

About This issue....

This issue contains an ENORMOUS amount of information.

Some of this information is time-sensitive.

We would not have included all of it if we didn't think it was so important that the membership have access to this information NOW!

The following topics are time-sensitive and require your immediate attention:

- ❖ Yak Husbandry Research Conference in November
- ❖ EHD information

These topics will require attention before the next newsletter in December

- ❖ National Western Stock Show Info
- ❖ Fiber Committee Updates
- ❖ Deafness in Yaks

The following are casual and informative reading

- ❖ Member Participation
- ❖ Historical Snapshot: Dreadlock
- ❖ Yaks Out and About!

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors meets the first Wednesday of each month at 7pm Mountain time.
All Association members are welcome to attend these video conference meetings.

The membership elects the Board of Directors, each of whom serve for a term of three years.
The Board of Directors selects its own officers annually.

You can view the list and bios of the Board of Directors here: <https://www.usyaks.org/board>



A note from the president...

MEMBER PARTICIPATION

Fall Issue Feature Photo!!



King Tut, Golden Royal
Star Ranch
Casper, WY

What's in this issue?

- A note from the President
- Historical Snapshot
- EHD: Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease
- NWSS News & Info
- Fiber Committee News
- Announcements, Updates, & Reminders
- Deafness in Royal Yaks
- Yaks Out & About!
- Yak Husbandry Conference Info

When USYAKS was created about three and a half years ago, it was created because the founders had a shared vision of a Yak association with a registry that was based on science, a membership that could offer meaningful input in matters of governance, and a collective union of yak owners that could offer a sense of community. In the last Newsletter, I discussed why the small genetic variation in North American yaks guided us toward a science-based-registry. This time I'd like to take on the subject of member participation.

If you were a cattle rancher, your neighbors would likely also be cattle ranchers. You'd probably be surrounded by fellow cattle ranchers. If you wanted to talk about something cattle-related you'd talk to your neighbor over the pasture fence or at the mailbox. Maybe you'd go to your local feed store, pour yourself a cup of coffee, and sit down at the table. You'd certainly be sharing that table with other people who raised cattle. If you had questions about putting a float through fresh concrete in a new-tire tank, someone at that table would have done it. If you sat there for an hour, you'd be able to share your experiences in a way that helped a table-mate.

Yak ranchers don't really have that. Your closest fellow yak rancher might be even hundreds of miles away. An USYAKS Board or Directors meeting might be the closest thing to a shared table at the farm-store that's available to you. The Board of Directors feels the same way, we want a shared table.

One of the seemingly revolutionary ideas common to all the founding members of USYAKS was that Board meeting agendas should be distributed to all members before meetings and that the Board meetings should be open to the entire membership. In fact, any member is even welcome to submit an agenda item for one of the meetings, just please do it about ten days in advance. All you have to do is write to Secretary@USYAKS.org, or to President@USYAKS.org. If you submit an agenda item, I suggest you show up at the meeting!

The Board generally meets once a month for about two hours. Much of the two hours can be a pretty grubby detail-oriented business meeting. There's usually a period of time, early on, when we are waiting for a quorum, and there's always a period of time at the end for a bit of socializing and sharing of information.

During the meeting, association members are welcome to offer meaningful input to the agenda topic under discussion. The socializing periods are pretty free-wheeling.

At USYAKS we have a large Board of Directors, currently numbering ten. Sometimes, visiting Association members out-number Board members at the meetings. This sort of governance structure is certainly not efficient, but it is sensitive to the desires and needs of the segments of the membership that find themselves a bit isolated.

By being an inclusive Association, thereby having widely varied sources of input, the Board of Directors is more likely to take the needs of all members into account early in the discussion/decision process. Because of this, our Board tends to get things right on its first try. Input from a wider cross-section of members makes us a better association. Your attendance at board meetings is more than welcomed, **it is valued.**



Dreadlock

If you own a yak with a long pedigree, the pedigree almost certainly will reference the bull Dreadlock. With the possible exception of Queen Allante, Dreadlock's contribution to the genetics of the registered yaks in North America is unsurpassed.

