



Romney Ramblings

December 17, 2024

Hi ARBA members

2024 seems like it has flown by – are you ready for 2025 and lambing?

Our annual meeting and national show were held in conjunction with The Big E, and Marianne DiTaranto and her team did a great job hosting. Stephanie Booren and the national show committee also contributed lots of time and effort to making sure things went smoothly. I was disappointed to miss the meeting and show due to a family issue, and am grateful to our vice-president, Charlene Carlisle for stepping up to run all the meetings – thanks to everyone who made our event a great success!

I'm pleased to let you all know that Jodi Rametes has adjusted well as our new secretary/treasurer – you can read a little more about Jodi later in this edition. If you need anything from her, please don't hesitate to reach out to her.

There is also lots of great information including results from the national show, results from NAILE, and results from the ARBA Futurity program in this edition – and remember if you have family updates to share, please let our editor, Patty, know about them so we can share them in our “flock news”!

Wishing you happy holidays, and a happy and prosperous 2025 with healthy, fast-growing lambs!

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Sunday Selfies will return starting on February 2nd. Join in by posting a selfie to our Facebook page, Instagram or by sending you photo to Charlene Carlisle.

This is a fun way to stay connected through the long winter months!

It's not just for juniors any more!
All photos welcome!!!



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:

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

If you know a Romney Breeder that isn't a member yet - invite them to join in on the fun!

We have no new members to welcome this edition.

Ask a friend to join in on all the Romney adventures!

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, highlight 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

Classified Ads—45 cents per word.

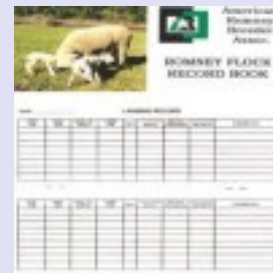
Above rates are based on camera ready copy, sized to fit the space purchased for the ad. Ads prepared by the editor will be charged at \$15 per hour, with a minimum fee of \$15.

Send all advertising information and news to: Patricia Sanville
4637 Cap Stine Road
Frederick, MD 21703

Flock Record Book:

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

Price: \$3.00 postpaid.



Order now from the
ARBA Secretary.
secretary
@americanromney.org

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.

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.

Rambling Roads: District Director Reports

District 1: Marianne DiTaranto

Ramblings District One Report 12/24

Show season has come to an end and fall lambing is winding down as New England shepherds prepare for lambing in the new year. Farmers markets have either ended or retreated indoors for the winter. The fall and Christmas season are excellent for marketing anything wool. Many Romney vendors can be seen at the holiday fairs, pop ups and festivals which will continue through the weekend before Christmas. Romney Wool is great for knitting and felting projects. Several Romney vendors participated in the Wool Arts Tour of NH, the Vermont Sheep and Wool Festival and the New England Sheep and Wool Festival in MA.

In the winter, if you are not lambing or working with wool, this could be a good time for you to assess your flock, management practices and wool products for sale. It is time to consider what is working; what are you feeling successful about; and what can be improved for the future. The winter also offers the perfect opportunity to attend best practices workshops or to learn different wool arts production techniques or a new marketing skill. Look around and see what you can do this year to enhance your skills and deepen your appreciation of the qualities of the Romney Breed.

May you, your families, friends and flocks stay warm and dry and have a blessed and safe Christmas and Holiday Season, and a Happy New Year!

Warmest Regards,

District 2: Patricia Sanville

Happy Holidays from District 2 -

Most of you will recognize my name as the editor of the Ramblings - I have once again stepped up to be the District 2 Director and hope to serve you well. Please reach out to me with news of weddings, births, shows, festivals, shearing schools, etc.

Show season has wrapped up and breeding is likely complete for most of us for Spring lambs. It's been cold and dry most of this fall - drought conditions continue for most of the states in my district. I cannot wait to see this years breeding shows and see what you have been able to produce on your farms.

Upcoming events for Maryland - MD Sheep and Wool Winterfest (online) will be held -January 24-26

MD Sheep Breeders will hold a shearing school - February 14-15

The Frederick Fiber Festival will be - April 26

Upcoming in Pennsylvania - The PA Farm Show - January 4-11

The American Sheep Industry Convention is in Scottsdale Arizona this year from January 15-18 and I sure hope we can get a photo of all the Romney Breeders that are able to attend! (Last year I bumped into Anne Crider and Nathan Trojanoski)

If you have any other dates to add, please reach out to me and let me know.

Fingers crossed we get some precipitation and that the lambs come on a less than frigid night.

Have a mug of warm cider for me and try to take it easy - if only for a bit.

District 3: Stacy Schmoll

No report

District 4: Sue Kalina

Hello Fellow Oregon Romney Breeders! What an awesome summer of events with shows, wool events and vendor events. Lamb prices stayed firm all spring and summer. It has been a good year to spotlight the strengths of Romney with meat and wool. Oregon Flock and Fiber had excellent wool sales this year for the spinner, whether raw wool or processed wool.

Now breeding season was another whole different world. Ewes settled early and then came back in heat months later. Ewes bred later, cycled and cycled. Several rams were used. Sound familiar? From discussion with breeders, the common denominator seemed to be the weather. 90 degrees one day, 65 degrees the next. Repeat again in two weeks. It will be an interesting lambing season for sure.

Once again, glad to have the former NARA members join ARBA and hope you have gotten your registrations completed. Speaking of registrations, there is new management at Associated Registry and a new location so be sure to use those new forms on the ARBA website with the new address!

