

American Gotland Sheep Society Bylaws

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GOTLAND SHEEP BREEDERS ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA

Article I THE CORPORATION

- 1.1 NAME: The corporation shall be known as and referred to herein as the American Gotland Sheep Society (AGSS).
- 1.2 CHARTER: The AGSS shall be chartered as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Oregon.
- 1.3 LOCATION: The principal and registered office of the AGSS shall be located at such place as most recently designated by the Board of Directors of the AGSS.

Article II PURPOSE AND GOALS

- 2.1 PURPOSE: The purpose of the association shall be to establish and support the Gotland breed of sheep in North America.
- 2.2 GOALS:
- a) To engage in the education and promotion of Gotland sheep.
 - b) To register and keep pedigree records of all animals that qualify as percentage blood Gotland sheep according to the guidelines of the Association.
 - c) To provide interested people with information about Gotland sheep and their products

- d) To maintain high standards and promote quality Gotland sheep that meet those standards.
- e) To promote interest in the Gotland breed of sheep wherever possible in order to attract new breeders for the conservation and well being of the breed.
- f) To maintain a registry of only those animals descended from Gotland sheep and the Foundation breeds: Finnsheep, Icelandic Sheep, Shetland Sheep, Wensleydale Sheep, Cotswold Sheep, Lincoln Sheep, Border Leicesters, Bluefaced Leicesters, English Leicesters, Teeswaters, and crosses between these breeds.
- g) Ewes (lambs) born prior to July 1, 2009, from a breed or cross other than foundation ewes that are at least 25% Gotland and are recorded with AGSS prior to 1/1/10, may be recorded as foundation ewes as they would grandfathered in as they were born, conceived, or the breeding had been planned prior to the acceptance of these rules.

Article III FINANCES

3.1 FISCAL YEAR: The fiscal year of the AGSS shall commence January 1 and end on December 31.

3.2 DEPOSITS: All moneys, securities, and other valuables of the AGSS shall be deposited in the name of the American Gotland Sheep Society in such banks, trust companies, or safe deposit boxes as the Board of Directors shall designate, and shall be withdrawn only by check or order signed by such person as designated by the Board. At least two (2) such people, including the Treasurer, will be designated at any time. Payments in excess of \$100 require specific authorization by the Board.

3.3 EXECUTION OF INSTRUMENTS: All instruments of assignment, transfer, conveyance, release, and contract requiring execution of the Board of Directors of the AGSS shall be signed by the authorized officer or agent designated by the Board.

3.4 ACCEPTANCE OF BEQUESTS, DEVICES AND DONATIONS : The President, or any other officer of the Board may:

- a) Accept any and all unconditional and unrestricted bequests, devices, and donations of money, property, or collections of value made to the corporation.
- b) With the prior approval of the Board, accept any other bequests, devices, or donations.

3.5 INDEMNIFICATION: Subject to compliance with Oregon state law: The

members, staff, management, directors, and officers of this organization, and their private property, shall not be liable in any manner for the debts, obligations, undertakings, or liabilities, and shall be exempted and indemnified against any personal expense, losses, or liabilities, which may accrue from time to time in any manner by reason of the ownership, administration or distribution of the corporate property of funds, the conduct of corporate affairs, so long as they act in good faith. They shall not be liable or accountable in any manner for honest mistakes or errors of judgment, nor for errors or wrongdoing of agents, brokers, attorneys, or servants, not for interest on funds temporarily idle as long as they act in good faith. They shall have the right, at all times and in all matters to act upon any information or evidence deemed by them reliable, without incurring any personal liability or responsibility of any kind or in any kind of manner, as long as they act in good faith. The Board of Directors and staff personnel shall be bonded if authorized by the Board.

3.6 PROHIBITED TRANSACTIONS: No part of the net earnings of this corporation shall inure to the benefit of any individual, and no part of the funds of this corporation shall attempt to influence legislation, nor shall this corporation engage in any prohibited transaction as defined by the Internal Revenue Code.

