheep.org
Oregon State Fair	Aug. 26-Sept. 5				See below re: National Wool Show 2022
Maryland State Fair	Aug 26-Sept.6				Marylandstatefair.com
The Big E	Sept. 16-Oct.2				Easternstatesexposition.com

Please forward any missing show dates or any changes to the listed shows to the editor - the show schedule is always subject to changes due to state and federal guidelines. Check websites or social media for the most up to date information.

National Wool Show 2022

As the calendar year slips away, don't let the opportunity to enter the National Romney Wool Show slide by. Plan to save and send those fleeces to Oregon for judging and exhibition at the Oregon State Fair, site of the 2022 National Romney Show. Details are in the making, but more information will be provided as it becomes available.

The Ramblings, ARBA website and Oregon State Fair website will serve as communication lines. Specific questions regarding those sources can be directed to JoAnn Mast or Kathleen Zappelli. Mark your calendar – ship fleeces to Oregon – late August, 2022 show.

NOTICES, REMINDERS AND EXPLANATIONS:

Notice to ARBA Members Regarding Registration of Moorit Romneys:

In the spring of this year, a question was brought before the ARBA Board of Directors (BOD) concerning the registration status of two imported rams (semen). The two rams in question are Rosebank 86/03 and Rosebank 59/03. Associated Registry (AR), the registrar for ARBA, reports that there are multiple owners/breeders of moorit or moorit carrier Romney sheep, including progeny from the two rams referenced above; however, current staffing issues at Associated Registry are preventing the timely development of a list of breeders who have purchased progeny from multiple generations of these two rams; therefore, this message serves as notification to all potentially impacted breeders.

The BOD has conducted a thorough investigation and has determined that, in fairness to breeders whose pedigrees include one of these rams, **all progeny that have been registered, or will be born by the end of 2021 and subsequently registered, will remain in the Romney flock book as purebred Romneys. Progeny born after 12/31/21 that are not directly sired by Rosebank 86/03 or Rosebank 59/03 will also be eligible for registration.**

The BOD's investigation also concluded that, at this time, there is no paperwork indicating the two rams in question were purebred and registered through the Black and Coloured Sheep Breeders Association of New Zealand (BCSBANZ), which is the organization that registers natural-colored Romneys in New Zealand where the rams originated. This does not mean those animals were not purebred Romneys; rather it means that after repeated requests by the ARBA Board of Directors requesting appropriate documentation from the breeder/owner of the semen, no documentation has been received. Further, the BCSBANZ reports the two rams in question were never registered with the BCSBANZ. Based on this information, no **direct** offspring of either Rosebank 86/03 or Rosebank 59/03 **born after December 31, 2021** will be allowed to be registered in the Romney flock book.

If you have any questions or comments concerning this matter, please feel free to contact your District Director. The BOD welcomes all questions. It is important that you feel confident of your breeding stock and the Romney breed as a whole.

To reiterate, if you own a registered Romney with moorit in its pedigree, your animal, and its offspring, will remain in the Romney flock book. Future offspring from your animal will also be eligible for registration in the Romney flock book.

UNDERSTANDING THE COLORS OF ARBA REGISTRATION PAPERS

Have you noticed that registration papers come on different colored paper? Here is what the different colors mean:

Cream-colored paper is used for white ewes.

Yellow paper is used for white rams.

Pink paper is used for b-factored (which includes BW at the front of the registration number) and natural-colored (which includes BB at the front of the registration number) ewes.

Blue paper is used for b-factored (which includes BW at the front of the registration number) and natural-colored (which includes BB at the front of the registration number) rams.

To help ensure clear identification of moorit and moorit carriers, the BOD determined that all moorit registrations (which includes MM at the front of the registration number) and moorit carrier registrations (which includes one M at the front of the registration number) will be issued on **green** paper for both rams and ewes.

If your current M or MM registration is not on green paper and you wish it to be changed now, you can submit the registration to AR for reissuance at no cost to you. When registrations of moorit or moorit carriers are transferred, the registration will be reissued on green paper.

Romneys: The Supreme Breed

By: Ethan Kennedy

As the dust settles after another show season it is time to brag about how fierce the Romney breed has been over the last several years at the NAILE Jr show, as well as many other national level youth and open shows. These achievements are a true testament to the hard work and dedication of Romney breeders. First, huge congratulations to the Hromis sisters of New Hampshire with this year's Supreme Ewe in the North American International Livestock Expo's (NAILE) Jr. Breeding Sheep Show. She looked picture perfect! NAILE is the Super Bowl of the breeding sheep industry's shows, and with over 9,000 sheep entries between market lambs, breeding sheep Jr show, and breeding sheep open show a win of this magnitude is quite an accomplishment. What is even more impressive is how dominant the Romney breed has been in the Jr show at NAILE over the last decade. Romneys are only one of two breeds that has had two Supreme champions in the last five years, the other being the Cheviots ('17,'19). Additionally, a Romney has been pulled into the top 5 every year going back to 2014, except 2020 when the show had limited attendance due to Covid. The following NAILE results show how much our junior breeders rock!

2014: a white yearling ewe shown by Ethan Kennedy

2015: a white ram lamb and Black yearling ewe shown by Ethan Kennedy

2016: *Supreme* with a white ram lamb shown by Ethan Kennedy

2017: a white ewe lamb shown by Ethan Kennedy

2018: a white yearling ewe shown by the Schmoll sisters

2019: a white ram lamb shown by the Hromis sisters

2021: *Supreme* with a white yearling ewe and pulled black ram lamb shown by the Hromis sisters

To say that we are proud of our youth program in the Romney breed is an understatement! And a heartfelt thank you goes out to all the junior mentor's, parents and families for supporting the passions of junior showers.

Although NAILE is the granddaddy of all shows, our Romney juniors have been a force to be reckoned with at many other national Junior shows, including North East Youth Sheep Show (NEYSS), the Youth Sheep Expo, and the Wisconsin Sheep and Wool Festival. At NEYSS Romney Jr breeders have been selected as Supreme Champion six times since 2014 and have been pulled into the top 5 every year since 2011, most impressively winning Supreme Champion Ewe four ('17, '18, '20, '21) out of the last five years! This past year Romney ewes reigned Supreme at the Youth Sheep Expo (Hromis sisters) and at the Wisconsin Sheep and Wool Festival Jr show (Ainsley Porter). Again, this is a true testament to the hard work our junior breeders put into their programs every day!

Although our junior breeders have been rocking it, this article would not be complete without mentioning that Romney dominance is not limited to the junior ranks as our adult exhibitors have been just as successful over the last decade! Since 2012, Romney have been named Supreme Champion in one of three categories (Ram, Ewe, or Fleece) five times ('12, '15, '16, '17, '18) at the MD Sheep and Wool Festival, and five times at the Big E ('13, '14, '16, '17, '18). That's more than any other breed, at both shows! Not to mention, being pulled into the top 5 six additional times at MD sheep and Wool festival, and 8 additional times at the Big E. Finally, our Romney open exhibitors have been lighting it up at NAILE as well, being pulling for Supreme Ram in 2012 (Thistle Down Farm), 2019 (Little Hooves Romney), 2020 (Clair Von Behrens), and 2021 (Hromis sisters), a feat that most breeds only dream about. If these results do not show that the Romney breed is going places and has become a powerhouse breed in the showing, I am not sure what else would! I want to personally say Congratulation to all of our great breeders that show at all levels of competition. You all help drive the breed that we all love to a higher level!



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