

SVBNC



JUNE

2024

NEWSLETTER

INSIDE

THIS

ISSUE

PG. 2 - Society News

PG. 3 - Widdermarkt 2024

PG. 4-5 - Featured Flock

PG. 6-7 - Top Flock Tips

PG. 8-9 - Club News

PG. 10-12 - Showing News



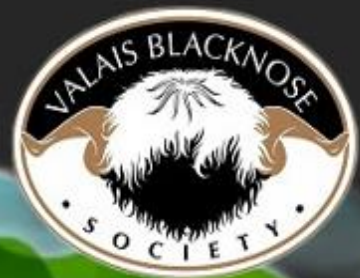
EDITION 2

“Hello and
welcome back to
SVBNC
newsletter”

Apologies for the delay in this second edition. We hope every one's lambing is going well.

We had a fantastic year here in Scotland last year with the Valais going from strength to strength. This year we not only have new events in Scotland but also 3 new shows - Ayr, Border Union and Perth!

To top this off we also have a new grading, sale and club show event in Lanark which is really exciting for us here in Scotland giving us a marketplace to sell our stock as well. More information will be out soon on the event.



“2024 looks
to be an
exciting year
for
SCOTTISH
breeders”

WHAT'S NEW!

Lots of news has come out the society since we last published. The ET vote was just out, and this has now resulted in a change in ET policy for all members. You should have received an email from the Society regarding the change in policy.

This has also had an effect on registration of lambs with ALL lambs now requiring DNA's returned to ensure registration is completed. The [society has information on their website regarding the process](#). You should ensure you are up to date with the new regulations. There are also new ear tags available for those who wish to [DNA using these tags](#) instead of the prick and nasal swabs.

The Society has also announced [4 new grading dates](#) which is really exciting.

Society Shop

The shop has clothes, society ties, pins and gift ideas.



<https://bit.ly/VBSShop>

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTE

Congratulations to Tom Blackwood for Ayrshire VBN flock for his recent appointment to the Society Council. I am sure Tom will be a great representation for Scottish breeders on the Societies Council. The vote for [new Society Council Members](#) was finalised and if you missed the email announcement a [full list of members](#) can be found on the society website

LAMB REGISTRATIONS

Reminder this year's letter is **L**.

As per the email from the society, please remember to process your DNA kits as soon as possible as they may take a while to return! They will also be required for any society sales.

Widdermarkt 2024



VISP, SWITZERLAND 2024



For those who are interested in the rams Widdermarkt takes place in early March each year in Visp. This is an outdoor event which is held at the Primarschulhaus, Sepp Blatter in Visp. This year we were lucky to have beautiful crisp weather with lots of blue skies unlike the previous year where it rained heavily. Although it did get chilly when the sun dropped behind the mountain later on.

It's an early start with animals arriving by 8am. The area starts to fill up quickly with animals with spectators and breeders looking on from the sideline. Unlike the ewes the rams are actually graded on the day by age category ([grading explained](#)). It is quite a splendour to see all the rams tied up by age category. The graders work quickly and assess the animals. Any animal that are graded and meet the [Valais blacknose breed standard](#) of maximum points are pulled to the front section

allocated for maximum point animals. Once grading is over and maximum point animals selected the lines of the rams are opened up to the public where you can walk up and down and see the magnificent display of animals up close.

Exhibitors wait to see the grading results which are posted on the results board similar to a grading back in the UK. If an exhibitor disagrees with their grade received, they have the opportunity to challenge the results and represent the animals in front of the graders. This year there were 2 animals grades disputed. The results we are told are rarely overturned however on this occasion one of the two animals presented did in fact have their grade overturned and received maximum marks!

In the afternoon there is a presentation for all maximum animals. Unlike Miss Visp there is no over champion. However all maximum point animals are brought up to the stage area to be presented with their award. Each exhibitor with maximum point animals received a beautiful, cased bottle of wine from Visp and of course the title and prestige of having a maximum point ram!

Of course the breeders do not stop here they continue through the night celebrating their grading with local bands playing into the night.



