Market Development Program

History:

In 1989 the Indiana Sheep and Wool Market Development Program was established and terminated in 2002. The reason being the national market development took effect in 2002.

From 1989 through 2002 the Indiana Market Development program was administered by the Director pf the Purdue University Agricultural Experiment Station. Policy, direction, enforcement and approving grants were the responsibility of the Sheep & Wool Market Development Council. The purpose of the Council was to support research on sheep & wool, consumer education, on the merits of sheep meat and wool products, sheep producer education, market development publicity/communications, sales promotion and cooperation with other state, regional and national organizations.

The Council consisted of 11 members. One from each of 11 districts in the state. Council had two ex-officio members. A representative from the Director of the Ag Experiment Station and the Commissioner of Ag, now the Department of Ag. Members to the Council were elected by producers. Council elected their own officers to conduct the business of the Council..

Members of the Council were not officers or directors of the Indiana Sheep Association. The Council was an dependent and separate organization. Council members were paid mileage for attending meetings, usually twice a year.

Referendums were held every 3 years asking producers if the program should be continued and every time there was positive results. There were provisions in the program for producers to ask for refunds.

With all Market Development Programs there are fees involved. It was 25Cents per sheep and 1 cent a pound for wool. This fee was collected by the “first handler” and remitted to the Director of the Purdue University Ag Experiment Station. First handlers retained 3% of the total fees collected for processing and handling. A “ First Handler” was defined as a person who engages in the selling, marketing or distribution of an agricultural commodity that the person has purchased for resale or is marketing on behalf of a producer. The term also includes a producer who distributes an agricultural commodity he has produced. Examples of first handlers include sale barns, auction/sales conducted by sales management, producers, fairs, lamb pools

How were the fees spent? First of all, a request for funding was submitted by the group requesting funding. The request included such items as purpose of project, budget which indicated dollars the requesting organization had committed. Funding considerations were usually done in the spring and fall. The Council reviewed each request and either approved as submitted, a lesser amount or disapproved.

Some of the projects funded included: Sheep Tales, Make It With Wool, Symposium, Teacher Workshops ,research projects at Purdue, shearing schools and more. Those projects receiving

funding were requested tp report the results upon the completion of the project. Reports included actual costs, number of people contacted etc.

Where are we now?

During the 2010 Legislative Session, of the Indiana General Assembly, Indiana Sheep Association and other commodity groups worked to change the Indiana Statute to allow various commodity groups , if they choose, to petition the Dean of the College of Agriculture at Purdue University asking for a referendum seeking a market development program.

Indiana Sheep Association has appointed a committee to prepare the necessary documentation including the petition toward asking for a market development program for sheep and wool in Indiana.

Watch this space for more information as it becomes available!