The annual meeting next year is in Kentucky at NAILE. Make plans now to attend, I am! The show is awesome. It's a great experience to get out and see other parts of the U.S. and fairs. A meeting is a great opportunity to visit with fellow Romney breeders. Enjoy the holiday season.

District 5: Tracy Haslem

No Report

District 6: Ethan Kennedy

Hello from sunny Charleston, South Carolina! My name is Ethan Kennedy, and I am thrilled to serve as the new District 6 Director, representing the southern states. It's been a hot and challenging fall, marked by severe storms across the Southeast. Thankfully, our Romney producers in the region have weathered these challenges and are now gearing up for the much-anticipated start of lambing season.

This fall, District 6 had the honor of hosting the 2024 North American International Livestock Expo Romney Show. It was a joy to reconnect with old friends, welcome new exhibitors, and celebrate the Romney breed in such a vibrant setting. The event was a resounding success, with 40 sheep showcased in the junior show and an impressive 71 in the open show, drawing participants from coast to coast. Congratulations to all the exhibitors for a phenomenal display of the Romney breed at one of the nation's most prestigious livestock events!

Looking ahead, here are some important dates for 2025 to mark on your calendar:

- **Carolina Fiber Fest:** March 14–15 at the NC State Fairgrounds in Raleigh, NC.
- **National Romney Sale:** May 8–10 in Greenville, Ohio, held alongside the Ohio Showcase Sale.
- **National Romney Show and Annual Meeting:** Returning to District 6 at NAILE next November. Start planning now to make the 2025 national event one to remember!

As lambing season approaches, I wish everyone a successful year filled with lots of healthy ewe lambs and minimal complications. May your holiday season be filled with love, family, and, of course, your woolly friends!

ARBA Website: Stephanie Booren, Chairperson

Do you have sheep or farm products to sell? Use our website's free classified ads. If you're a member of ARBA, just go to americanromney.org, click on Member Services, My Account and Log in. If you don't know your username or password, email our secretary or the website chairperson and they will send you a reset password link. Once logged in, go to Member Services, Classified and begin your free 6 month ad. You may request to extend your ad at the end of the 6 months. This is also the place you can check out other members posts and you don't need to be logged in to see ads. There is also a quick link on the home page to go right to the Classified Ads.

Have a wonderful winter, Stephanie

Secretary/Treasurer: Jodi Rametes

Hi – I'm Jodi Rametes, your new secretary/treasurer. Currently I live in Beavercreek Oregon on the family farm. I think this is 3 generations now. I started raising sheep in high school for meat lambs. Mainly blackface crossbreds. It wasn't until 2005 that I started raising Corriedales. I got out of the sheep world for a short time until my "friends" said I needed sheep again and was given a Merino ewe. I had a few Merinos and then moved on to Romeldales. I currently have Romeldales and my grandson Bentley has Romneys. I have started processing the fleeces into batts and do a few shows a year to sell the fiber. Bentley is a great help with the sheep don't know if I could do half of this without him. I also work full time in the Insurance business. Please let me know if there is anything you need from me.

Flock News - The Human Side of Things:

In Memory of Vincent McIntyre -

Vincent McIntyre, father of Anne McIntyre-Lahner passed away in September. As a young man, he spent summers working on farms, and was always interested in sheep, and especially the Romney breed raised by Anne and her family. His support will be missed.



Congratulations to Anne Nichols and Alex Davenport on the birth of their son Parker James Davenport born 10/03/2024.

Scholarship announcement: a note from NARA

As a final task for the North American Romney Association as it's members rejoin ARBA, the NARA board will be awarding 3 youth scholarships. The complete criteria, requirements and application is being developed and will be posted on the website and in the Ramblings sometime early 2025. These will be one-time scholarships in the memory of John Scholder who was a devout supporter of youth and young shepherds.

John was a former Ag student at Fresno State College and a shepherd of the college sheep flock. He also supported youth by judging 4-H and FFA shows and mentoring youth on fitting and care of their flocks.

This will be a great opportunity for youth to help fund their education.

(note: ARBA is not responsible for the funding, selection, or distribution of this scholarship.)



Recessives Rock

“Recessive Romneys” is fightin’ words if you say them in the wrong bar(n). For those Romney breeders who even recognize the term, “recessive” can mean to some boutiquey, or a priesthood with obscure jargon or a fixation on fifty shades of blue. For too many, “recessive” conjures the picture of a colored sheep valued for fleece only and scarcely up to the ARBA breed standard for body size.

Folk who breed recessives, however, have blown past these perceptions in the last twenty years to discover, and proclaim, that recessives are not just quaint throwbacks. Recessively-colored sheep have useful attributes over and above their most conspicuous one – controllable variation in the shades of their fleeces.

Most writing about “recessive” or “recessively-colored Romneys” focuses on fleece, especially the salient characteristic of variations in coat color pattern. There’s much else to say. I’ll first present the else in some depth, then come back to emblematic coat patterns. Before that it’s necessary to say what’s meant by “recessively-colored” (usually shortened to “recessive”). To do this, we need a shallow dive into coat color genetics.

Recessive Romneys: continued

Four major places (**loci**, singular **locus**) in the set of sheep chromosomes are involved to create the many varieties of coat color and pattern recognized today. At each locus, two DNA sequences are positioned in separate compartments as paired **alleles**. The interaction of the two alleles during cell division designs the **gene product**, a protein with a particular purpose. If the DNA sequence in one allele encodes a significant variation on the other's, there is seldom room for compromise. The gene product will generally be what the **dominant** allele of the pair makes of it. A **recessive** DNA sequence will determine the gene product only when both alleles are recessive, which happens in about 25% of replications not involving the solitary Y chromosome of males.