“Widdermarkt has some of the most outstanding rams!”

Feature Flock



HORSEMILL VALAIS BLACKNOSE – GREтна GREEN



Horsemill Valais Blacknose Sheep are based near to the famous Gretna Green Village with views over the Solway in one direction and the Lake District in the other.

Having been born and brought up in Edinburgh, I never in my wildest dreams thought I would ever be breeding sheep or breeding any livestock. My husband grew up on his family's farm and it was following his accident that we decided to purchase a smallholding to assist with his rehabilitation.

In 2015 we were already breeding commercial sheep. Claire, my daughter, was working full time on our smallholdings and assisting Les with his rehab, whilst I was a registered nurse and travelled around Scotland in my post of Associate Director of Care.

March 2015 and it was a normal morning driving up the motorway to work. I stopped off for petrol, filled up the car and had a quick look at the magazines as I always bought the smallholders monthly publications. The front cover of one caught my eye immediately. What were these beautiful looking sheep? I'd never seen anything like them. Fuel and magazine purchased, I continued on my journey.

During a tea break I read the article on Valais Blacknose Sheep and how Emma Collison had brought these sheep into the UK. Later that same evening, I searched Google to find out as much as I could about the Valais Blacknose sheep, where they originated from, their characteristics, general health etc.

I contacted Emma and after lots of emails and phone calls over the following weeks, Claire and I were excited to have a date for the delivery of our first Valais Blacknoses. Two ewes, each with two lambs at foot arrived in April. And that was the start of our journey, or you could call it an addiction. I couldn't believe how docile and friendly these sheep could be and they looked stunning.



Our first Valais Blacknose lambs were born in 2016 and that was the year we headed to the Blacknose Beauties Show in Carlisle. We had never been to a sheep show and never had to wash and prepare sheep for the show ring. It was a daunting task. We did not know what to expect. But we got through the nerves and came home with a 2nd and 3rd rosette for our tup lambs Dawson and Denzel. We were thrilled considering we were novices. We have successfully shown our sheep over the years and to this day we continue to attend the Blacknose Beauties Show and last year sponsored a class.

Since 2015 we have slowly built up our flock and I have to say they are a joy to have. All our lambs are naturally bred and from pure Swiss bloodlines. We have lambs, ewes, and rams for sale throughout the year and see many returning customers. We also offer a tugging service for purchased ewes and in 2023 our rams were exceptionally busy. Many customers return with their ewes each year and will send messages and pictures of their lambs when they arrive which is lovely to see. We are passionate about this breed and our aim is to maintain the Swiss standards.



During visits to other breeders, up and down the country, we have gained and shared knowledge of this breed. We have met so many wonderful people in the farming community and formed many lasting friendships. I know if I have a query there is always going to be someone whom I can call on for their advice.

It's great to see the formation of Valais clubs such as the Scottish VBN Club and the Northern VBN Club. Last year we attended both club's show days which were fun, friendly, the atmosphere was relaxed, and we got the chance to meet up with old friends.....and the crack was good! We look forward to attending their show days again this year.



I had promised Claire, I would take her to Switzerland this year to see these lovely sheep in their homeland. However, we had a few late lambers.....typical. So, our goal is set for next year and we WILL be in Switzerland! I visited there many years ago and look forward to returning.

Claire always sets herself a challenge every year. In 2022 she completed the Scottish 10k run in Glasgow raising money for Epilepsy Scotland. In 2023 she completed her first Half Marathon in Edinburgh and followed this two weeks later by taking part in Gelt Gladiator with her colleagues from Solway Spartans Boxing Club. This year Claire is entered into Britain's Fittest Farmer 2024, over 40s category, and is in training five days a week. Look out for her at the Royal Highland Show!



Images supplied by Horsemill Valais

Top Flock Tips



VET ARTICLE – SCHMALLEMBERG IN LAMBS



Schmallenberg virus (SBV) is an emerging pathogen that primarily affects ruminants, including sheep, goats, and cattle. It was first identified in the Schmallenberg area of Germany in 2011. The virus is primarily transmitted by biting midges (*Culicoides* spp.), which are common across Europe. Although this has been predominantly hitting flocks down south it is important to be aware of the issue.

