



VOL. 2

AUGUST 31, 2023

# American Cotswold Record Association

## Voting for ACRA's new bylaws

Here's what you need to know!

Does it seem like “new bylaws” is the only thing we have been writing about the past year? You are correct! The board has good news for everyone. The new bylaws have been completed. They have been to a lawyer for review. He approved with only 3 small suggestions/areas to research and review which will be explained later in this article. A few changes were made and on August 21st, 2023, the board unanimously passed the new bylaw draft. But we are not done! These need to pass the membership to be official.

### Timeline for Final Approval by membership

**Early September** - A letter will be sent to all members from the past 5 years as a reminder to update their membership to ensure their ability to vote on bylaws. Letters will **not** be sent to those who have updated their membership with in the past year.

**September 6th** - An email will be sent to all members with a copy of the proposed bylaws,

the rules as well as Codes of Ethics for review. (If you need them mailed to you, please notify the secretary. It is a large document.) Please send any concerns or changes to the board by the September 19th board meeting.

**September 20th** - All members will receive an e-mail with a link to vote on the bylaws unless the member has only submitted an address to receive a ballot. A ballot will be mailed in that case. Voting will last one week.

**September 28th** - Results of the vote will be sent to all members.

Whew! So why this time line? The board would like the new bylaws in place before the November Annual meeting. Current best practices for non-profits recommend elections

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for half of the board each year. This will be a change for ACRA. The board would like to start new elections per our new bylaws and need to be able to meet timelines. Every odd year, the top 4 positions listed below will be elected. Even years the rest of the board will be elected. Currently, we also have 2 board members working in an interim capacity. These positions (noted by an asterisk\*) also need to be officially filled. The current board members would like to stay on the board and will run for positions but we could use you!

This fall the following positions will be up for election per the new bylaws:

- President
- Vice President
- East Regional Director
- Member at Large
- Secretary/Registrar\*
- Treasurer\*

If you are interested in learning more about a position, please reach out to a current board member. We have zoom meetings almost every month (summer and lambing is a struggle!). It is a great way to meet shepherds from across the country, work in a different way for our cotswolds, and we have fun!



One area the lawyer recommended for change was the makeup of the board. Per the IRS, "irrespective of size, a governing board should include independent members and should not be dominated by employees or others who are not, by their very nature, independent individuals because of family or business relationships. The Internal Revenue Service reviews the board composition of charities to determine whether the board represents a broad public interest, and to identify the potential for insider transactions that could result in misuse of charitable assets."

Long story short, it would behoove ACRA to have an outsider (someone who doesn't raise ACRA sheep) such as a lawyer, CPA, non-profit specialist, or a veterinarian to serve on our board. If you know someone who is passionate about saving rare breeds but would also bring something to the board table while serving on the board, please talk with them about ACRA!

A second area the lawyer wanted the board to research was proxy voting. The new bylaws do not allow it. With our members living across the country, the ability for us to connect through zoom or other platforms, and our ability to have all votes on-line or through the mail the board did not feel proxy voting is needed. The classes that we took through the Livestock Conservancy also recommended that a change away from proxy voting would be better.

The third area of change is mostly semantics. In writing the new bylaws, we tried to keep the structure and verbiage as similar to the old bylaws as possible. The old bylaws had both an "executive committee" and "the board." The lawyer recommended that we simplify and just have a board. The board can always vote in an executive committee if this is needed down the road. At the moment, it is not.

Last but not least, bylaws are a working document. They bring structure to an

organization. They protect the members. They protect the board members. Most importantly, they protect our cotswold sheep.

A few new best practices for non-profits are included in our bylaws. The first is a “Code of Ethics” for members and there is another code for anyone who will sit on the board. The members code of ethics will be attached to our yearly membership forms. It is a great way to remember why we join breed associations, its all about our beloved cotswold sheep! Board members will have an ethics code within their training packet when they join the board (don’t let this scare you...its just information- all good things!). This will help the board keep their focus on ACRA sheep and the work to protect them.