Those four major loci, in Margaret Howard's BASE mnemonic, are as follows:
B (black/brown) locus sets up which melanin pigment will be on tap to go into skin and wool.
A (agouti) locus governs whether that pigment will go into the wool; if yes, where and to what extent. The spatial distribution of pigment directed from agouti is fairly predictable.
S (spotting) locus is a wild card. In a less predictable way than agouti's, its product blocks pigmentation of wool hit or miss. See end-note on spotting.
E (extension) locus. When one of the alleles here is the dominant variant, the extension locus supersedes agouti to pump the base pigment (brown or black) to the same extent into every fiber on the body except where spotting precludes it.

The recessive brown, or moorit, allele at the B locus is uncommon among Romneys, indeed among colored sheep in general. Most have the dominant "black" allele (which, strictly speaking, expresses a brown so dark it looks black). Nearly all "white" sheep also have the black allele at B, manifest in nose leather and hooves. Key warning: The allele pairing at the B locus does not determine whether the coat will be colored or white. That decision is made at the agouti (A) locus, on chromosome 13.

Romneys with two copies of the recessive brown (also called moorit) allele at the B locus have the genetic potential for brown skin and wool. That potential will be latent, however, unless at the agouti locus neither of the two alleles is the white/tan (Awt) that is dominant over the range of "color alleles." If even one of the pair is white/tan, no pigment will be allowed in the wool: a white sheep. Thus, a moorit Romney like the one pictured below (courtesy of Tawanda Farms) is recessive at the B locus and at the A locus.



A moorit Romney that is recessive at the B locus and at agouti. Note the white "teardrop" an inch anterior to the inner canthus of the eye. photo by Margaret Howard



A recessively-colored Romney lamb at Anchorage. He looks black rather than brown. He is not recessive at the B locus, but is at agouti. Note the "teardrop." Photo Stephen Shafer

Recessive Romneys: continued

As I use the term here, “recessively-colored” refers just to the domain of the agouti locus. A sheep can have a recessive genotype at the B locus that may have a role in coat color, but it won’t have pigment in its wool unless there are two recessive color alleles at agouti. Not all Romney moorits are recessive at agouti. An extension-dominant moorit is also possible.

The world literature reports several dozen “color” alleles at agouti that, when not paired with the dominant Awt, put pigment into wool; that is, make sheep “naturally-colored.” In American Romneys, only five of the many have been identified securely. These are presented in a later section on agouti allelotypes in colored Romneys.

Having explained what makes a “recessively-colored Romney,” we can get on to its what else besides the jacket makes it so useful.

Earlier this year I asked Graeme Stewart, the farm manager here 2004-2023, for his take on “recessives.” Years ago, Graeme would gently provoke me by referring to white or natural-colored sheep that are not recessive as “normal sheep” or “regular sheep.” In 2024 he wrote:

“I was the Manager at Anchorage Farm Romneys for 19 years. We raised white and natural-colored Romneys and were prominent in the show and sale world. When the Shafers said they wanted to bring in recessive Romneys I was definitely skeptical. When I saw the first ones I was even more skeptical. What were they going to add to our current program?”

The first couple of years we only had a few recessive ewes lamb. As the numbers increased I began to see certain characteristics, in the recessive ewes, that really opened my eyes.

- 1-less lambing problems = less lamb loss
- 2-vigorous lambs that were up and drinking in a few minutes
- 3-excellent mothers
- 4-excellent milkers
- 5-less turnover in ewe numbers
- 6-beautiful fleeces that hand-spinners would love
- 7- smaller size made them easier to handle and work with

I admitted to Stephen that I had been wrong at first about the recessive sheep. Also told him, and many others, that if I were going to raise Romneys now, I would include recessives.”

Looking for published data to validate some of Graeme’s points, I was referred by Margaret Howard to an epochal 1970 paper by Stefan Adalsteinsson (Colour inheritance in Icelandic sheep and relation between colour, fertility and fertilization. J. Agricultural Research Iceland (1970) 2,1 3-135). Most of the text is on coat color inheritance, but additional findings about reproduction were treated in detail.

Prof. Adalsteinsson described an advantage of about +10% for Icelandic recessive ewes compared to white ewes in number of lambs born per ewe lambing, which we might call average litter size. This is not a huge difference, but has meaning for management. It is statistically highly significant, based as it was on over 6000 matings.

In our experience with Romneys, on a much smaller scale than Adalsteinsson’s with Icelandics, the average number of lambs born alive per ewe lambing has been consistently higher for r-r unions (recessive with recessive) and for unions in which one parent is recessive and the white parent has one such color allele (i.e. is an F1 color carrier) than for all other types of unions. Table 1 below shows the outcomes for the seven years between 2016 and 2024 in which there were enough lambs from r-r matings to compare usefully with all other kinds.

Recessive Romneys: continued

The years 2022 (recessive ram failure) and 2023 (brief exposure to rams) did not provide enough for meaningful comparison. Merging observations from lambings 2016-2021 with those of 2024 gives

	r-r	r to F1 color-carrier	non-recessive	total
Lambs to term	114	44	322	480
Ewes lambbed	59	22	183	264
Avg. litter size	1.93	2	1.75	1.82

Table 1. Average litter size at Anchorage Farm, by agouti genotype of parents, in seven successive lambing seasons 2016-2024

Combining the two groups that have at least one color allele at agouti in each parent gives an average litter size of $158/81 = 1.95$, about 11% higher than the 1.75 among non-recessives.