3.7 YEARLY AUDIT: The Board of Directors may require that a yearly audit of the corporation is conducted by an independent auditor who is beyond the realm of the business affairs of the AGSS. A copy of such audit shall be available to the members of the AGSS.

Article IV MEMBERSHIP

4.1 PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP: Membership in the Association is and at all times shall be considered to be a privilege and not a right. Active members of the corporation are entitled to attend and speak at the membership meetings of the association. In addition, members in good standing shall be kept informed of the corporation's activities, shall be notified of all membership meetings including board of directors meetings, shall have annual reports, and up-to-date copies of the bylaws made available to them. All reports and books of the association may be inspected by any member of the association at any reasonable time, with the exception of matters relating to the hiring, firing, discipline of personnel, or personnel records.

Only AGSS Members in good standing may register, record, or transfer sheep with the Association.

4.2 DEFINITION OF MEMBERSHIP:

a) **MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY:** Any person, family, entity or corporation who owns, breeds, or registers Gotland Sheep with the AGSS or has an interest in Gotland sheep is eligible for membership.

b) **MEMBERSHIP UNIT:** Any flock that is managed as a unit by a single family, corporation, group of other partnership is entitled to no more than one (1) Active Membership with one (1) vote, regardless of how many locations the flock is managed on. Correspondingly, sheep that reside at one address and are managed as a unit are considered to be a single flock and are eligible for no more than one (1) Active Membership with one (1) vote.

c) **ACTIVE MEMBER:** Active members must be current on their membership dues (in good standing) to be eligible to vote and/or hold elective office. Active members maintain their active status by being the owner of record on any animal registered with the association.

d) **ASSOCIATE MEMBER:** Any person, family, entity or corporation interested in the promotion of Gotland sheep may become an associate member of the AGSS, and as such is entitled to all privileges of full membership except they shall have no vote, nor shall they be eligible to hold elective office.

e) **JUNIOR MEMBERS:** Any interested person under the age of 18 may become a junior member of AGSS. Junior members have the same privileges of active members except they shall have no vote, nor shall they be eligible to hold elective office.

f) **HONORARY MEMBER:** Any person having made outstanding contributions to the establishment of the Gotland breed in North America, upon nomination and election by the Board, may become an honorary member. As such they shall not be entitled to the privileges and responsibilities of active members including the holding of elective office and the privilege of vote.

g) The Board of Directors may, at its discretion, establish other classes of membership.

4.3 **MEMBERSHIP FEES AND DUES:** Annual membership fees for the above established classes of membership shall be set at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Annual dues shall not exceed \$35 per year per membership.

4.4 **EFFECTIVE DATE OF MEMBERSHIP:** Annual membership shall begin January 1st and expire on December 31st. During the month of December each year, the Secretary will mail and/or email dues notices to members

whose dues are not yet paid.

4.5 **TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP:** Membership shall terminate on December 31st each year. A grace period of 60 days will be in effect, allowing such time for members to send in membership dues. To renew the membership after 60 days, a reactivation fee in an amount to be determined by the Board of Directors shall be submitted with the annual membership fee.

4.6 **EXPULSION OF MEMBERS:** The Board may expel members for just cause, including but not limited to: not keeping adequate records, falsification of pedigrees, or willful misrepresentation of any animal owned, bred or exhibited by him/her or any other act derogatory to the standing of AGSS.

Article V MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

5.1 The members of the AGSS shall meet a minimum of annually and the meeting will be held via electronic communication and/or conference call. A meeting can be called as requested by either 25% of the membership or the board of directors to discuss timely issues before the association

5.2 **PURPOSE OF MEETING:** The General Membership Meeting is held for the purpose of announcing the election results of Board members, for hearing the report of officers of the Board, for the consideration of bylaws changes, and for the transaction of any other business which may properly come before the meeting.