You may not know much about Dreadlock, so I'll fill in some details. Let's start with Dreadlock's parents. Dreadlock's dam was named Wooly Bully. Larry Richards (Living Diamonds Ranch) had purchased Wooly Bully in Alberta. Wooly Bully might have been born at Al Oeming's Alberta Game Farm, or she might have been purchased by Al Oeming from eastern Canada, or the eastern US. Larry Richards held Wooly Bully for several years and then sold Wooly Bully to Dan Thee in 1993. Dreadlock's sire was Bill the Bull.

Bill the Bull is estimated to have been born in 1988. He was purchased by Larry Richards among a group of yaks from a private yak breeder in Southern California. Shortly thereafter Bill the Bull was also sold to Dan Thee. Dan Thee lived in North Powder, Oregon.

In January, 1997 Dan Thee sold a large group of yaks to Jerry McRoberts of McRoberts Game Farm in

Historical Snapshot: The Genetic Influence of Dreadlock

Tim Hardy

Nebraska. Included in the sale was an un-named bull calf approximately nine months old. Jerry McRoberts had a number of ranch-hands as he had a very large place and a wide variety of animals. The hands started to call the big fluffy calf "Dreadlock", and the name stuck. Dreadlock lived at McRoberts Game Farm until 2001, where he presumably sired a number of calves that were never registered.

In 2001 Larry Richards engineered a three-way transaction that sent Dreadlock, and more of the Thee herd, to Sam Bibler. Sam Bibler was the owner of Springbrook Ranch. His purchase of Dreadlock and Prince Allante daughters from Dan Thee, was the foundation of the Springbrook Ranch breeding program. Springbrook was Dreadlock's last stop. His last calves were born in 2007. While at Springbrook he sired 65 registered offspring, an average of 13 per year; 22 of them were bulls. Dreadlock was a huge, woolly, imperial bull. In the eyes of largest breeders of the time, his characteristics were highly desirable. Undoubtedly, most of us would feel that way today. If you own a beautiful big bushy yak, you might have Dreadlock to thank for it.

In the last Newsletter I wrote of the need for a science-based-registry. In that article I mentioned that North American yaks are all descended from only a few imported yaks.

Genetically, that was a bottle-neck. In the early 2000s, for a few years, a few prominent bulls (especially Dreadlock) started to be responsible for more yaks entering the registry than just about all of the other bulls combined. This made Dreadlock's genes extremely prominent in the registry, essentially creating another bottle-neck, at least among the North American registered yak population.

An extremely narrow gene pool can naturally lead to serious in-breeding. This, in turn, can possibly threaten the health of our entire combined herd. Our science-based registry allows for unregistered "pure" yaks from North America or other continents to be admitted to the registry, thereby broadening the gene pool. USYAKS' genetic-test which helps quantify in-breeding and our associated web-based Match-A-Yak tool gives members a real opportunity to protect against further inbreeding.

Let's take a closer look at how the gene-pool got pinched again in the early 2000s. In 2001 the registry had been around for 9 years; Dreadlock was just getting registered. Association registrations were quite sparse. In 2001, fifty-seven yaks were registered by twenty ranches. About half of the fifty-seven were dead-ends for the registry - either the yak or all of its

eventual descendants fell off of the registry. About half of the other yaks registered in 2001 were later bred to Dreadlock or had a majority of their first-generation offspring bred to Dreadlock. Far more of their second and third generation offspring were bred to offspring of Dreadlock. Consequently, if you have a yak with a pedigree extending back to about 2001, Dreadlock almost certainly appears in the pedigree.

This pattern continued for several years, during which time Dreadlock was hard at work. In Dreadlock's first year, he sired Infinity, who went on to produce 21 registered calves. In Dreadlock's second year he sired Chewbacca, who produced 65 registered calves. In Dreadlock's third year he sired Dr. Lock, who produced 45 registered calves. By then it was 2004, and Dreadlock's All-Star career was only half over. In 2007, eighty-nine yaks were registered; at least twenty-six of the eighty-nine were dead-ends for the registry. Fifty-two of the remaining sixty-three were either blood relatives of Dreadlock or had all of their descendants bred to descendants of Dreadlock within a couple of generations. After Dreadlock had died, his sons and grandsons continued his tradition of populating the registry.

In the next issue I'll offer a historical snapshot of Queen Allante.