Adalsteinsson did not find a survival advantage for liveborn Icelandic recessive lambs compared to white ones. With a different breed and a smaller set of observations, we do see one. Across the same seven years captured in Table 1 in re average litter size, a distinct survival advantage appeared. This is shown in table 2

	r-r matings	all other matings	total
recognized conceptions to term	157	325	482
survived conception to weaning	148	296	444
% lost conception to weaning	5.8%	8.9%	7.9%

Table 2. Proportion of lambs lost between conception and weaning, by agouti genotype of parents, over seven successive years 2016-2024, Anchorage Farm Note: The number of losses in gestation for both groups (2 lambs total) may seem low. We define “recognized conception” as our seeing definite products of conception or a nonviable fetus delivered or a term lamb living or dead. The only recognized losses in utero over this time were two lambs of a recessive first-timer in 2024 who had “ring womb” that we did not catch in time to save the lambs or mother.

lambs born alive at term	155	325	480
survived birth to weaning	148	296	444
% lost birth to weaning	4.6%	8.9%	7.5%

Table 3. Proportion of liveborn lambs lost between birth and weaning, by agouti genotype of parents, over seven successive years 2016-2024, Anchorage Farm Note:

In these 480 liveborn, the risk of death between birth and weaning for recessive lambs is about half that for all matings not r-r. The risk ratio estimate from this sample ($.046 / .089 = 0.52$) is not statistically significant at the $P < 0.05$ level. We are impressed by it anyway. Higher average litter size together with increased survival after birth give a real edge in management ease to recessives.

Recessive Romneys: continued

A common slam on recessive Romneys is that they are smaller than white or extension-dominant ones. They may not weigh quite as much at maturity nor stand as tall, but they are solid. The one recessive lamb born here in spring 2022 (#1867) had twins in 2024 whose 30-day weights adjusted for age were 30 and 34.4 pounds. In 2024, one white and one recessive ewe each raised triplets by herself. Age-adjusted 30-day weights averaged 24.7 lb for the white ewe and 24.6 for the recessive.

In spring 2024, thirty-day weights of twins raised as twins (adjusted for age on a straight-line basis assuming birth weight zero) were higher among recessive lambs than among non-recessives. In the first 30 days, dams of all agouti genotypes consumed, besides hay, an average of 1.5 pounds of grain/day regardless of litter size. Lambs were not offered any ration in the creep, but did start nibbling hay early. Table 4 compares weights for twins raised as twins, by the lamb's coat-color genotype and sex.

male twins raised as twins	count	line average in pounds
White BW	7	24
Recessive	6	29.8
Extension-dominant	0	----
Total	13	26.7
female twins raised as twins		
White BW	3	22.8
Recessive	8	24.3
Extension-dominant	2	21.5
Total	13	23.5

Table 4. Age-adjusted thirty-day weights for twenty-six Romney twins raised as twins, by coat color genotype and sex, Anchorage Farm 2024

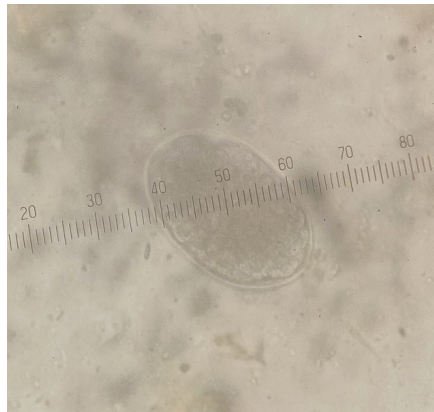
In males, the recessive average weight was almost 6 pounds higher. In females, it was 1.5 pounds more. Higher birth weights explained most of the difference. (see Table 5)

Male twins	count	line average in pounds
White BW	9	9.9
Recessive	6	13.5
Extension-dominant	0	---
Female twins		
White BW	4	11
Recessive	7	13
Extension-dominant	2	9.5

Table 5. Birth weights for twenty-eight Romney twins born twins, by lamb's coat color genotype and sex, Anchorage Farm 2024

I can't explain the better reproductive outcomes for agouti recessives, nor the better 30-day weights. Yet they are real for us, as are the other positives that Graeme noted even before he got to # 6 (fleece). Recessive lambs also have special charm. They are inquisitive and sociable, as the frontispiece photo above shows. Many have no-two-alike white facial markings ("facial drama," Margaret Howard calls it) that by themselves or mingled with spotting make them individually distinctive.

***** End of part 1 part 1 to follow in next issue of Ramblings *****



Strongyles eggs x 1,000



On October 8th, the Tufts Vet Field Services team did LAI on thirty brood ewes at Anchorage with semen of Kikitango South 7084/22, seen above at 14 months. On resistance to internal parasites, he stood in the 5th percent of 33,000 NZ rams born in 2022. He'll help us toward a flock that thrives on little or no chemical dewormers, combating the emergence of drench-resistant *Strongyles* like the “barber pole worm.”

Twenty-eight ewes scanned pregnant on 20 Nov! We hope ARBA members will buy many of his sons. We will also make semen available to breeders, (and not just of Romneys) who seek a non-pharmacological counter to drench resistance. Visit [our website](#) and follow us on [IG@anchorageromneys](#).

Anchorage Farm, Saugerties NY 12477

Stephen and Elizabeth Shafer - 917-453-7371

ARBA Futurity Results for 2024: by Charlene Carlisle

This year there were thirty nominations from ten breeders, from seven states for our Futurity Program. Eight youth participated with seventeen head, by returning their post show placement paperwork. ARBA collected \$600 from these nominations and 100% gets returned to the participating youth based on point accumulations from each show. See results below.

