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Karakul Alliance Goals

Our primary goals are to:

1. find flocks & count Karakul sheep
2. bring together a community of Karakul shepherds

The Alliance has been working toward these objectives and the survival of Karakuls in North America since 2014.

No Membership fees for 8 years of our services, but coming soon to help the Alliance grow.

The **BLOODLINES** page is full of information for breeders, and is currently being updated on karakulshepherds.org. The list is more complete & stories are being posted.

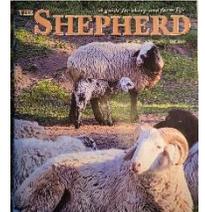
Lamb Photos: by Letty Klein, (PLF) Pine Lane Farm Kalamazoo, Michigan

Words of wisdom from the late Page Jacobs
~ written Dec 8, 1988

Registries are only as good as we breeders make them.

Alliance Got the Word Out in *The Shepherd*

The July 2022 issue of *The Shepherd* magazine featured **front cover** Karakuls and a 3-page article with 5-story-telling photos. It was authored to explain two *seemingly unrelated* important events that occurred almost simultaneously this spring: 1) our discovery of Canadian Karakul extinction. Heritage Livestock Canada has not registered a Karakul in over 10 years, and 2) the export of three Karakul rams from southwestern Michigan to far eastern Canada. The article spoke about the increase in dairy Karakuls, and also the unfortunate increase in crossbreeding. Karakul ewes are being sought after as AI recipients for imported Awassi semen (and other African fat-tail breeds) to satisfy the demands of *sheep tail-fat* consumers across the US. This popularity of US Karakuls has increased numbers. There was a follow-up article in the **August *Shepherd*** magazine with a helpful outline on **Export to Canada** - all the necessary steps for completion of breeding stock export & import, especially rams.



Cover photo by Penny Gelhaus, CA

This Newsletter is dedicated to new & future Canadian Karakul breeders
Michigan Karakul rams moved to Nova Scotia, their breeding exploits Summer 2022

Karakuls in the Canadian Maritimes

An unnamed Shepherd and his partner, Nova Scotia, Canada

As brand-new Canadian shepherds gain experience with their first Karakul-cross lamb crops, they wish to remain private for now, not wanting to become too famous or popular too fast. To maintain shepherd anonymity, three Karakul rams speak in the first person below, becoming stars with these story highlights:

- 1) On April 14th, three PLF rams - Martin, Archy & Revel were imported from Michigan to Nova Scotia, the first Karakul genetics in Canada in 25 years. We had stunning shallow lustrous birthcoats!
- 2) After quarantine, we successfully bred a handful of Karakul-cross ewes and 50 Canadian Rideau Arcott ewes. Since all were marked on their first heat cycle in June,
- 3) a new group of 75 Rideau Arcott ewes were exposed to our Karakul charms. Then a discovery,
- 4) a flock of 85 Karakul-cross ewes in Saskatchewan were purchased and shipped to Nova Scotia. After quarantine and flushing,
- 5) We exposed this 3rd group. We're handsome yearlings with high energy for busy breeding!
- 6) We survived Hurricane Fiona as the storm lashed Nova Scotia with 140+MPH winds and 8 inches of rain on Sept 23rd & 24th. What an exciting 6 months in a new country!
- 7) Our first breeding group lambs hit the ground in November. Our new shepherd texted our breeder Letty Klein with news that lambs out of the Karakul-cross ewes were beautiful!

More to come later. This is an evolving story and will be shared as two Canadian men and three Karakul rams work towards a high-percentage Karakul flock on Nova Scotia Island.



PLF Plato's Martin – C0328
as newborn (46% Dawley)
sire Max's Plato
dam Dawley Molly



PLF Plato's Archy – C0398
sire Max's Plato
dam Hindi's Aylee

PLF Moses' Revel – C0395
sire Regal's Moses
dam Tilik's Rhena
Archy & Revel photo'd at 3 weeks of age



Alliance Advisors have agreed to *not* register known crossbreds and there are no current plans to add an upgrading program to the KSAR Registry at this time. However, **CSBA (Canadian Sheep Breeders Association)** offers **graded-up registrations**, if these two new Karakul breeders would like to pursue certificates. We hope they do, and we wish them the absolute best!