EHD: Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease

Tim Hardy



Biting Midge

Actual size is about 0.04" long or about 1 millimeter

The drought in the western states has resulted in outbreaks of EHD (epizootic hemorrhagic disease) in yaks this year. I've had reports from several ranches that have included multiple deaths so far.

SYMPTOMS

Yaks with EHD have difficulty breathing; their nostrils become plugged; they may foam from the mouth; their eyes, face and feet may be swollen; they will grind; they will have a fever; in severe cases they can bleed internally and from their nose, and eyes. Yaks will show difficulty standing, and may stagger when moving. During infection, lactating moms may produce far less milk for their calf.

EHD is in the Orbivirus family, which also includes bluetongue virus and African horse sickness virus. Bluetongue and EHD present similar clinical symptoms initially in yaks. Yaks with serious bluetongue normally recover in about ten days, however EHD can be deadly for yaks.

An experimental vaccine will be available to yak ranchers in time for the 2022 EHD season. This vaccine is being developed with cervids (deer family) in mind, and has

not yet been used on yaks. Each ranch using the vaccine will need to be individually approved by the USDA and by their state veterinarian, a procedure that will be undertaken for you, not by you, the approval normally takes about a month. I'll offer more information about the vaccine below.

PREVENTION

There is no vaccine for EHD for the remainder of the 2021 season, but you can do things to prevent damage to your herd. Yaks are normally infected when an infectious biting midge takes a blood meal. The midges are not born with the virus infection and become infected by feeding on a viremic or infected host. Some species of midges will fly for up to mile to in search of a meal, and likely are attracted to your yaks. Nearby deer and cattle herds may be reservoirs for EHD virus. Infected midges may be migrating to and from your yaks from these nearby herds or larval habitats (wetter ground). You can help manage EHD in your yaks by keeping them protected from insects. Methods include chemical treatments such as permethrin pour-on, putting in two insecticide-treated ear-tags, offering your yaks fly-control lick tubs, etc. If your yaks are not easily rounded-up for treatment, a CO2 powered vet gun can safely administer insecticide while a yak remains in the pasture. By all means possible, isolate your infected yaks! Your ill yaks are less likely to use defensive measures like tail flicks and foot stomps to

avoid being bitten. It only takes one or two bites from an infected midge to spread the virus. By isolating your sick yaks from insects, and treating with permethrin, you help protect the rest of your herd from midges that have made a meal out of your infected one(s). Chickens are not effective in midge control as they are not active at the right time of day; you might consider experimenting with a bat-house.

The life cycle of a midge requires the presence of mud or wet ground for at least 14 days, depending on the temperature and the midge species. The midge will bite your yak to get blood to yoke her eggs, return to the mud to lay eggs, and then return to feed and start the cycle again. To interrupt the midge life-cycle, eliminate the mud. The mud may be present around streams or ponds or around stock tanks. Place rock under or around the tanks or elevate them so water runs out around the tanks and does not pool, creating muddy areas. EHD will end with the first killing frost if all the midges are killed by the weather.

If you can't effectively control the mud, you can aggressively attack the biting midges by creating a fine fog of an insecticidal compound. Use the insecticides according to the label rates and according to federal and local laws. The insecticide only kills insects it contacts, so if the insects are not flying when you are spraying, you are wasting your time and money. Most biting insects (mosquitos and midges) are

active during the crepuscular hours which are one hour before and after sunrise and sunset.

When choosing an area to treat, target a small area and make sure that the chemical fog is comprised of droplets that are small enough to remain suspended. If the droplets do not hang in the air 30-60 minutes, they are too big. Conversely, if the spray is being pulled up into the atmosphere because of the wind or warm air in your area, adjust the fogging mechanism to make the droplets a bit bigger. Be sure you are using the products effectively and observe your work to be sure it is doing what you want it to do. Your extension agent may be a good local resource.

I should mention that if you live on the eastern seaboard, midge control is a little different, because the midges are different species.

TREATMENT

You can treat EHD symptoms. Daily Banamine will reduce fever and pain, and is highly advised while your yaks are showing significant symptoms. Vitamin B complex will help a yak feel better. Antibiotics are not effective against EHD, because it's a virus – not a bacterium. A yak with EHD should be given antibiotics to protect against secondary bacterial infections. Secondary infections would likely be in the respiratory system, so Draxxin is a good choice for antibiotic.