The Futurity Program for 2025 is underway and nominations can be submitted on either ewe lambs or yearling ewes bought or home grown. See specific rules on ARBA's website for details. Once nominated, it is up to the youth to submit verification of placement for each show that the lamb/yearling ewe participates in. The form needs to be submitted within 2 weeks of each show. Points are accumulated throughout the show season and placings are realized at the end. Checks will be sent out after official results have been announced.

White Home Raised Romney Yearling Ewes (none nominated)

White Owned Romney Yearling Ewes

First Place George Fry (NH) Winding Wicks 2307 Winding Wicks Farm (NH)
Second Place Kenneth Briggs (NH) Winding Wicks 2318 Winding Wicks Farm (NH)
Third Place Sadie Bonyng (IL) 3L 2341 3 L&S Farms (MI)

White Home Raised Romney Ewe Lambs (none nominated)

White Owned Romney Ewe Lambs

First Place Katelyn Oberholtzer (PA) Winding Wicks 2416 Winding Wicks Farm (NH)
Second Place Katelyn Oberholtzer (PA) Morton 0293 Woodland Acres (CT)
Third Place George Fry (IN) Winding Wicks 2414 Winding Wicks (NH)
Fourth Place Sadie Bonyng (IL) E/C Plank 2414 E/C Plank (MI)
Fifth Place Sadie Bonyng (IL) 3L 2413 3 L&S Farms (MI)

Natural Colored Home Raised Romney Yearling Ewes (none nominated)

Natural Colored Owned Romney Yearling Ewes

First Place Claire Von Behrens (IL) TDF 316 Thistle Down Farms (NY)
Second Place Elizabeth Briggs (NH) Winding Wicks 2305 Winding Wicks Farm (NH)
Third Place Josie Bonyng (IL) 3L 2306 3 L&S Farms (MI)
Fourth Place Josie Bonyng (IL) 3L 2302 3 L&S Farms (MI)

Natural Colored Home Raised Romney Ewe Lambs (no forms submitted)

Natural Colored Owned Romney Ewe Lambs

First Place Elizabeth Briggs (NH) Winding Wicks 2422 Winding Wicks Farm (NH)
Second Place Josie Bonyng (IL) E/C Plank 2416 E/C Plank (MI)
Third Place Tie Josie Bonyng (IL) 3L 2426 3 L&S Farms (MI)
Third Place Tie Kingston Rincker (IL) Winding Wicks 2357 Winding Wicks Farm (NH)
Fourth Place Kingston Rincker (IL) E/C Plank 2413 E/C Plank (MI)

Congratulations to all participants. This year the participation was pretty consistent with last year, which was up from the previous year. Thanks to all the parents, breeders and youth who helped make this possible.

ARBA's National Sale 2025: by Charlene Carlisle

Start making plans for ARBA's National Romney Sale to be held on May 9th - 11th, 2025. The Ohio Showcase Sale, managed by Select Livestock Services, will be held in Greenville, Ohio again this year. Last year made for a great weekend with Romneys sales doing very well. Many transportation options are available, barns and parking are easily accessible, and hotels are within a close proximity. Please mark your calendar and join your fellow Romney enthusiasts. More details to follow as time gets closer.

The Big “E” including The 2025 National Romney Show Results and Annual Meeting: by Marianne DiTaranto

In September, District 1 hosted the National Romney Show on Sunday, September 22 and the Annual Dinner and Meeting on Friday, September 20 at the Eastern States Exposition, (known as Big “E”) in West Springfield Massachusetts. On Friday, September 20th, the annual dinner and meeting were held at Storrowton Tavern and Carriage House. Jodi Rametes, ARBA Secretary and Treasurer and Stephanie Booren, ARBA Board of Director flew from Oregon to participate in the ARBA events. It was nice to join together for a meal and to visit with each other. Also, the food was delicious. Tim Fleener said grace and offered a few words and a moment of silence in support of Anne McIntyre-Lahner, ARBA President, her father in his passing and her family. Charlene Carlisle, the Vice President presided over the meeting and the reading of the annual report. Draft minutes of the meeting can be found on the ARBA website.

During and after dinner, the members had the opportunity to bid on donated items at the silent auction which was spread over two tables. Thank you to everyone who donated and to all who bid. The funds from the auction will be used for supporting youth and promoting ARBA.

On Saturday, several Romney members dressed in their beautifully designed and well presented, woolen outfits to participate in the second week Leadline as part of the Fiber Products portion of the Eastern States Exposition Sheep Show. Elizabeth Briggs of Deerfield, NH finished second in Novice. Megan and Isaac Garges of Parkton, MD finished fifth in Novice. Katelyn Oberholtzer of East Earl, PA won the Junior class and Bronwyn Wolfe of Lee, NH was second in Junior. Congratulations and thank you for your creativity and promotion of wool!

There were 18 entries in the Romney Fleece Show. Melissa Trojanoski had first place white Romney fleece which was also the Reserve Champion Purebred Fleece. Charlene Carlisle was second and Penny Swearingen was third. In the Natural Colored class, Melissa Trojanoski was first, Sara Tomis took second and Kathleen Collins was third. Congratulations to everyone who participated for showcasing the luster, durability, elasticity and simple beauty of pure Romney Wool.