Another area that will be new for members especially board members is the Rules of ACRA. This is a working document that aligns with the bylaws. The rules are what allow the heart of the bylaws to keep pumping. The rules section spells out the day to day activities for ACRA and can be changed by the board instead of the entire membership. At the end of this document is a calendar of what needs to happen every month to ensure ACRA is meeting best practices. The rules section should help new board members jump into roles and know what they need to do every month to ensure ACRA stays up to



**Have you joined the Shave ‘Em to Save ‘Em initiative? Make sure to check it out!**

<https://livestockconservancy.org/get-involved/shave-em-to-save-em/>

date with IRS regulations, communication, and other best practices.

Last fall’s Livestock Conservancy classes were extremely helpful with writing these bylaws. The board used the classes as well as 4 different breed association’s bylaws to draft ACRA’s new bylaws and have multiple discussions. The board has spent hours upon hours on these bylaws and given it all so much thought. We hope that you will agree and vote “yes” for the new bylaws.

If you have any questions about the new bylaws or why something is written a certain way, please reach out. [info@cotswoldacra.com](mailto:info@cotswoldacra.com)



## COTSWOLD AWARDS





A big congratulations to Robin Nistock on her blue ribbon fleece at Maryland Sheep and Wool this past May!

*(Robin also had a beautiful booth filled with Cotswold wool at Maryland Sheep and Wool! Make sure to check out her website!)*

ACRA won 4th place for having a breed association table at Maryland Sheep and Wool. This award came with \$9 and the ability to have a table there next year!

Beth Ivankovic won first place in the Cotswold fleece division at Shepherd's Harvest Sheep and Wool Festival in Minnesota also in May. (She also won 2-4th place due to being the only Cotswold entry ;)

*We want to share your good news! Send your awards and achievements to [info@acracotswold.com](mailto:info@acracotswold.com) to be in the next newsletter!*

## THE BOARD'S GOALS FOR ACRA IN 2023 INCLUDE:

- *Updating our Bylaws per the recommendations of the Livestock Conservancy. This update will also include Member and Executive Committee Code of Ethics statements. Please watch e-mails for notification of these changes and voting that will need to take place.*
- *Fine tune the new Website to continue increased ACRA awareness.*
- *Increase membership by 10%.*

## President's message from Kathy:

The summer is ending and it brings with it the final closure of ACRA's updated Bi-laws and website. The Board over the last two years took on some profound challenges with creating a social presence and bringing the inner workings of ACRA into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The hard work of the Board now provides a foundation to move forward to protect the future of this heritage breed. We have created opportunities for members to advertise their farms as well as their animals, to educate the public on the history and benefits of the Cotswold sheep, as well as to provide resources to help shepherds with caring for their animals. Regularly held Shepherds Chats covering different topics monthly relating to the raising of this breed have been well attended. New shepherds are browsing available animals and starter flocks anywhere in the country on the newly developed website. Most importantly, as we grow ACRA with new members, Cotswold owners now have an opportunity to be heard

or to work with others in a much easier and collaborative way. We hope to develop these relationships and to once again grow our ACRA Cotswold numbers around the United States.

As we move forward past our original goals, we create new ones to advance ACRA and the Cotswold breed. We have plans to explore and educate our shepherds on the importance of genetic diversity and how to plan our flocks for the future. Importing genetics for the first time in over 20 years, some members will introduce new blood to the US genetic pool. We continue to work on an electronic registry to help with ease of recording our flocks and provide genetic research on our breeding. A relationship has been forged with the Livestock Conservancy and their financial support has aided in the financial burdens from this past year and we hope will help again as we explore new future opportunities.

Personally, I stepped into some 'new' this year myself, as I showed my Cotswold's for the first time at Md Sheep and Wool Festival in May. I had more fun than I ever could have imagined and never thought I'd step in the show ring. First time showing anything at post age 50 created the 'bug'. The opportunity to be around so many other shepherds and talk with others about our wonderful breed made for a great weekend. Having already had a fiber background, I gained an even deeper appreciation for the gentleness of this breed and their grace and beauty in the show ring. Lots of discussion of dreadlocks and curls never seems to get old.

