

HAMPSHIRE HERITAGE AWARD

Poe Hampshires Established 1945

In the early 20th century in the Midwest, farming was a common occupation. At the time, Poe Farms had about 80 acres of row crops along with beef, sheep, swine, dairy, and poultry- raising most of their own food while also earning a living. In 1945, ten-year-old Stanley E. Poe along with his father, Walter D. Poe traveled to nearby Lakewood Farms of Edinburg, IN. Lakewood was a nationally known Hampshire breeder at the time and shepherds L.T. Dwyer & Chan Davis struck a deal with young Stan to purchase his first Hampshires to start his 4-H career. They took notice in the excitement and interest the young man displayed in the project. Walter & Stan purchased 10 bred ewes for a total of \$1000 and Poe Hampshires was established.



When Stan joined 4-H one of the first lessons was how the commercial grade livestock he already owned would not be suitable for the show ring in order to achieve success. Growing up watching Lakewood Farms display championship genetics Stan took an interest in Hampshires under the guidance of L.T. Dwyer & Chan Davis.

Poe Hampshires, A Brief History...

Over the years there hasn't been much change in the management of the flock other than the growth. Multiple members of the family have been more or less involved in the operation given the stage of their own lives. Stan Sr. ultimately managed the flock from the early years through his siblings' 4-H careers in the 1950s-60s. With meticulous production practices and constant research, Poe Hampshires quickly garnered national success in the 1950s-60s. Kenny and Alberta Poe, Stan's younger siblings managed the flock and showed the sheep while Stan was in and out of college and the military. Stan maintained about 160 ewes with Hampshires, Columbias & Southdowns during the 4-H careers of Stan II, Keegan and Cameron Poe. All three boys earned state and national recognition with a very lucrative tenure in the show ring.

When Stan II returned from college in 1988 he assumed a much more managerial role and began farming full time as Stan Sr. was working off the farm. From 1988-1991 Poe Hampshires experienced much added growth with 300 western ewes and about 220 breed ewes and the facilitation of club lamb sales. In 1995, Kalen Poe, the youngest of the Poe Family began 4-H and even though having a very successful 4-H career there was a shift in the focus of the farm with the added interest from the club lamb business. Poe Hampshires remained relevant in the production and show success of registered seedstock. However, the goals were to maintain more moderate, muscular sheep to produce more marketable wethers. Resulting in Poe Hampshires being some of the first slick sheared Hampshires you would see in the show ring. The late 90s-early 2000s would serve as the turning point of the operation with major success producing the Supreme Champion Wether Sire at the Midwest Stud Ram Sale in 1999, Champion Ram at the Indiana State Fair with "Undertow", a slick-shorn ram in 2001, Premier Exhibitor at the National Hampshire Show with an entirely slick-shorn show string in 2002 and the Res. Grand Champion Market Lamb at the Oklahoma Youth Expo in 2004.



When Kalen was in high school he and Stan II began to form a partnership as Kalen grew older and took on more responsibilities on the farm. In 2003, Stan II and Kalen purchased the Charles Kirlin flock in its entirety and put ewe numbers to about 400. Poe Hampshires were also one of the initial flocks in the country to implement artificial insemination into their practices. During the 2000s, the flock developed into an innovative form of production technology and efficiency utilizing artificial insemination, semen processing, and embryo transfer to maximize their genetic potential as well as offering these services to outside clientele. These numbers remained while Kalen was in college and graduate school and in 2009 & 2011 the brothers brokered two

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other major purchases buying out Kevin Hoeing of Rushville, IN & Kent Langemeier of Mead, NE. These 220 additional ewes put the operation to over 600 head. Kalen's involvement increased through his college years developing many new business relationships across the country and in 2014 he returned home to the farm full-time.

Stan Poe II has been on the AHSA Board from 2003-2012 & served as President from 2009-2011. He was also one of the founding members of the All-American Junior Show.

Poe Hampshires currently maintains 550 head of registered Hampshires and black-faced crossbred ewes. The operation thrives on customer success and their business model is designed to directly reflect the demand for moderate, correctly structured, muscular sheep that are versatile breeders with productive longevity. The top 80% of the projected 750 head of lambs born each year are marketed to other seedstock producers and 4-H families through six online sales, live auctions and privately. Poe

Hamps fills multiple segments of the market offering show sheep and seedstock of all ages along with frozen and fresh chilled semen. The lower 20% are marketed through local commercial producers and meat suppliers.

Management practices are kept current maintaining innovative technology. All brood ewes between the ages of 1-5 years are artificially inseminated on site in the state-of-the-art breeding facility. They also facilitate AI space for approximately 30 individual clients ultimately breeding around 1000 head annually on the farm.

The conception rates will average between 60-90% making the production scheme extremely efficient. AI groups are kept together with all progeny maintaining the same schedule for processing, vaccinations, and weaning. This also helps to facilitate the various markets they can achieve from across the country.

The farm utilizes their sheep as teaching tools whenever the opportunity arises given that each of the Poes was an active livestock judging team member. Poe Hamps have supplied classes at the Mid-America Classic in Hutchinson, KS, Houston Livestock Show, Indiana State 4-H/FFA Contest, and the North American Intercollegiate Livestock Judging Contest. Poe Hamps hosts tours for FFA groups during National FFA Convention held in Indianapolis, IN annually seeing over 800 students. Started in 2012, Poe Hamps is the first and only sheep operation in the country to host an official judging workout for high school and colligate judging teams traveling to NAILE. They have become a regular stop hosting more than 60 judging teams from across the country every year.