When it comes to lambs, Schmallenberg virus can cause congenital malformations if the ewe becomes infected during a critical period of gestation. This can lead to stillbirths, birth defects, or weak lambs that may not survive for long after birth. The severity of the effects can vary depending on factors such as the stage of pregnancy at which the ewe was infected and the strain of the virus. Here's a breakdown of how Schmallenberg virus affects lambs:

Infection during Pregnancy: Ewes that become infected with the virus during pregnancy can transmit the virus to their unborn lambs. The virus can cross the placenta and infect the developing foetus, leading to developmental abnormalities.

Congenital Malformations: Lambs that are infected in utero may be born with various congenital malformations, including skeletal deformities (such as bent limbs or fused joints), brain abnormalities, and other defects. These malformations can vary in severity from mild to severe.

Stillbirths and Weak Lambs: Some infected lambs may be stillborn due to the severity of their malformations, while others may be born weak and unable to thrive. Weak lambs may have difficulty standing, nursing, or regulating their body temperature, making them more susceptible to other health issues and less likely to survive.

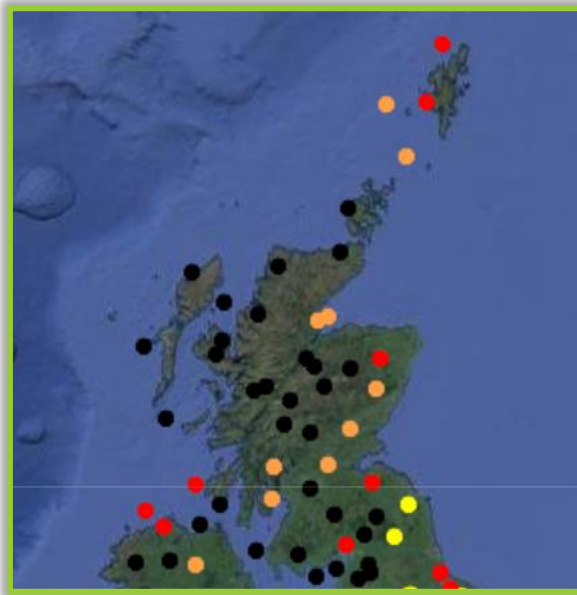
Variable Effects: The effects of the virus on lambs can vary depending on factors such as the strain of the virus, the stage of pregnancy at which the ewe was infected, and the overall health of the ewe and lamb. Some infected lambs may show no obvious signs of malformation, while others may be severely affected.

Preventing Schmallenberg virus in lambs involves measures such as controlling midge populations, vaccinating animals where vaccines are available, and implementing biosecurity measures to reduce the risk of exposure to the virus. Additionally, monitoring pregnant ewes for signs of infection and managing affected lambs appropriately can help mitigate the impact of the virus on lamb health and welfare.

More information can be found on the [ADHB website](#) which includes a survey for reporting cases of Schmallenberg.



UPDATE ON NEMATODIRUS - SCOTLAND



- Negligible Risk
- Low Risk
- Moderate Risk
- High Risk
- Very High Risk

The [SCOPS forecast](#) shows a much lower risk down south currently the risk is still high in Scotland.

Later-born lambs in upland and/or northern areas could still be at risk so, if your flock falls into that category, keep an eye on the forecast for the next few weeks.

For more information, please see our [last newsletter](#) which has an article on Nematodirus or on the [SCOPS website](#).

Please click on image below to see a good YouTube video explaining Nematodirus and worming

Please contact your vet directly if you have queries on worming your flock



Beating Nematodirus - Protect Your Lambs this Season



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Demo-Show Prep Day – 18th May
- Scotsheep-5th June
- Black Beauties- 23-24th August
- Scottish Grading Event-14th Sept
- Smallholder Festival - 19th October



COMMITTEE NEWS

We have lots of events planned this year, so the calendars are starting to look full! We hope to see you out and about at some of the events that are on in Scotland.