Good luck to everyone as we enter our breeding seasons. Coming off a very dry and hot summer and looking forward to shorter, cooler days. Choosing amazing Rams matched with their Ewe's, helping to preserve a wonderful breed for many years to come.

My best,

Kathy Crow

ACRA President



*Kaya Farrington showing Kathy how to fit a sheep at MD Sheep and Wool. (above) Showing in the ring! (right) Kathy's "booth" at MD Sheep and Wool.*



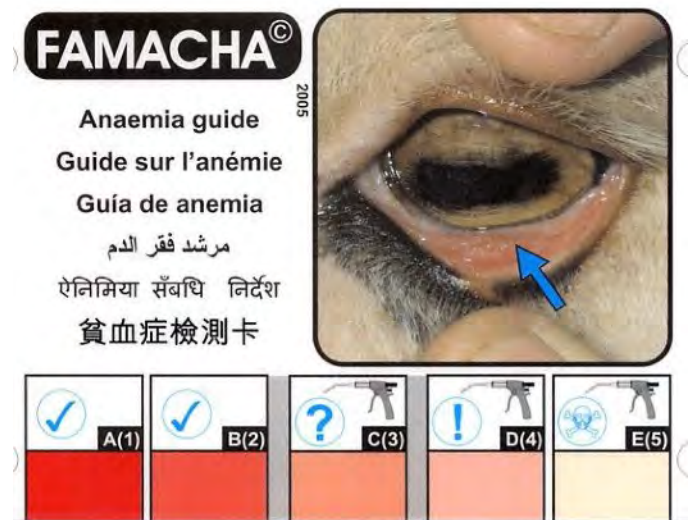
## From Lisa (Midwest):

At Kline Creek Farm we recently finished harvesting and threshing our oats, which are fed to our sheep and cows throughout the year. Summers with sheep, as usual for me, are focused on pasture and parasite management. Though I have been FAMACHA scoring sheep ever since I started working with sheep twelve years ago, I took the time this past winter to get officially “certified.” I had previously been working off my own eye scoring system based on FAMACHA, but I wanted to take the training and start using the printed color cards to make sure I was being consistent in my deworming management. Training can be done for free online (though FAMACHA cards are \$20 each). I highly recommend at least watching the videos:

[Online FAMACHA® Certification \(uri.edu\)](https://uri.edu)

Dr. Anne Zajac, who specializes in small ruminant parasitology, developed the training. I remember attending one of her talks ten years ago when the recommendation was to use one dewormer for a while and then rotate to prevent parasite resistance. Now the recommendation is to deworm with all three classes of dewormer each time a sheep’s FAMACHA score warrants deworming. The idea is that you are killing as many drug-resistant parasites as possible and maintaining refugia. “Refugia” are parasites that have not been as exposed to dewormers. Your flock will always have parasites, but you want the majority of parasites to be susceptible not resistant. The key to FAMACHA is selective deworming. When you deworm all the sheep, all the parasites are exposed to dewormer. The surviving parasites reproduce with other resistant parasites and eventually your entire flock is infected with super-resistant parasites. I try to breed for parasite-resistance. I don’t tend to deworm often, but if I have a sheep that needs consistent deworming, she goes on my cull list. As always, consult your veterinarian on your particular flock and situation.

-Lisa Carpenter, Midwest Regional Director



## From Beth:

Priory Farms has had a really busy spring and summer. The lambs are growing and our pasture projects are winding down.

This spring, I traveled to MD Sheep and Wool to help Kathy with her sheep and enjoy the show. What fun! It was wonderful to meet other ACRA members and learn more about the sheep show world. The weekend after that I brought a few of my Cotswolds to Minnesota’s Shepherd’s Harvest Wool Festival. They had never had Cotswolds in the breed barn and I talked non-stop for 3 days about them. September 7-10th, I will be taking a few sheep to the breed barn at the Wisconsin Sheep and Wool Festival in Jefferson, Wisconsin. At the end of this newsletter is a copy of a 5 x 7 postcard that ACRA had made for Maryland Sheep and Wool. If you are going to a show and would like to hand these out, please let me know and I can send some to you. The QR code links to the ACRA website.

