

VALAIS BLACKNOSE SHEEP



Winter 2022

NEWSLETTER

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING March 31st, 2022 • 6:30pm via Zoom

Welcome

Happy New Year and a warm welcome back to all our existing and new members, we hope you had the most wonderful Christmas. January not only marks the Society's 1st Anniversary but is also the beginning of yet another busy year with lots of exciting things to look forward to in the coming months. The shortest day has long past, the days are gradually getting longer, and the promise of Spring and all its new life is just around the corner.

We hope you enjoy the Winter newsletter and wish you a successful lambing season.



VBS Annual General Meeting

As previously announced plans are underway for the first Valais Blacknose Society AGM. The event will take place on March 31st, 2022, at 6:30pm via Zoom, further details will be communicated out to members in the coming weeks.



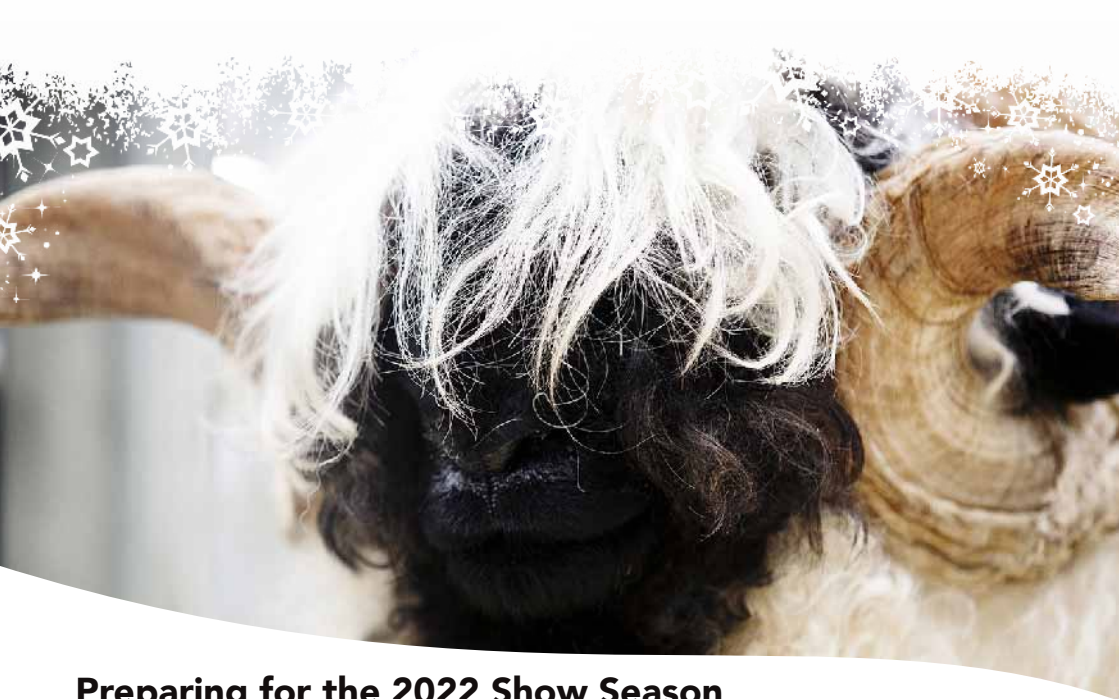
2022 Lamb Registration Letter & Membership Renewals

The Society follows an alphabetical naming system for the registration of lambs, it is a mandatory requirement that all registration names correspond to the letter set out for that year, please be reminded that the letter for 2022 is 'J'.

Membership renewals are also now due, if you haven't yet renewed your subscription, you can do this directly via the website, payment is accepted via PayPal or Bank Transfer:

<https://valaisblacknosesociety.co.uk/memberships/>





Preparing for the 2022 Show Season

Due to their long wool and fast-growing fleeces Valais Blacknose require shearing twice a year for optimal health and wool quality. If you are planning on showing your sheep, this year you will need to start planning your shearing dates now to achieve the minimum 5-6 months (10cm staple length) growth that is required for competing i.e., February if prepping fleeces for August shows. If particularly cold at the time of shearing you will need to house the sheep for a few weeks, also note that shearing dates can be adjusted accordingly if you are not showing your stock. Lambs should be shorn for the first time at around 6 months of age.

