



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Hardin County Extension News Release

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For Immediate Release – November 28, 2019

Ohio Sheep Producers Tour Argentina

by Mark Badertscher, OSU Extension Educator

Hardin County – Four Hardin County people joined an Ohio Sheep Improvement Association and Ohio Farm Bureau International Sheep and Agriculture Tour of Argentina in October. Local sheep producers Dave Burkhart, Nancy Wilcox, Madelyn Lowery, and OSU Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources Educator Mark Badertscher joined a group of 21 sheep producers, sheep industry personnel, and both current and retired OSU Extension Educators on a two-week trip to Argentina to study sheep production methods and marketing techniques. In addition to touring sheep farms, the group also stopped at various other agricultural production sites and related industry visits, ranging from beef cattle operations, field crops, a huge livestock market, a fruit tree farm, an olive plantation with an olive oil processing facility, a vineyard and winery, along with several cultural tours. The trip left the Columbus airport on October 19 and returned on November 1.

Sheep farms visited on the trip included Estancia Esperanza in the middle of the Santa Cruz Province Patagonia steppe. This farm has a 4,000 head Merino commercial sheep flock and provided a border collie sheepdog demonstration for the group. Another sheep farm visited was the Monte Dinero Merino farm, which began to develop the Corino breed forty years ago, joining the best of the Corriedale, the Merino and the Poll Merino; having as a result, an animal with great wool that yet gives good meat. La Constancia, a small farm where three generations live on the property, struggling to keep the farm in the family that has had to diversify their production by farming corn, soybeans and wheat, in addition to running a Hampshire Down and a poultry operation rounded out the sheep farm visits on the tour.

Other agricultural production farms and industry visits while in Argentina included Liniers Livestock Market. Occupying 34 hectares within the Buenos Aires city limits, between 2-10 thousand head of cattle are sold at this location daily for processing in the slaughterhouses around the city for domestic consumption. The group visited El Desafío, a 280-hectare farm where soybean, corn, wheat, barley, oats, green peas, and some other crops are grown. This farm also leases land, planting about 1000 hectares every year in addition to an Aberdeen

Angus herd, selling the production as bulls and heifers to commercial ranchers. Bodegas Zuccardi vineyard and winery was a stop in the Mendoza Province, located in one of Argentina's most important wine regions, accounting for nearly two-thirds of the country's entire wine production. Vesta SH fruit farm near Vista Flores, in the Uco Valley, where they grow peaches, cherries and other fruits was another stop on the tour for the Ohio group. Annual rainfall in this region is about 12 inches, so all the agriculture is done with irrigation of water coming from ice melted in the high Andes mountains. Aceites Maguay, an olive plantation where they also process olive oil was included on the itinerary. The group took a tour through their olive trees and production houses to learn about the entire life cycle of the olive. Maguay's flagship product is their collection of brined olives, but their extra virgin olive oils are elegant, refined and worthy of equal recognition.

Cities visited on the tour included Buenos Aires, El Calafate, Río Gallegos, Pergamino, Melincue, Potrero de Los Funes, Mendoza, and Puerto Iguazú. Tourist sites visited included Perito Moreno Glacier in Los Glaciares National Park, Glaciarium Museum, Buenos Aires city tour, and a Tango show. Other tourist sites included Three Borders Point to look at the confluence of the rivers and the Paraguay and Brazilian coasts, penguin colonies located at the most southeast point of continental Argentina, bordering Chile and the Magellan Strait, and the Iguazú Falls National Park in a sub-tropical forest area to see Devil's Throat, the largest fall in the whole complex, which is approximately 4 miles long. While on the trip, part of the group took an excursion into Brazil to experience a South American musical show.

Photo captions:

(Sheep Farm Visit) Argentine agronomist interpreter Marcos Casares explains production practices and marketing methods as told by the local producer to Ohio sheep producers on a farm stop on the Ohio Sheep Improvement Association and Ohio Farm Bureau Argentina Sheep and Agriculture Tour.

(Merino Wool) Sheep producers on the Argentina Sheep and Agriculture Tour organized by the Ohio Sheep Improvement Association and Ohio Farm Bureau get a close-up look at the fine wool produced by a Merino sheep while on a trip to the South American country.