This summer our big project was installing internal fencing through all of our summer pastures. These will help us with our rotational grazing. Instead of putting up 4+ net fences to move the flock, for most moves we will need to only put up one fence. Internal fences will allow me to make larger or smaller sections and with the time savings, I can move them more often. They are such a game changer for summer. Rotational grazing has helped us decrease the need for de-worming our sheep. We do not allow sheep to come back to the same piece of pasture for at least 40 days and many times longer than that which really helps to break the parasite cycle.



We installed 4 high tensel wires and kept them 160 ft from the edges of our woven wire fences. The premier fences are roughly 164 ft long. This gives us some wiggle room for moving the netting fencing.

**Secretary/Registrar news:** We have had 6 new members recently! We welcome all of you to ACRA. Make sure to join us on our monthly Shepherd's Chats to make connections across the country!

For registration questions, needs or concerns or any issues with the website, please let me know and I will do my best to help you out. All of the forms are on the new website. I'm getting faster with my processes for getting registrations done and out the door. I can be reached at [info@cotswoldacra.com](mailto:info@cotswoldacra.com) or 715-829-5384

## Shepherd Chats

Don't miss the next Shepherd's Chat on September 26th at 7 pm CST through zoom. During the August chat, a long list of topics were discussed from handling sheep to dyeing wool. Make sure to join us for one or all!



These zoom chats are a low key, get to know you discussion but with a focus. If

you have a topic you would like to be discussed, let us know! Register through the website and a zoom link will be sent to you. <https://cotswoldacra.com/shepherd-chat-march/>

# Annual Meeting

The Annual meeting will be through zoom on Tuesday

November 14th  
7pm cst/8 pm est

A zoom link will be sent to all current members.

# Fall Elections

Besides the positions mentioned in the first article. There are specific volunteer positions that would report to the board:

**Newsletter Coordinator** - Put together 2 newsletters a year for ACRA for February and August. Responsible for gathering articles, updates, and sharing about activities the board is working on for ACRA and successes members have with their cotswolds.

**Livestock Conservancy Liaison** - This member will be the contact between the Livestock Conservancy and ACRA. This member will let

the board and other members know what is happening at the LC and vice versa.

**Educational outreach coordinator** - Organize zoom "Shepherd Chats" once a month and other programs as developed. Help to design handouts about ACRA Cotswolds for members to have at their events.

## Veterinarian Access Questionnaire



Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences

Survey of veterinary access to care and antibiotic use by owners and managers of small ruminant livestock in the United States.

Access to veterinary care can be a challenge for owners and managers of small ruminant livestock. Researchers at Washington State University College of Veterinary Medicine have developed a survey to better understand how those that raise sheep and goats manage the health of their animals and the obstacles encountered. It is anticipated the results of the survey will inform further research and efforts to improve access to veterinary care and foster antibiotic stewardship on small-scale, small ruminant livestock operations in the United States.

This project is being spearheaded by Ashley, a 4<sup>th</sup> year veterinary student who owns sheep and trains herding dogs. Her first-hand experience of the challenges faced by sheep and goat owners motivated her to do this research as her senior paper project. Her goal is to better understand and develop solutions to remove obstacles to quality health care of sheep and goats. Please help her by completing this survey: [Survey URL](#)

The survey should not take longer than 10-15 minutes. It is completely voluntary, and all responses will be anonymous, so you can answer candidly without any risk of anyone tracking your answers back to you.

If you are at least 18 years of age and own or manage sheep or goats as part of a "hobby" or "backyard" farm in the United States you are eligible to participate in this online survey.

If you have any questions about the survey or how the data will be used contact Dr. John Wenz DVM, MS, Associate Professor, WSU College of Veterinary Medicine: [jwenz@wsu.edu](mailto:jwenz@wsu.edu) 509-335-0773

"This study, IRB 20122, has been certified as Exempt by the WSU Human Research Protection Program."

