

Tom Slack, Slack Club Lambs

Tom Slack started his purebred and wether sheep flock when he was just seven years old. He turned his sheep hobby into a livelihood after completing his 10 years in 4-H and becoming a State and National 4-H Achievement winner. He was a member of the 1975 Purdue Livestock Judging Team which placed first at the North American International Livestock Exposition. Slack finished 2nd in the nation in Sheep and had the high oral reasons score in sheep at the national contest, as well as second overall at the Chicago International.

He began with 15 ewes after graduating from Purdue, and taught high school woodworking for three years before making his passion for breeding quality sheep his business. In 1979 he started raising sheep full time. Now he, and his wife Val with son Brett, operate the largest Suffolk flock in the state of Indiana, lambing 450 ewes last year.

Tom's program embraces modernization and change. He is an early adopter and innovator of technologies to improve the production and quality of his sheep. He utilizes artificial insemination and embryo transfer to advance his breeding program and social media to attract, educate and assist his customers.

The Formula for Champions Club Lamb sale started by the Slacks in 1979 is in its 36th year and is the largest single producer club lamb sale east of the Mississippi River. Slack's attention to detail and understanding of genetics has allowed him to breed and merchandize champion sheep in a multitude of state and national shows. Thirty-eight states in America have Slack bloodlines improving their flocks. Tom's flock was the leading flock in Suffolk registrations for several years prior to the consolidation of associations.

In 2014 Slack Club Lambs was named the Premier Exhibitor at the largest sheep sale in the United States- the Mid-West Stud Ram Sale held in Sedalia, Missouri. This is the third time Slack has been premier exhibitor at Sedalia after winning six champions, two reserve champions and twenty-two class winners with seven breeds. Tom had the largest consignment at Sedalia with seventy head. Forty-five of the 70 stood 5th place or higher in class. Slack showed the Champion Suffolk Wether Sire, Champion Suffolk Wether Dam and Reserve Champion Suffolk Wether Dam. In addition, Slack won 10 Suffolk Wether Sire/Dam Classes and had the highest selling ewe at the Mid-West Stud Ram Sale for \$20,000 which was also the Champion Suffolk Wether Ewe.

Tom's enthusiasm for sheep is contagious. He is always willing to take time to help the new breeder and the experienced sheep person. Tom, Val and Brett, have worked tirelessly to improve sheep projects at the local, state and national levels through sponsorships and volunteering on local and state committees, as well as serving as breed managers at the Indiana State Fair. The Slack family maintains a web site available at www.slackclublambs.com which tells more about their multi-generational operation.