The National Romney Show was held on September 22 at the Mallory Complex on the Big “E” grounds. Evan Snyder was the judge. The entries for both the open and the junior show were 23 exhibitors and 83 sheep. The revolving national show trophies and plaques were returned and readied to be distributed to this year’s winners. For a full account of the results, go to the Big “E” website: <https://www.thebige.com/p/competitions/show-results--photos>.

In the National White Romney Show: The Champion White Ram who was also the Junior Champion Ram was shown by Catherine Hromis of Chichester NH. The Reserve Champion White Ram was exhibited by Tim and Sarah Fleener of Robeson PA. The Champion White Ewe who was also the Junior Champion Ewe was shown by Catherine Hromis. The Reserve Champion White Ewe was shown by Emma Rogers of Danielson, CT. The Junior Show Reserve Champion White Romney Ram and Ewe were exhibited by Catherine Hromis.

In the National Natural Colored Romney Show: The Champion Natural Colored Ram was shown by Tim and Sarah Fleener. The Reserve NC Champion was shown by Teresa Hromis. The Champion NC Ewe was exhibited by Claire VonBehrens of Stewardson, IL. The Reserve NC Ewe was shown by Victoria Briggs of Letts, IA. The Junior Show NC Champion Ram was exhibited by Cadence Higgins of Coventry, CT and the Junior Show NC Champion Ewe was shown by Elizabeth Briggs of Deerfield, NH. The Junior Show NC Reserve Champion Ewe was shown by Penelope Kemp of Ridgefield, Ct.

One final honor for the Romney Breed occurred when Catherine Hromis won Supreme Champion Ewe for Week 2 of the Eastern States Exposition Sheep Show with her first placed yearling ewe lamb.

Congratulations and thank you to everyone who exhibited and all those who supported the exhibitors and the National Romney Show. In 2025, the National Show will be in November at the North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville KY. We will see you there!

Here are a few photos from the Big E!!!

Supreme Champion Ewe, Champion Romney Ewe, 1st Yearling Ewe Lamb, Shown by Catherine Hromis, Chichester, NH



The Big "E" photos



ARBA National Show Sponsors 2024: by Charlene Carlisle

As always, National Show awards don't just happen. There is a lot of planning and behind the scene work that happens to ensure a great time. Marianne DiTaranto was the spearhead behind this National Show and what a great job she did with the help of many other members, exhibitors and helping hands. There were meetings, annual dinner and the show itself to be managed and we had a lot of help. Like the saying goes, it takes a village and our village consists of members from the west and east coast, and in between.. The actual show results, meeting etc. will be covered in a separate article but this article will focus on our support system that sponsored awards. When the call goes out for awards, I am always so humbled by the deep generosity from our members. This year we not only needed awards to be sponsored but also exhibitor gifts for everyone participating in the National Show. The exhibitor gift was a long sleeve t-shirt with the ARBA logo and the wordage "Realize Results with Romneys, National Show 2024". So many folks stepped up to help and I sincerely thank you.

Gr Champion White Ram - Rincker Land & Livestock (IL)

Gr Champion White Romney Ewe - Emma Rogers (CT)

Gr Champion NC Romney Ram - Thistle Down Farm (SC)

Gr Champion NC Romney Ewe - Birds of a Feather Farm (CT)

Junior Champ White Romney Ram - Henny Penny Farm (CT)

Junior Champ White Romney Ewe - Southern Oregon Romneys (OR)

Junior Champ NC Romney Ram - LibertyHall Farm (NH)

Junior Champ NC Romney Ewe - Thistle Down Farm (SC)

Best Headed White Romney - Ravenwood Farm (CT)

Best Headed NC Romney - Ravenwood Farm (CT)

Many other folks donated funds towards the exhibitor gifts. They include the following:

Andy Peterson & Family (DE), Theresa Walker & Family (NH), Robin Patnode (VT), Winding Wicks Farm, and Little Hooves Romneys.

I know I have said this before, and I hate to be redundant, but the Romney members are the absolute best. Go Romneys!



iPad Raffle: by Charlene Carlisle

The iPad raffle drawing was held at Big E on September 22nd, 2024. The winning ticket was drawn between the National White Romney Show and the National Natural Colored Romney Show by our judge, Evan Snyder. The proceeds were to benefit the National Junior Show (held in conjunction with the All-American Jr Show) and NAILE's Jr Show. The iPad was donated by Ethan Kennedy/Thistle Down Farm with 100% of proceeds designated for the two above shows. I am so pleased to announce that the winner was Hayley Reed (Reed's Rustic Farm) from Kentucky. As a side note, Hayley is the great granddaughter of Ray Goff, one of our original Romney breeders. Ray passed in 2018 but would have been very proud to know that his great granddaughter has Romneys and is always supportive of our youth. Total proceeds were \$955. Thanks to all of you that purchased tickets and to the many that also helped sell them. Go Romneys!



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NAILE Open Show: By Ethan Kennedy

A year of dedication, long hours, and high anticipation culminated at the 2024 North American International Livestock Expo with the Open Romney Show—the grand finale of the 2024 show season! Judged by the esteemed Mr. Evan Snyder of Atglen, Pennsylvania, a highly regarded livestock judge, this year's event brought together top producers from across the nation. The White Division showcased 33 animals from 11 exhibitors, while the Natural Colored Division featured 38 animals from 11 exhibitors. Though numbers were slightly down from last year's National Show, participation continues to trend upward compared to the past five years. Romney producers from NH, MI, WI, PA, IL, CT, IN, CA, DE, OR, NY, NJ, RI, and KY proudly represented their states on NAILE's iconic green shavings.