PO Box 648610, College of Veterinary Medicine, Pullman, WA 99164-6610  
509-335-0738 • FAX: 509-335-0880 • [www.vetmed.wsu.edu](http://www.vetmed.wsu.edu)

A student at Washington State University is looking for shepherds to take a survey about veterinarian care and antibiotic use. Please help her out through this link: [https://wsu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_e51CjuURWnUNslm](https://wsu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_e51CjuURWnUNslm)



If you have any questions about this survey, contact Beth at [info@cotswoldacra.com](mailto:info@cotswoldacra.com) and she can send you the official email.

The new website could use a few Cotswold lambing pictures! If you have a favorite picture or two with higher resolution and are willing to share, please send to [info@cotswoldacra.com](mailto:info@cotswoldacra.com) Thank you to those who have sent in pictures!

## October 28th is National Hug a Sheep Day!

We need you out in your pasture hugging your sheep and taking pictures! Please send all sheep hugging pictures to [info@cotswoldacra.com](mailto:info@cotswoldacra.com). These will be posted on the website! Can't wait to see the love!

## Hanging up the Shingle

**What to do when you have a flock of rare sheep and can no longer take care of them?**

Over the past few months, my husband and I have been working on our wills and retirement planning. Through this process, we have had many discussions about our flock. What would happen to them if the worst happened? How could we protect them in the best way?

Sitting on the ACRA board, multiple discussions with staff at the Livestock Conservancy and even a rare breed specialist from Canada, it is clearly apparent that our Cotswold sheep are a very rare breed. They are currently listed in the threatened category in the US but very close to the critical category. This is the case for so many breeds of sheep. Less people are raising flocks of sheep. The Cotswold sheep is not fairing much better in the UK or Canada as well. When we look across our fields, each of us need to realize the rarity with which our view holds. Flocks of Cotswold sheep are few and far between. This fact brings opportunities to the shepherd but also brings along extra responsibility. Without planning extinction of genetic lines can happen quickly.

Here are ten ways to protect the lineage of your flock of cotswold sheep:

1. Continue your membership with ACRA. Membership in a breed organization helps keep shepherds connected and is a great way to find ways of dispersing rare genetics when the time comes.
2. Record keeping. Maintain a file folder or box of all of your sheep's registry information. Separate the information by rams, wethers, ewes, and lambs. Ensure that all sheep have tags in their ears at all times and can be traced to paperwork. Let your loved ones know how your organization system works for your sheep.
3. Animal care. A couple of times a year update a "how to take care of my animals" list and have it posted in your barn or somewhere in your house. A calendar of monthly jobs that need to be done around the barnyard is also helpful for someone who needs to jump in

unexpectedly. Have a list of a few people who could jump in and help around the farm.

4. Review your will. Make sure that it specifies exactly what you want done with your sheep. If possible, leave funding to ensure their well being is taken care of until new homes are found.

5. Make contacts now that might be willing to take part or a whole flock down the road. Include this list in your will including names and phone numbers: ACRA members, historical parks, petting zoos, Fibersheds, breed associations (of course, ACRA), the Livestock Conservancy, other shepherds who live near you, 4-H groups, FSA or NRCS. Include in your will that you would like new owners of the sheep to understand the rarity of the breed and to join ACRA to ensure genetics remain available for others.

6. Membership to ACRA and the Livestock Conservancy allows for selling of animals through their websites. Spell this process out for those responsible for your will as a first place to post animals for sale or rehoming. There is also a Cotswold Sheep group and an American Cotswold Record Association page through Facebook.

7. If you have a planned retirement from sheep, contact ACRA as soon as possible so that our volunteer board can help you spread the word about your flock.

8. Once you have retired from sheep, don't stop being involved with ACRA! ACRA will need your expertise. Become a board member, work on a committee or other job to share your knowledge!

9. Is your house filled with pictures of sheep and sheep trinkets? Again, the ACRA website has a way to post these for sale. Let your loved ones know.

10. Once all of this is in place, go to bed knowing that you have been a great shepherd to your flock ensuring their care for all time and to those who will take care of your will when needed.

If you have other suggestions for flock dispersement, please share them with [info@cotswoldacra.com](mailto:info@cotswoldacra.com).

