

RHODE ISLAND SHEEP COOPERATIVE

WOOL COLLECTION DAY

Date: Sunday - June 11, 2017

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Place: (*NEW THIS YEAR*): Seldom Seen Farm, 406 Evans Road, Chepachet, RI
(located ½ mile down road from where it was last year)

Questions: Contact:

Robin Meek at 949-2167 or ballydufffarm@yahoo.com (yes-there are three "f"s)
or Polly Hopkins at 949-4619 or khop4811@aol.com

PLEASE READ:

We still have a large inventory of blankets left for sale (in all sizes) along with 150 yards of material not cut yet. Because of this inventory on hand, we are leery of adding the usual 300 or so more blankets to our present stock. In prior years, we have usually sold out the inventory by spring and could start taking pre orders for the next edition.

As discussed at the Annual Meeting in March by the members, we don't want to lose the 'momentum' we have gained for gathering good wool, as well as selling our Rhode Island based product. Keeping all comments discussed at the Annual Meeting in mind, we have decided to again run a collection day this year. We encourage our members to bring their good wool as usual, and are asking you to stay while your bags of fleeces are 'reviewed' (thrown) on the skirting tables.

We ask the following of everyone:

- (1) This opportunity is for paid members – you can pay your dues (\$10) to our Treasurer the day of collection.
- (2) Skirt your fleeces before coming to Collection Day, bringing them in plastic garbage type bags.
- (3) We will be asking you to take your skirtings, if there are any, home with you (it makes great mulch for your gardens!!).
- (4) We will accept veggie free (or mostly free) fleeces, please don't bring fleeces with shavings or lots of hay in them. The length of your fleece should be at least 2-2½ inches and no longer than 6 inches (use a dollar bill for comparing your short or long fleeces).
- (5) No wet fleeces will be accepted. No fleeces shorter than two inches will be accepted. No fleeces longer than six inches will be accepted. No fleeces with "contamination", meaning heavy in manure, hay, straw, or other vegetable

matter, will be accepted. Please don't make us be the *bad guys* and have to turn your wool away if it is wet, too short, too long, or overly dirty. In the past, we have accepted some questionable fleeces, but will not this year. Accepting these fleeces cost the project money, and short fibers fall thru the machine, not contributing to the blanket wool. The end result will be a higher quality product to pass along to our customers.

Remember – The blanket project was established to give farmers an additional means of income to support their animals, with the intent that the farmers help promote and sell the blankets. (Remember if you sell a blanket, you get the “credit” = meaning the profit. The Cooperative was only supposed to front the cost of the processing, so the farmers didn't have to put money up front.) Because the project (of selling the blankets) was so successful through the Cooperative's sales, the Cooperative has been able to pay you \$2.00 per pound for your wool at Collection Day = that was a bonus. But remember income to you is also made by selling the blankets yourselves, with the profit from the sale of each blanket you sell going directly to you. We encourage all paid members to participate in the sale of blankets. You didn't contribute wool last year (or don't plan to this year)? That's okay. If you are a paid member you can still promote and sell the blankets.

If you have questions, want clarification, more details, want blankets to sell, or just don't understand this project -- please contact Robin for details today !

Robin Meek and Pelly Hopkins

There is still time to call your shearer! Don't have one? Here are some people who are shearing in RI. Call soon to book a date!

Sammye Patti (college student) – call 401-585-0487 – if she doesn't answer, leave a message, she will call you back.

Colin Siegmund (graduated college student, sheep & dairy farmer from Connecticut) - telephone: 860-315-7684 call and leave message, will call back.

Taylor Meek (graduated college student) - ballydufffarm@gmail.com , cell: 401-626-6599 email is best, coverage not good on her cell phone at home.

Aaron Loux – professional sheep shearer and sheep farmer from Massachusetts – telephone: 413-230-8607 (leave message, will get back to you) is now booking for later in June.

**Remember to keep your sheep dry for shearing day. Have your animals penned up and ready for your shearer, don't make him/her chase your sheep around the field. Discuss the Rhody Warm Blanket Project with your shearer, they can give you insight to prepare a better product.