...More about the development of a vaccine in the next issue.

Deafness in Royal Yaks

Tim Hardy



Delilah with Delphine
Hay Springs Yaks

Have you ever owned a deaf yak?

If you have, it was certainly a royal. Deafness in yaks is not a directly inherited hearing condition. There is a genetic component to yak deafness, but the genetic component has to do with the genes that impact coat-color-patterning.

If a mom or her baby is deaf, they can't keep track of each other while the baby is young. Many ranchers have reported more deaths in their royal infant calves than in their other calves. It's possible that deafness could play a role in this. At USYAKS, we use science to solve problems, and we are starting to work on this one. The first step in solving a problem is gathering data, we are hoping to get your help.

You can help out in two ways.

- First of all, tell us if you are one of the many members with a deaf royal yak. Go to the USYAKS Membership page and select "forms". Find the form that says "Tracking Births of Abnormal Calves". Open the form, and report your deaf yaks, please include a picture of both sides of the head. With your help we can start building a database.
- Second, bring your royal yaks to National Western Stock Show in January! USYAKS has invited Dr. George Strain, one of the world's leading experts on coat-color-pattern related deafness, to perform a specialized hearing test known as brainstem auditory evoked response on royal yaks brought to NWSS. If you are an USYAKS member, the testing is free. Dr. Strain will use electrodes to detect electrical activity in the cochlea and auditory pathways to the brain. The test will be able to determine if a yak is deaf in one or both ears, and the extent of deafness. If your yak is deaf in only one ear, you almost certainly don't even know it.

With your cooperation, the combined team of geneticists and hearing experts may be able to offer to some help to us down the road. It's a long journey, but it can't be completed until after it starts.

Let me tell you a bit about what we already know about coat-color-pattern related deafness. With Dr. Strain's help, the world knows quite a bit about how this works. At NWSS 2022, it will be the first time that anyone has ever worked on this problem specifically on yaks.

If you look under the guard hair on your royal or trim yaks, you'll notice that the skin is pink wherever the hair is white. The cells in the pink skin and white hair are defective, it's like localized albinism. The cells have malfunctioning minor organelles, there are a number of consequences, but to the eye, the obvious consequence is that melanin (pigmentation) is absent. When these defective cells include the auditory hair cells that are located within the spiral organ of *Corti* in the cochlea of the inner ear, deafness results.

We are not looking for a deafness gene. Each royal yak has its own distinctive white pattern; the white pattern is sort of a visual roadmap of defective cells. We hope to begin to understand the genetics behind the pattern of these defective cells for them to occur in the inner ear.

USYAKS National Western Stock Show in Denver 2022:

We're excited to tell you about USYAKS at Denver's 2022 National Western Stock Show. We've increased the number of days we'll be at NWSS, because we have a bit more to fit in. Just like last time we have a Halter Show, a Pen Show and a Fiber Show (fiber judging on the yak), a Masquerade Parade, and an Obstacle Course event. The Fiber Committee wants a bigger a Fiber Arts Show, so we've expanded that time slot. Brand new, and perhaps this time only, we'll be performing some in-depth scientific hearing tests on Royal yaks. Read about Deafness in Royal Yaks elsewhere in the Newsletter.

USYAKS has reserved a limited number of rooms at Embassy Suites, Denver Central Park, 4444 Havana Street. The rooms are available first-come-first-serve for \$139/night, provided you reserve before December 23, 2021. City and State Occupancy taxes are currently at 15.75%. USYAKS has negotiated this reduced rate with Embassy Suites, but each USYAKS member will pay Embassy Suites directly. Embassy Suites will consider expanding the number of available rooms at this price, if the current block fills up in the next month or so. The Hotel offers free shuttles to and from the airport and NWSS. Here is the direct booking link –

<https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/deeplink/?ctyhocn=DENARES&groupCode=CESUSY&arrivaldate=2022-01-19&departuredate=2022-01-23&cid=OM,WW,HILTONLINK,EN,DirectLink&fromId=HILTONLINKDIRECT>