White Romney Highlights

In the White Division, eight rams were presented. Catherine Hromis of Chichester, NH, claimed **Grand Champion Ram** honors with her Spring Ram Lamb, *Winding Wicks 2428 "Chad"*. Notably, "Chad" also won **National Champion Ram** at the 2024 Big E in September. Claire VonBehrens earned **Reserve Grand Champion Ram** with *Rincker 2739 "Shaboozey"*.



The competition intensified with the White Ewes, featuring 25 elite females. Among them were heavyweights like George Fry's All-American Jr. Show Champion Ewe, Catherine Hromis's Big E Supreme Ewe, and Emma Rogers's Junior Champion Ewe from the National Show. The depth of quality in these classes was so remarkable that Judge Snyder commented on the exceptional caliber of the entries. Ultimately, the **Grand Champion Ewe** title went to Catherine Hromis with her Winter Ewe Lamb, *Winding Wicks 2440*. George Fry earned **Reserve Grand Champion Ewe** with *Winding Wicks 2307*.



NAILE Open Show - continued:



The *Best Fleece on Hoof* award went to Emma Rogers with *Morton 0285*, a Winter Ewe Lamb. Rounding out the White Division, Catherine Hromis won **Premier Exhibitor** honors, continuing her dominance with a fifth consecutive **Champion Flock** at NAILE.

Natural Colored Highlights

After a brief intermission, the spotlight shifted to the Natural Colored Romneys in the South Ring. The show began with 10 elite rams, where Ethan Kennedy claimed **Grand Champion Ram** honors with his Winter Ram Lamb, *Thistle Down 405*. The **Reserve Champion Ram** title went to Teresa Hromis with her Fall Ram Lamb, *Winding Wicks 2356 AI*.



The competition heated up with the Natural Colored Ewes, featuring some of the deepest classes in recent memory. The highlight was the Yearling Ewe class, with 12 impressive entries—the largest class of the entire Romney show. From this group, Claire VonBehrens emerged victorious, taking **Grand Champion Ewe** honors with *Thistle Down 316 "Silver Charm"*, the same ewe that was crowned **2024 National Champion Ewe** at the Big E and National Sale Champion earlier this year. Ethan Kennedy took **Reserve Champion Ewe** with his Winter Ewe Lamb, *Thistle Down 406*.



NAILE Open Show - conclusion:

The show concluded with the *Best Natural Colored Fleece on Hoof* award, won by E&C Plank with *E&C Plank 2409*, and Ethan Kennedy earned the final **Premier Exhibitor** banner alongside the first-place flock



A Bright Future for the Romney Breed

The 2024 North American International Livestock Expo highlighted the incredible quality and promise of the Romney breed. With exceptional exhibitors and animals setting the standard, the future of Romneys looks brighter than ever. Mark your calendars for the 2025 National Romney Show, returning to NAILE next November—we can't wait to see you there!



ARBA Juniors - An amazing group of kids!

NAILE JR show :by Ethan Kennedy

The NAILE Junior Show is always a highlight, serving as a celebration of a year filled with hard work and growth for our talented Romney junior exhibitors! The weekend kicked off with the lead line contest, where Romney participants made a strong impression in highly competitive classes. A special congratulations to Elizabeth Briggs for her win in the 8–10-year-old class! Our Romney youth also shined in the annual showmanship contest, with several making the top 10 in their respective classes, a testament to their dedication and skill.

Saturday was an exciting day packed with activity. The annual Romney social and gift presentation was a big hit, featuring this year's gift: directors' chairs generously sponsored by Thistle Down Farm (*Editor adds a big Thank you to Ethan from the entire Board!*). These gifts were a standout success and were talked about throughout the barn.

The spotlight turned to the NAILE Junior Show on Saturday evening, where 15 exhibitors showcased 40 outstanding Romney sheep. Judged by Mr. Braden Campbell of Ohio, the show was a thrilling display of excellence. Catherine Hromis of Chichester, NH, swept all four champions and reserves and earned Best Headed Ram, while Katelyn Oberholtzer took Best Headed Ewe honors. Penny Kemp capped off the event with Best White and Best Natural Colored Fleece on Hoof. All remarkable achievements that highlighted the quality of this year's entries.

Every junior exhibitor should feel incredibly proud of their accomplishments this show season. The North American International Livestock Expo Junior Show was a fantastic finale, and we look forward to seeing everyone back next year on the green shavings! (a few photos are on the previous page)

NAILE JR show sponsors for 2024:By Charlene Carlisle

NAILE Sponsors for 2024 The following sponsors stepped up and showed support for our NAILE Junior Show this year. The Champion and Reserve Champions received a set of wireless headphones. The headphones were affixed with a leather label denoting the show, award and year received. Extra donations were received to defer expenses for our social fun time which was a hoagie fest this year.

Champion Romney Ram - Phyllis Looker & Family (OH)

Reserve Champion Romney Ram - Chatter Brook Farm (NH)

Champion Romney Ewe - Phyllis Looker & Family (OH)

Reserve Champion Romney Ewe - FP Livestock (IL)

Romney Ram Best Head - Sonshine Acres (PA)

Romney Ewe Best Head - Feehan Family (OH)

Romney Best White Fleece - Mis-Fit Acres (NY)

Romney Best Natural Colored Fleece - Mis-Fit Acres (NY)



Hoagie Fest Donations included funds from Chatter Brook Farm (NH), FP Livestock (IL), Winding Wicks (NH), Little Hooves (NJ), Schmoll Show Lambs (WI), and Jodi Rametes (OR). If I have overlooked anyone, please let me know!