We are looking to see what information we can provide our members. We have some thoughts but looking for ideas from you!

[Please fill out the questionnaire.](#)



SVBNC – SHOW 2023

Big thank you to everyone who attended the SVBN first club show day. Emma Collinson from Gemstones flock travelled up to judge the classes.

We have a [photo gallery available](#) from the day.

Congratulations to Hatton flock with their aged ram – Hatton Hero for winning Champion and Hardens View taking Reserve Champion with Hardens View Jasmin.



Left to right - Reserve Champion - Rikki McLean from Hardens View Flock holding Hardens View Jasmin. Judge - Emma Collinson. Show Sponsor – Frazer Russell from Wright and McLennan. Champion – Stan Pollock holding Hatton Hero



DEMO DAY

Following on from last year's successful Demo Day we held a similar event with kind permission from Conor Maden, Rosemain Flock, Berwick Upon Tweed. On 18th May. We have had a great response to our Demo days and hoping to run more when we can.



Image from Demo Day 2024 with kind permission from Conor Maden



SCOTSHEEP

The Scottish Club has been asked to support this year's event at Scotsheep on 5th June 2024. This event runs every 2 years and this year the event is being held at Aikengall Farm, Innerwick, Dunbar, East Lothian.



It is a great day out with a full days Timetable full of sheep events. If you are at the event, please pop into our stand and say hello!

Tickets for the event and more information can be found on the [SCOTSHEEP Website](#)



SMALLHOLDERS FESTIVAL

Again, the club will be promoting the breed at this event which was held last year at the Highland Showground. Hope to see some breeders showing.

Pop along and say hello!

[Scottish Smallholder Festival](#)



Festival of Scottish Smallholders-
Val Cartner and Janet Ramsden

Showing News



SVBNC SHOWING LEAGUE - RESULTS

We are super excited to announce the results for the first [SVBNC points Trophy League](#). Well done to all who went out and competed at all the new shows. Without breeders attending the shows the classes would be unable to keep going. We are running this again this year so remember to keep a note of your placings!

Flock of the Year

Whiterigg Flock



Young Handler of the Year

Jed McLean – Hardens View Flock



Rosettes for Classes

	1 st Place	2 nd Place	3 rd Place
Rams (1 shear and over)	K & R Taylor	T. Blackwood	M. Dempsie
Ram Lambs (born in current year)	K & R Taylor	T. Blackwood	R. McLean
Ewes (1 shear and over)	K & R Taylor	T. Blackwood	R. McLean
Ewe Lambs (born in current year)	K & R Taylor	T. Blackwood	R. McLean

Young Handlers

Jed McLean 1st place
Arran McLean 2nd place



SCOTTISH SHOW DATES

- Ayr-11th May
- Drymen-25th May
- Royal Highland-20-23rd May
- Doune and Dunblane-6th July
- Border Union-26-27th July
- Braco-27th July
- Black Isles-1st August
- Perth – 2-3rd August
- Scottish Grading Sale and Show – 14th September



SCOTTISH SHOW DATES

Exciting news the Society has been doing a lot of work bringing on new judges and shows with dedicated Valais classes. There are a few more shows now available in Scotland this year!

NEW

- Ayr Agricultural Show
- Border Union Agricultural Show
- Perth

Please support these shows and the hard work the society and agricultural shows are doing to bring these to members.

[Full UK VBN list of classes from the Society](#)



SCOTTISH GRADING EVENT

Hot off the press!! Scotland is having its very own Highland Gathering of Valais at a new grading event this year. The club is working with the society to help at the event planned for 14th September in Lanark. This will also involve a club show and sale! As always, we will pass on any information as we get this. This is a fantastic opportunity and gives Valais breeders an outlet in Scotland to sell animals.

NEW



FINAL MESSAGE

Good luck to all of those competing this year. It will be good to see your photos so remember to post them on the group Facebook page!



If you have any spare time to help at events or any ideas for the club, then please message us.

We are also looking for articles for the next newsletter. Please email us if you would like to contribute svbnc@hotmail.com