

If you are interested in sheep, October will be a great month as several different organizations through the state of Ohio will be offering a wide variety of workshops.

October 1, 2011 is Sheep-O-Rama – a one-day educational event to promote the development of the Sheep Dairy Industry in Ohio. This Saturday event is from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Delaware County (OH) Fairgrounds. This should be of interest to those already raising sheep for meat or fiber that want to add value to their herd or for those considering embarking on a new farming venture. The day's events will focus on the business of sheep milk production including financing, facility and equipment requirements, genetics and grazing.

Keynote speaker will be Claire Mikolayunas, Ph.D., Dairy Sheep Specialist from the University of Wisconsin. Other speakers include Bob Hendershot, USDA/NRCS State Grazing Specialist, Lisa Sippel, co-owner of the first ODA licensed Sheep Dairy in the State of Ohio and Jim McGuire, Wichert Insurance. Plans are in the works to have sheep dairy and sheep handling equipment on-site so that participants have a first-hand view. Artisan cheese makers from around the state will be on hand to offer samples of sheep cheeses and other sheep dairy products. Morning coffee, breakfast and lunch will be available for a small fee from the Fairgrounds concessionaire.

For more information, contact Traci Aquara, Heart of Ohio RC&D, tkaquara@netzero.net or visit www.heartofohiorcd.org or <http://ohiosheepdairy.wordpress.com/>. Cost is \$20 in advance, \$25 after 9/26/11. To register, please send check or money order for \$20, payable to Heart of Ohio RC&D, and mail to 557 Sunbury Rd., Delaware OH 43015, ATTN: Sheep-O-Rama. This event was organized by the Heart of Ohio RC&D and the Ohio Sheep Milk & Cheese Initiative and sponsored in part by Innovative Farmers of Ohio.

On October 14, 2011, a workshop Management Skills for Organic Small Ruminants is scheduled from 1 to 5 p.m. at Ohio State University's Ohio Agriculture Research and Development Center (OARDC) in Wooster, Ohio. Sheep and goat producers who are certificated organic, in transition to becoming organic or just interested in small ruminants and organic methods will benefit from attending this event.

The workshop will focus on the management knowledge needed for organic small ruminant production. Joan M Burke, PhD, Research Animal Scientist, USDA, Agricultural Research Service from Dale Bumpers Small Farms Research Center in Arkansas will be one of the featured speakers. Joan has done extensive work in small ruminant parasite management and organic practices for small ruminants. Francis Fluharty, PhD, is a Ruminant Nutritionist Researcher at the OARDC. He will share the importance of nutrition on animal growth, as well as animal welfare concerns in an organic system. Rose Smith from the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA) will discuss the process of becoming certified organic, recordkeeping, and the new NOP pasture rule.

The workshop will be held at the Research Service Building, Room 130 at the Ohio Agriculture Research and Development Center located at 1680 Madison Ave, Wooster, OH 44691. Cost for the workshop will be \$15.00. This workshop is sponsored by the Organic Food and Farming Education and Research Program (OFFER) at OARDC and the Small Farm Institute. For more information contact Kathy Bielek at Bielek.4@osu.edu or 330 202-3528.

The final event is "Selecting the Right Sheep for You" on Saturday, October 15 at the Wayne County Fairgrounds in Wooster, Ohio. This workshop is sponsored by the Ohio Heartland Sheep Improvement Association (OHSIA). Sheep producers who are interested in expanding their flocks, purchasing new

animals and anyone interested in buying sheep for the first time will benefit from this event. Learn what makes a good sheep. The workshop will feature keynote speakers Joan Burke, PhD, Research Animal Scientist, USDA Agricultural Research Service and Charles Parker, PhD, Professor emeritus, Ohio State University. Dr. Burke will share her experience on selecting the right breed and management system. Dr. Parker will provide an overview of the sheep industry and areas of potential growth. Breakout sessions will include live sheep to demonstrate selection criteria for different market segments, including: purebred sheep and flocks offering Expected Breeding Values (EBVs); commercial sheep production; club lambs and show sheep; and hand spinner and fleece production.

The workshop will be held in the sheep barn at the Wayne County Fairgrounds in Wooster, Ohio from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Pre-registration before October 7 will be \$20 per person or \$15 for each additional family member with lunch included. Registration after October 7 and walk-ins are welcome but the cost will be \$25 per person. For more information please call Suzie Gortner at 419-869-7353, skg2ewe@frontier.com or Donna Stoneback at 419-368-3949, wadejean@netzero.net .