Advertising your sheep, farm, and/or related products on our **For Sale** page is available for \$10 per ad, good for one year, using the fillable online form under **Advertise**. Submit up to 5 photos.

NEW ~ Flock numbers now have a letter & a dash - in front, A-AKSR, C-KSAR, B-KSA, NH-No History shepherds

In the database example  Letty can be found with Flock#: A-51 or C-2

Contact

Deborah Hunter
Librarian, Historian,
Registrar & Web
Shepherd

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Karakul Shepherds  
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People you sell sheep to
please
send CONTACT info to me

Even if buyers do not want to be contacted, minimum send to me Name & City for tracking Hidden Flocks. THANKS!

Shepherds up North
Live in a state bordering Canada? Willing to participate in Scrapie testing (see **Export Outline**) to sell Karakul rams to Canada? Please connect.

~ Deborah

News about KSAR - History, Database & Memberships

Between 1986 and the present, over 8,000 US Karakuls have been registered, with a handful from Canada. Presumably A0001 to A0444 were counted for some years of Karen Koch & Ted Stultz's registering (mid-80s back to the 60s). For our database ancestors, I started from A0445 in 1986 (Julia DeVlieg's new AKSR) & went forward; 150 have already been entered.

I will leave empty the records I think are genetic dead-ends, and focus on sheep that made impacts. This will hopefully cut many data entries. It has been a walk down memory lane looking at records of old Karakuls who are ancestors of today's beautiful sheep.

I will do as much of the work as possible to keep costs down, seek breeders' help & I am actively seeking local area help as well. Data entry is a huge new project to keep working on, a bit each day. Partially launched on-line (not public) is the sub-database for Breeders.....



The database moved forward!

I actively worked with the programmer and his skilled wife in late spring, with results shown in the photo. (Ask for Email to view details.)

Our programming will be set up in Phases. First, we are working on the Breeders' sub-database to be used for Memberships. This will be the first section launched, and will help the Alliance move forward technologically, as we'll be able to enroll members digitally. Meanwhile I'll keep adding to spreadsheets so the database-upload is easier for the programmer. However, we are experiencing a delay this Fall with the programmer's family facing a terminal illness. We wish them so very well, with peace.

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If you have experience with Excel spreadsheets & would like to help out by entering some data for our new online system, please email me. --- info@karakulshepherds.org

**Education Focus - Karakul History in Canada & US - Cousins**

Serendipitous coincidences with Canadian Karakul imports spanning 108 years, 1914 to 2022. US and Canadian Karakuls were related through the large 1914 import, over 130 head, which entered though (PEI) Prince Edward Island, Canada, and studied there for two years. The study ended in 1916 and 24 sheep that proved to be of the best fur-bearing quality were transported to Frank Dawley, Fayetteville, in central New York. Many of the remaining Karakuls stayed in Canada and were bought and transported to western provinces. Without new genetic input over 100+ years, Canadian Karakuls eventually became quite inbred, were outcrossed with other breeds for genetic necessity or lamb markets, until purebred Karakuls were non-existent. A supportive association might have helped mitigate extinction.



A photo and caption of four Karakul rams in 1914, two of which were at PEI.

~ From: The Karakul Sheep in America by J Walter Jones, 1914

No.6. Four Rams of the 1<sup>st</sup> Importation  
2 rams-Lowden & Yermoloff died in 1912.  
Other 2-Teddy Sr & Fasset, together w Lowney (not pictured) are now at Charlottetown, PEI

Spring 2022, right after the discovery of the breed's extinction in Canada, a large farm in the

Canadian Maritimes began the long-term work of up-grading to high percentage Karakul sheep, with big diverse ewe flocks. It is in the same area, 108 years later, and about as many miles apart, as the very first Karakul sheep farm on Prince Edward Island in 1914. A 2<sup>nd</sup> serendipity-3 rams imported in 2022 have Dawley bloodlines, returned to their source. The Maritimes Islands seem to be the unlikeliest of places given the breed's desert heritage.

**What is it about those far eastern islands in the Canadian North Atlantic that serve as Karakul incubators?**

*Karakul Handbooks are available on the **Books Plus** page*