As an added note, the award labels were made and donated by a small, ranch based business in Nebraska. Pleasant Valley Creations (Heidi Erickson-Riessland) has been helping me out with awards for 5+ years. Heidi is very creative, easy to work with and is an active rancher/farmer and the mother of 4H'ers and FFA'ers. She always knows what the kids like. I highly recommend Heidi for any awards you might need. She can be found easily on Facebook and Instagram.

As always, your generosity is so appreciated.

Calendar of Events:		
EVENT	DATE	NOTES
MSU Birth Management for Sheep & Goats Webinar`	01-02-2025	Events.anr.msu.edu/smallruminantbirthmanagement/
Southeast KY Sheep Producers Assoc. Shearing School	01-04-2025	Patrick Angel - 606-312-5264 - Somerset, KY
Pennsylvania Farm Show	01-04/11-2025	pa.gov/agencies/farmshow/pa-farm-show.html
IU-USU-SDSU Extension Sheep & Goat Monthly Webinar	01-08-2025	Uldaho.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_fWiLWKvuS2-dx3AJnWotNw
MSU Birth Management for Sheep & Goats Webinar	01-08-2025	Events.anr.msu.edu/smallruminantbirthmanagement/
ASI Convention	01-15/18-2025	SheepUSA.org - Scottsdale, AZ
MSU Birth Management for Sheep & Goats Webinar	01-15-2025	Events.anr.msu.edu/smallruminantbirthmanagement/
MSU Birth Management for Sheep & Goats Webinar	01-22-2025	Events.anr.msu.edu/smallruminantbirthmanagement/
UT State University Sheep Shearing School	01-23/25-2025	Eventbrite.com/e/usu-sheep-shearing-school-2025-tickets-1003155062797 - Logan UT
Univ. of CA Cooperative Extension Lambing School	01-24/26-2025	Surveys.ucanr.edu/survey.cfm?surveynumber=44106 - Hopland, CA
Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival Winterfest	01-24/26-2025	Sheepandwool.org
MSU Birth Management for Sheep & Goats Workshop	01-25-2025	Events.anr.msu.edu/smallruminantbirthmanagement/ - Okemos, MI
MN Extension Lambing & Kidding Kits Webinar	01-27-2025	UMN.xoom.us/webinar/register/WN_HsQ7c3_2RR2jDVfkti1iXg#/registration
IU-USU-SDSU Extension Sheep & Goat Monthly Webinar	02/12/2025	Uldaho.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_fWiLWKvuS2-dx3AJnWotNw
Maryland Sheep Breeders Shearing School	02-24/25-2025	Marylandsheepbreeders.org/activities/Maryland-shearing-school - Fairplay, MD
Missouri Extension Shearing School	03-05/06-2025	Lincolnu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0dneWaxS3PQrWq - Jefferson City, MO
IU-USU-SDSU Extension Sheep & Goat Monthly Webinar	03-12-2025	Uldaho.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_fWiLWKvuS2-dx3AJnWotNw
TX Sheep & Goat Raisers' Stockman's Sale	03-14/15-2025	TSGRA.com/events#stockmans-sale - San Angelo, TX
Carolina Fiber Festival	03-14/15-2025	NC State Fairgrounds, Raleigh, NC
Ozarks Highlands Sheep & Fiber Festival	03-21/22-2025	MestaMeadows.com/fiber-festival - Glenallen, MO
Minnesota Extension Pasture Forage Management Webinar	03-25-2025	UMN.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_t8hG1d-9Sg2z7F-MnHWzka#/registration
Tennessee Sheep Shearing School	03-28/29-2025	Tennesseesheep.org/shearing-school - Murfreesboro, TN
IU-USU-SDSU Extension Sheep & Goat Monthly Webinar	04-09-2025	Uldaho.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_fWiLWKvuS2-dx3AJnWotNw
Washington State Beginning Sheep Shearing School	04-21/25-2025	Sarah M. Smith - 509-754-2011 ext. 4363 or smithsm@me.com - Moses Lake, WA
Univ. of CA Cooperative Extension Shearing School	04-22/26-2025	CEMendocino.UCANR.edu/livestock_and_range_management/sheep_shearing_school / - Clearlake Oaks, CA
Washington State Advanced Sheep Shearing School	04-26-2025	Sarah M. Smith - 509-754-2011 ext. 4363 or smithsm@me.com - Moses Lake, WA
Frederick Fiber Festival - Frederick, Maryland	04-26-2025	Frederickfiberfest.com
Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival	05-03/04-2025	Sheepandwool.org - West Friendship, MD
National Romney Sale	05-08/20-2025	Greenville, OH
IU-USU-SDSU Extension Sheep & Goat Monthly Webinar	05-14-2025	Uldaho.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_fWiLWKvuS2-dx3AJnWotNw
International Wool Textile Organization Congress 2025	05-20/23-2025	IWTO.org/congress-2025/ - Lille, France
<p>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. For more dates - there is a list at www.sheepusa.org</p>		

American Sheep Industry:

In just a few short weeks the American Sheep Industry will hold their annual convention in Scottsdale Arizona—January 15-18, 2025. If you are in attendance please reach out to Patricia Sanville to say hello and get a photo for the next edition of the Ramblings.

In other news - as of today it looks like the Farm Bill will get another one-year extension. This will allow the incoming administration to craft what the new bill will look like. Reach out to your legislators and help shape our future.

THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE WANTS TO KNOW:

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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