There are a number of agricultural shows hosting dedicated Valais Blacknose breed classes this year, take a look at the 2022 Show & Event schedule to see which shows VBS will be supporting this year. Please note that this schedule may be subject to change so be sure to keep an eye out for any updates. Show & Events schedule



DNA Profiling and Parentage Verification

DNA testing is an important element in both breed genetic transparency and maintaining accurate flock and registry records. The data gathered can be useful from a genomics perspective but also effective in authenticating breeding and parentage which acts as a guarantee when breeders sell their stock.

Current Society Rules

Mandatory DNA testing is already a requirement for the registrations of lambs in the instances outlined below:



- Donor ewes and service rams being used for embryo transfer must be DNA profiled.
- Any Valais Blacknose ewe or ram may be DNA profiled at the request of the owner.
- Lambs produced by embryo transfer in 2020 and beyond must be profiled prior to registration.
- Any Valais lamb may be DNA profiled and parentage verified at the request of the breeder.
- All rams must be DNA tested as part of registration from 2021.

**Please note that sheep entered in Society shows and sales must be fully registered. DNA samples (whereby applicable) need to be submitted well in advance to guarantee pedigree registration and entry.*





Testing Methods

Grassroots offer breeders 2 testing kit options:

1. Neogen Genomics Sheep Sampling Kit

This is a pin-prick test where you puncture the sheep's upper lip with a lancet. You then use the Neogen blood card to collect a sample by positioning the card on the blood droplet.

2. Ovine Nasal Swab Collection

This test requires you to rub the nasal swab inside the animal's nostril for up to 5 seconds.

How to Order Test Kits

VBS Gold Members can purchase DNA kits directly from their online Grassroots account.

- Simply go to 'Manage My Animals'
- Select 'DNA Profile and Parentage verification'
- Tick the box next to the animal/s you wish to test

**Please note that when ordering DNA kits, the default option is the 'Neogen Genomics Sheep Sampling Kit' at £28.80. If you wish to upgrade to the nasal swab option at an additional charge of £3 per test, please place your order online and then email or call grassroots expressing your wish to upgrade the test/s who will then update your order accordingly and collect any outstanding fees.*

Email: valais@grassroots.co.uk

Tel: 01392 270 421



Results

Once you've sent your samples back to Grassroots, they will be forwarded to the laboratory for processing. Results can take between 4-6 weeks but once received Grassroots will update the online breed registry accordingly.

- Sheep which have been DNA profiled will have the note 'DNA profiled' displayed in their online record.
- Sheep which have a positive DNA parentage verification will have the note 'DNA Parentage Verified' displayed in their online record.

For the full story please [click here](#).



VBS Regional Clubs

In 2021 the first VBS affiliated Regional Club – Northern Ireland Valais Blacknose Club (NIVBC) was successfully set up in Northern Ireland.

The club has already hosted a demo day welcoming over 180 attendees from across Ireland, you can read the full story [here](#).

VBS fully supports the concept of regional clubs and would like to establish branches within the following areas to support members further:

- Scotland
- Wales
- Northern England
- Central England
- Southern England
- Northern Ireland



The primary function of the VBS regional clubs will be to provide 'local' education services through the delivery of training days, agricultural show support and breed promotion. As an extension of the main Society each club will abide by and reinforce the same overall policies and values.

If you have an interest in establishing a regional club and wish to discuss matters further, please email the VBS council directly on: info@valaisblacknosesociety.co.uk



VBS Newsletter Support

As the Society now enters its second year the council would like to enlist the help of members in the development of flock management articles for both the website and newsletter. Please let us know if you have any topics, you feel would be of interest to our readership or if any of you are budding authors and would like to develop an article in conjunction with the society please get in touch.



QUESTIONS?



VBS operates a zero-tolerance policy and remind all to be respectful when communicating with Grassroots, council, and fellow members both face-to-face and online. Please note that VBS will not participate in or encourage any social media debates be that on our own or third-party pages. Should you have any specific questions, wish to raise topics, or lodge a complaint please contact our council members directly by emailing:

info@valaisblacknosesociety.co.uk