USYAKS Headquarters will be in the Stockyards, All Events will begin in the Stockyards or in a Stockyards arena. With Covid and the Hurricane Season it's possible that the schedule below might need to change. It's possible that one of the seminars might be moved from Thursday afternoon to Friday afternoon. We may have a speaker, or two, or three, at the banquet.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Wednesday January 19, 2022

12:00-5:00 Set up Fiber Show Area
2:00-5:00 Accept Fiber Show entries

Thursday January 20, 2022

9:00-12:00 Continued Fiber Show set-up and acceptance of entries
12:00-4:00 Seminars and Hands-on sessions:
Halter Training with Terri Bowen Lindley.
Additional topics include trekking and veterinary care.
1:00-5:00 Fiber Arts Display open to public
1:00-5:00 Fiber Arts Demonstrations
(NWSS demonstrations will include Weaving, felting, knit/crochet, spinning, combing)
2:00-5:00 Fiber Arts Judging

Friday January 21, 2022

8:30-12:00 On-The-Yak Fiber Collection by fiber judges
9:00-12:00 Pen Show evaluations by Conformation judge(s)
9:00-5:00 Fiber Arts on Display
10:00-12:00 Fiber Arts Demonstrations (may include: weaving, felting, knit/crochet, spinning, combing)
2:00-3:00 Fiber Arts Demonstrations continue
4:00 Yak Obstacle Course
7:00 (tentative) USYAKS Banquet

Saturday January 22, 2022

8:30-11:30 BAER Hearing Testing of Royal Yaks, (we expect an additional time slot on Friday)
9:00-11:00 Fiber Arts Demonstrations continue
12:00-3:00 USYAKS Halter Show in a Stock Yards Arena
3:30 Masquerade Parade

Sunday January 23, 2022

Pack up and out by noon.



Fiber Committee Co-op News and Update

Susan Phillips-Mandatta

As yak enthusiasts, we all appreciate the value of yak fiber, and the fiber committee is working to develop resources to ensure that USYAKS members have access to information about how to harvest their fiber as well as what to do with their fiber. We understand that solutions are needed in order to answer the recurring question - "what is the best way to use my yak fiber?"

After the July Board meeting, when the topic of a fiber co-op was raised, I was tasked with researching the feasibility of creating a fiber co-op. After many conversations with USYAKS members, in particular fiber committee members, and fiber experts as well as delving into the administrative, legal, financial, and coordination aspects

involved in developing a co-op, the consensus was that the idea of a co-op should be placed on hold. Instead, the committee will focus on developing resources to the membership that will address the question of what to do with our yak fiber. Plans include the following:

- 1) Beginning the process of compiling a list of mills that will contain information regarding minimum weight requirements, turnaround time, cost, customer service, blending and dyeing options, end product options, capacity for working with yak fiber specifically, and so on. The committee envisions this being accomplished over time through detailed conversations with mill representatives, in-person visits where possible, and especially

input from members about their experiences with mills. If there is additional information that you would like to see included, or if you'd like to provide input about your experiences, or have recommendations about mills to include, please let us know by contacting Susan Phillips-Mandatta: nydags2@aol.com of Silver Cuff Farm in New Jersey.

- 2) Providing a list of fiber terms with definitions to help everyone feel comfortable "talking fiber". i.e., what is a micron, what is staple length, crimp, and so on.

- 3) Developing a network of yak fiber producers. This will be an invaluable resource to yak owners who want to donate their fiber or collaborate with other yak owners for any reason, for

example, in order to meet minimum weight requirements.

- 4) Revising the rubric on the fiber scorecard used for judging at the NWSS; this rubric will not only be an invaluable tool for those who collect fiber, but it will also be made available to the membership so that they may have a chance to see the criteria being used to judge yak fiber.

- 5) Lastly, please let us know what your expectations are for resources when it comes to fiber. Developing marketing tools, checklists, calendars, videos? We would like to be a proactive committee delivering solutions as promptly as we can. As we move forward in 2022, what an exciting time to expand on the luxurious resource we have on our animals!

Updates and Reminders!