#### **The ACRA 2023-2024 Executive Committee:**

##### **Kathy Crow**

President and interim Treasurer: Aleta Springs Farm in Churchville, Virginia [president@cotswoldacra.com](mailto:president@cotswoldacra.com) or [treasurer@cotswoldacra.com](mailto:treasurer@cotswoldacra.com)

##### **Beth Ivankovic**

Vice President and interim Secretary/Registrar: PRIORITY Farms in Eau Claire, Wisconsin [info@cotswoldacra.com](mailto:info@cotswoldacra.com) or [vp@cotswoldacra.com](mailto:vp@cotswoldacra.com)

##### **Kaya Farrington**

Eastern Regional Director: Double Trouble Farm in Cummington, Massachusetts [eastrigdir@cotswoldacra.com](mailto:eastrigdir@cotswoldacra.com)

##### **Lisa Carpenter** Midwest Regional Director: Kline

Creek Farm in Wheaton, Illinois [mwregdir@cotswoldacra.com](mailto:mwregdir@cotswoldacra.com)

## History Corner

From the Detroit Free Press August 5, 1843

**COTSWOLD SHEEP—Large Fleeces.—Mr. EDITOR:**  
 —I last year furnished the Farmer with a statement of the quantity of wool taken from my imported

Cotswold sheep; and although my clip of this year does not come up to that of last, still I think it will be hard to beat in Michigan, or indeed elsewhere.—Owing to the loss of my best and largest ram, which last year sheared over 14 lbs, I of course have not got him to shear this year, otherwise I think I should not have been behind last year's clip: and as my best sheep this year, which are only one year old, have given me an average of 11 lbs. and 6 ounces, I think the prospect next year, bids fair to outstrip any thing that has been taken off a sheep's back for some time.

Every day convinces me that the Cotswold sheep are the best adapted to our climate of any other breed whatever, their wool now commanding 50 cents a pound, while other wool drags heavily at 25 and 30 cents. And such a carcass, too; oh! what would some of our people think of the mutton, after having eaten only of our native sheep! The difference in the meat alone, leaving out the wool, I should think sufficient inducement for any farmer to get as quickly into raising the breed as possible.

To show in what estimation the Cotswold are held in Illinois, I would state that I have received two applications for rams to go into that State the coming season; and if any of the farmers in our own State are desirous to obtain the breed, it would be well to make early application, for I had much rather that our own State should receive the benefit of such fine blood. I have still several rams on hand, which I will either let for the season, or dispose of very moderate, and on such terms as shall meet the wishes of farmers and breeders. Any application by mail, (post paid) will receive immediate attention.

Yours respectfully,  
**GEO. HENTIG.**  
 MARSHALL, MICH., July 17, 1843.

From the Michigan Farmer.

## Maryland Sheep and Wool 2024

Would you like to see Cotswold sheep a featured breed at MDS&W? ACRA would need to guarantee 6 exhibitors and at least 30 animals. If you are interested in showing next year, please reach out to Kathy Crow at [president@cotswoldacra.com](mailto:president@cotswoldacra.com)




American Cotswold Record Association

America's Cotswold registry since 1878

[Cotswoldacra.com](http://Cotswoldacra.com)

email: [info@cotswoldacra.com](mailto:info@cotswoldacra.com)





**The ACRA Cotswold Sheep** is a great choice for any flock. For hundreds of years, Cotswold sheep have been known as the easy keeping longwool sheep.

- Great mothers
- Easy lambing
- Mild tasting lamb and mutton
- Wool is known as the "poor man's mohair"
- Fun breed history both in the UK and US
- These Gentle Giants are fun in the show ring
- Thrive on pasture
- They are the Cotswold Lion

Website:  
[Cotswoldacra.com](http://Cotswoldacra.com)  
 Use the QR code to go directly to the website.

Rams: 250-300 lbs

Ewes: 190-220 lbs

Fiber: 33-40 microns, year growth > 10 inches



Postcards about ACRA! If you would like a few cards to take to a show or to give out when you sell sheep, please let Beth know.