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Kentucky Master Shepherds Named
Hudson Glimp - Sheep Extension Specialist
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The Bluegrass State Sheep Association recently announced its Master Shepherd Award winners for 1965. The certificates were presented at the Association's annual meeting for three categories of commercial sheep producers based on flock size. The winners were as follows:

0-100 Ewes: Carlisle Besuden, Winchester, Kentucky. He marketed a fantastic 168% lamb crop with his lambs weighing an average of 90.6 lbs. and bringing \$26.10 per hundredweight. His lamb income and an added \$326.47 in wool income figured out to a gross income per ewe of \$46.26 average. Carlisle also has a flock of 20 registered Southdown rams. He also shows his Southdowns with his father and has an outstanding record in state and national shows.

Walter and John D. Sousley of Flemingsburg, who switched from registered Hampshire sheep a short time ago to commercial production, were second place in this division. Gross income per ewe from their 95-ewe flock was \$43.01

100-300 Ewes: Won by William Mullins and Mrs. Wade Henton of Versailles, Kentucky. This partnership operation marketed a 160% lamb crop from their 121 ewes, with their lambs weighing 93 lbs. and averaging \$25.26, per hundredweight. With an added wool income of \$763.28, their ewes had an average gross income of \$43.77 each. Mr. Mullins and Mrs. Henton always have an outstanding record at the Central Kentucky commercial lamb show and sale.

Over 300 ewes: Won by Herschel Weil, Lexington, Kentucky. Mr. Weil's record certainly proves that we have big sheep operations in the farm flock states. Mr. Weil's operation includes 1426 ewes, from which he sold an 108% lamb crop last year. Herschel quickly admits that this is one of the poorer records he has had in recent years. However, he sold his lambs early at a 95 lb. average weight for \$28.00 per hundredweight. The \$9,130.30 wool income in addition to his lamb income gave him a gross income from his sheep operation of \$49,430.92. This figures out to \$34.60 per ewe for this year.

Mr. Weil's creep feeding and lambing program is quite different from the traditional Kentucky system. He starts lambing in early December and allows his ewes and lambs to graze small grain pasture. His lambs are creep fed whole oats until they are about six weeks of age, at which time 25% shelled corn is added to the creep ration. When the alfalfa and bluegrass start growing in the early spring, lambs are not given further creep feed. He grazes off his first cutting of alfalfa, marketing this through his lambs. This program allows Mr. Weil to market his lambs early with not too much fat, yet with less feed costs than most

producers. He also believes that early lambing ewes will continue lambing early, and that the most prolific ewes tend to lamb early.

Mr. Weil is also one of the three major lamb buyers on Central Kentucky lamb markets, and last year imported and sold approximately 4000 replacement ewes. He has cooperated with the University of Kentucky on many research programs. Studies with his own flock in 1941 showed the effect of temperature at breeding time on date of lambing. He clearly showed the benefit of shearing ewes when breeding in the summer heat in studies he conducted in 1949 and 1950. Mr. Weil also cooperated with Dr. Ray Dutt in the late 1950's on a study of artificial insemination techniques. Over 1500 of Mr. Weil's ewes were artificially bred in this study.

Young Sheepmen Honored

The bluegrass State Sheep Association also awarded certificates of merit for 3 young farmers for outstanding industry accomplishments.

4-H Club: James Davis, Springfield, Kentucky. James has been in the registered Hampshire sheep business for the past 7 years, and has progressed until he is now 1 of the top Hampshire breeders in the state. His flock has developed from a small number of ewes to a present market value of over \$5,000. In addition to the Master Shepherd's Award, James received an all-expense paid trip to National 4-H Club Congress in Chicago, and was recipient of a scholarship for his outstanding sheep record in national competition.

FFA: Bill LeGrand, Gallatin County High School, Warsaw, Kentucky. Bill comes from a family that has always been prominent in the sheep industry in Kentucky. Bill, however, has switched breeds on his family and now has one of the better flocks of Polled Dorset sheep in this area. Although he has only been in the business a few years, Bill is winning more than his share of blue ribbons at shows in Kentucky and surrounding states. Bill and his father recently purchased another large flock of polled Dorsets, and is looking forward to a college education from his sheep income after two more years in high school.

Kentucky Young Farmers Association: Wayne Lane, Woodford County Chapter, Versailles, Kentucky. Wayne is one young farmer that realizes the value of sheep in getting established in farming in Kentucky. He now has a flock of 120, two and three-year old western ewes. Last year, when over half of the ewes were yearlings, he sold an average of \$26.70 worth of lamb and \$5.60 worth of wool per ewe. This gave him a gross income of \$32.30 per ewe, which means his ewes returned more than their initial cost during their first year of production.