- Fiber Study continues...send your fiber samples to:
 - Kat Tylee, 1409 SE Hamilton St., Roseburg, OR, 97470
 - Questions? Email Kat: littlehawkyarns@gmail.com
- Show off your yaks! Send your photo submissions for inclusion in the newsletter to unadtaylor@gmail.com
- Do you have yaks or yak products to sell? Post them on the **USYAKS** website!
- Do your part! Join a committee! Contact information below.
 - Fiber: Una at: unadtaylor@gmail.com
 - Marketing: Greg at nct1108@yahoo.com
 - Meat: Tim at tim@hayspringsyaks.com
 - Science: Peter at hackett@hypoxia.net
 - Exhibitions and Shows: Brad at 970-302-0889 or 970-590-0955
- The association is still collecting information to track the birth of abnormal calves. Please continue to report any incidences of abnormalities to **USYAKS** via this link: [Tracking Abnormal Calves \(usyaks.org\)](https://www.usyaks.org/Tracking-Abnormal-Calves)
- Revision of the USYAKS website continues – updates forthcoming...
-

The USYAKS Fiber Committee Invites Members to Enter Their *Fiber Arts* Creations At The 2022 USYAKS Fiber Show at NWSS in Denver!

Next year in 2022 USYAKS will be highlighting yak fiber, whose value and superior quality have for too long been overlooked. Yak fiber and fiber arts will be on display and featured front and center at the

2022 NATIONAL WESTERN STOCK SHOW

The Fiber Arts Show will highlight not only fiber arts, such as yarns, felting, knitted/crocheted items, weaving, etc., but will also feature artists demonstrating their skills in fiber arts.

❖ ALL CLASSES

➤ Fiber on the Animal

- Classes
 - Less than 12 months old on 2022 NWSS Entry Deadline
 - 12 months old or more on 2022 NWSS Entry Deadline
- Rules & Regs
 - No grooming products are to be used on the animal prior to fiber judging.
 - The judge will be the only one collecting fiber
 - Owners will not be permitted to collect fiber
 - Yaks must be adequately restrained by a snug and securely tied halter for collection
 - Only the judge(s), yak owner, and one assistant will be allowed in the pen during collection.

➤ Fiber Arts Categories: Each category can be wearable, home goods, utilitarian, etc.

- Classes
 - Fiber creations: 1) Knit; 2) Crochet; 3) Felting; 4) Weaving
 - Yarns: 1) Mill Spun Yarns: 2) Hand Spun Yarns: must be displayed as a hank (not in a ball or twisted skein)
 - Spinnable fiber (Roving, batt, rolag, etc.)

❖ ENTRY FEES

- On-the-animal fiber contest
 - \$15 per animal
- Fiber Arts
 - Display only - Free
 - Contest
 - \$10 per item for people who don't bring animals to NWSS
 - \$10 entry fee to enter up to five items for people who bring animals and show them in the USYAKS show

❖ FIBER ARTS CONTEST SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

- Entries for fiber arts may be brought to the Fiber Booth/Pen by Thursday (January 20th) at 1:00.
 - Entries may be mailed in advance, but must be received no later than Monday, January 18th, 2022.
 - Send entries to the fiber committee chair: Una Taylor, 7170 Highway 20, Chadron, NE 69337
 - Entries will be identified with an assigned number, not by ranch name so as to remain anonymous
 - Entries for fiber arts must include information and a description of item on a 3 x 5 card to include:
 - Fiber blend content (must contain between 50%-100% yak fiber)
 - Types and percentages of fibers must be specifically delineated
 - Whether it is hand spun or mill spun
 - Method of creation (knit/crocheted, hook/needles, loom, etc.)
 - Fiber Arts Products may be brought in for display or sale as well as for competition
 - USYAKS will receive 3% from sales by USYAKS members and 5% from non-members.
- Questions? Please email Una Taylor, Chair of the Fiber Committee: unadtaylor@gmail.com

Out and About Showing Yaks! 🐾

Sunshine and Nate Schultz of *Prairie Wind Yaks* brought yaks to the Wyoming State Fair!



PWY Timber with Declan Johnson
Grand Champion Fall heifer calf
Reserve Grand Champion overall



PWY Moose with Owen Schultz
Grand Champion Fall bull calf

Neal Meseck of *Iowa Yak Ranch* brought yaks to the Iowa State Fair!



