Consecutive AgriLife Sheep, Goat Events are Almost Here
Sheep and Goat Field Day, Texas Sheep and Goat Expo set August 18-19 in San Angelo

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SAN ANGELO – Two major sheep and goat events are fast approaching.

The 44th annual Sheep and Goat Field Day, followed immediately by the 2017 Texas Sheep and Goat Expo, will be August 18 and 19 in San Angelo.

The field day theme is “Feeding for Profit” and will showcase work being done at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center in San Angelo. The event is being dedicated to the memory of the late Clinton Hodges, longtime sheep producer and industry innovator from Sterling City, said Dr. John Walker, Texas A&M AgriLife Research resident director at the center.

The field day will open with registration at 8:00 a.m., followed by the program from 8:30-11:30 a.m. and ending with lunch at the center, north of San Angelo on U.S. Highway 87.

The Texas Sheep and Goat Expo will follow the field day at 1:00 p.m. at San Angelo’s 1st Community Federal Credit Union Spur Arena. The August 18 activities end at 8:30 p.m. and resume August 19 at 8:30 a.m. The event ends with a 2:00 p.m. ram sale.

Marvin Ensor, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service regional program director at San Angelo, said there’s been much thought and preparation put into the expo.

“We have a very active and dedicated committee who plans this statewide event,” Ensor said. “This is the third one we’ve had in as many years, and coming up with new information takes time, effort and dedication, but this group has been equal to the task. They’ve adhered to the original idea of making this a broad yet unique event designed to meet the needs of a very diverse and often changing sheep and goat industry.”

Ensor said the committee has secured many new additions to the expo this year.

“New this year are equipment demonstrations to be conducted both days, a youth program that targets sheep and goat skill-a-thons, concurrent sessions for all major segments of the industry, including, for the first time, a session on Angora goats, a commercial hair sheep production producer panel, a judge’s panel on future show ring trends, and a presentation on grazing systems for meat goats on small acreage.

“And to cap off the expo, we will complete the event with a sale of performance tested Rambouillet and Katahdin rams.

“The sale is designed to showcase performance-based genetic selection techniques, which are also something new to be discussed this year. The sale will give expo participants the opportunity to buy some of the top genetics discussed earlier in the program,” he said.
Dr. Reid Redden, AgriLife Extension state sheep and goat specialist at San Angelo, said the sale will feature fine-wool and hair sheep from breeders who have used intensive genetic selection technology for many years to make positive genetic improvement within their flocks.

“Eight of the Rambouillet rams will be from the Texas A&M AgriLife Research Ram Performance test at San Angelo, including the top indexing ram on the test,” Redden said. “Some of the consigned rams are enrolled in the National Sheep Improvement Program and will have estimated breeding values or EBVs for growth, maternal and wool traits.”

Redden said all the Katahdin hair sheep breeders offering rams for sale during the auction are from out of state.

“All the breeders consigning these rams have a major focus on reproductive rate and parasite resistance,” he said. “All the rams are in the top 50 percent of the breed for NSIP Hair Index, which verifies their superior genetic merit for both reproductive rate and growth potential.

“All the rams being offered are top individuals within their respective breeds, and the breeders have the data to back up their claims,” he said.

Ensor urged attendees to register soon as the early registration deadline is August 15.

“Thanks to strong sponsorship, we are able to offer these programs at a very reasonable rate,” he said. “And by preregistering, it will help save attendees a few dollars while helping us to know how many to expect.”

Early individual registration for the expo is $40 by August 15 and $60 thereafter. Individual student registration is $15 per day. The fees cover all available meals provided during the expo.

For more information on the Sheep and Goat Field Day, contact Walker at 325-653-4576, j-walker@ag.tamu.edu. Individual registration is $10 and includes lunch.

For more information and to register for either or both events, go to http://agrilife.org/westresults/registration or contact Ensor at San Angelo at 325-653-4576, m-ensor@tamu.edu.

For more information on the ram sale, contact Redden at 325-653-4576, Reid.Redden@ag.tamu.edu.

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