Tim and Una of *Hay Springs Yaks* brought yaks and fiber products to the MidPlains Fiber Fair in York, Nebraska!



2021 Yak Husbandry Research Conference

**Saturday, November 13th
9am-5pm**

Location: Derrickson Agricultural Complex, Morehead State University

Conference Capacity-50

Sponsored by

Morehead State University, Department of Agricultural Sciences, Morehead, Kentucky
The University of Kentucky Department of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Lexington, Kentucky
USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Grant, Southern Region
USYAKS (Yak Registry and Association)
Star Yak Ranch, Casper, Wyoming
Zhi-ba Shing-ga Yak Farm, Wellington, Kentucky

**This conference is for current yak producers, small acreage farmers,
beef producers interested in possibly increasing the market value of their meat,
and those interested in developing yak operations.**

Speakers

Dr. Michelle Arnold: University of Kentucky Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory: **Yak Health Management Considerations**

Dr. Jeff Lehmkuhler: University of Kentucky Department of Agriculture, Food and Environment: **Initial Forage Study Results, Forage Consumption Formulas, Nutrition Concerns**

Dr. Philip Prater: Morehead State University Department of Agriculture, Reproduction Specialist: **Development of Artificial Insemination Program for Yaks: collection and semen evaluation**

Dr. Patricia Harrelson: Morehead State University Department of Agriculture: **Yak Semen Preservation Research Results to Date including Preservation Process**

Dr. Ted Kalbfleisch: Bioinformatics Specialist, University of Kentucky: **“How genetic technologies can inform your breeding decisions”**

Gregor Dike, owner of Zhi-ba Shing-ga Yaks, Wellington, Kentucky: **Why Beef Producers and Small Acreage Farmers should take note of the economic potential of yaks**

Walfer Hernandez, Head Chef at The Barrel and The Easter, Washington D.C.: **Will prepare a yak meat buffet using different cuts and preparations for attendees.**

Working Demonstrations

Yak Semen Collection

Synchronizing yaks for insemination

Conference Schedule

Time	Topic	Speaker
8:00-9:00 am	Registration / Vendor	
9:00-9:30	Welcome & Why are we considering yaks?	Greg Dike
9:30-10:15	Health Considerations of Yaks in the Southeast	Dr. Michelle Arnold
10:15-10:30	Break	
10:30-11:00	How genetic technologies can inform your breeding decisions	Dr. Ted Kalbfleisch
11:00-11:30	Myth Busting: Nutrition of the Yak	Dr. Jeff Lehmkuhler
11:30-noon	Is Your Bull Bad? Breeding Soundness Exams	Dr. Phil Prater
noon-1:00 pm	Lunch / Vendor	
1:00-1:15 pm	Q/A Yak Meat Prep	Chef
1:15-2:30 pm	Overview of Process of Estrus Synchronization & Semen Cryopreservation	Dr. Patricia Harrelson & Dr. Phil Prater
2:30-4:00 pm	Demonstrations: Semen collection, ultra-sounding for pregnancy, CIDR device use/synchronization, (possible) insemination	Dr. Patricia Harrelson & Dr. Phil Prater
4:00-4:30 pm	Wrap-up & Evaluation	Greg Dike

Hotels/Motels in the Morehead Area

- **Hampton Inn** (606-780-0601) A block of 12 rooms will held until November 5th for those attending the Conference. Reservation code: YAKCON. Cost \$99/night plus taxes.
- **Holiday Inn Express** (606-784-5796)
- **Days Inn** (606-783-1484)
- **Comfort Inn and Suites** (606-780-7398)

Airports

- **Cincinnati International** (Denver to Cincinnati round trip is currently \$104)
- **Blue Grass Airport**, Lexington, KY (Denver to Lexington round trip is currently \$324)

Registration

(There is no charge for conference. We welcome your interest and participation.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Farm/Ranch Name: _____

- Currently own yaks _____ Number of yaks _____
- Interested in yaks for the future _____
- Small acreage farmer (no yaks) _____
- Beef producer _____
- Number of people attending: _____

Please scan and email to nct1108@yahoo.com or
Mail via the postal service to
Gregor Dike, 57 Journeys End, Wellington, KY 40387

Questions?

Contact Greg Dike
606-776-0022
nct1108@yahoo.com