5.3 **GENERAL NOTICE OF MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:** Written notice of the time and place of the membership meetings shall be mailed or emailed to the members and be postmarked at least 30 days prior to such meetings. An agenda of the meeting, any ballots to be used, and any proposed changes to the bylaws shall be furnished to all members.

5.4 **QUORUM:** The active members present at any properly called membership meeting shall constitute a quorum.

5.5 **VOTING:** Voting on issues addressed at membership meetings shall be conducted by mail ballot. No more than 10 days after the General Membership Meeting, the Secretary of the Association or person designated by the association shall mail the ballots to each active member. The ballots shall be returned to the person designated by the association to conduct the election and postmarked within 15 days of the ballots being mailed to the

membership. All voting members who have submitted an email address to the association will be notified by email when the ballots are mailed out and when their ballot has been received by the person designated by the association to conduct the election. Results of the balloting shall be counted by the Secretary of the Association or such other person as designated by the Board, and shall be kept in his or her custody for a minimum of 60 days from notification of membership of the voting results, and be subject to inspection at reasonable times by any member of the Association. The membership shall be promptly notified of the results of such balloting notified within 10 days of the close of voting on the results of that vote by mail, and can be notified immediately by email. The act of the majority of those voting shall be considered an act of the membership of the corporation.

5.6 SPECIAL MEETINGS: General meetings other than the above mentioned General Membership meeting may be called by the President or by petition of the lesser of 10 active members or 25% of the active membership. Written notice of the time and place of the General meetings shall be mailed or emailed to the members and be postmarked at least 10 days prior to such meetings.

Article VI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

6.1 AUTHORITY: The Board of Directors of the AGSS shall be the governing board of the AGSS, and shall have ultimate authority over and responsibility for all corporate expenses, properties, funds, and debts.

6.2 DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY: Members, staff, directors, officers and others may act in the name of the AGSS only when specifically authorized to do so by the Board.

6.3 NUMBER OF DIRECTORS: The Board of Directors shall consist of seven members and can only be changed by a vote of the membership. The Board of Directors includes the Officers and 3 Board Members at large, one each representing the Eastern time zone, Central time zone, and Mountain / Pacific time zone. No more than one member of a family, corporation or entity as defined in Section 4.2.e shall serve on the Board at the same time.

6.4 TERMS OF DIRECTORS: Director(s) shall serve a term of two years. Elections shall be staggered such that in even years the President, Secretary and even numbered Directors will be elected, and in odd numbered years the Vice President, Treasurer and odd numbered Directors will be elected. No one person may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms as President, Vice President, Secretary, or Board Member at Large. The Treasurer may serve an unlimited number of terms.

6.5 MANNER OF ELECTIONS: The Board of Directors shall have the discretion to declare districts within the territory covered which will promote a fair and reasonable representation of the membership.

- a) Election of officers and/or directors shall be held in October of each year with the elected members being seated as of the following January 1.
- b) In any election of directors, a majority of all votes cast shall not be required to elect directors, but the requisite number of persons receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected. In the case of ties, a run-off election shall be held among those receiving the tie vote. All elections of officers and directors shall be by ballot via regular mail.
- c) Nomination of candidates shall be considered valid when written nomination is received by the Secretary or member designated by the Board of Directors from any active member emailed and/or postmarked by October 1, of each year. .
- d) The Secretary of the Association shall mail a ballot for election of Directors to each active member by October 10, of each year. No ballot shall be counted as valid unless such ballot shall have been postmarked by the date specified by the Association Secretary. Results of the election shall be announced at a general membership meeting and the members of the Association shall promptly be notified by mail or email of the election results. All ballots will be kept on record for a minimum period of 60 days.
- e) Board of directors voting shall require a majority of votes cast to pass. Board members can only abstain from the vote if they would benefit personally and/or financially from said vote. The President shall vote on all issues brought before the board. In the case of a tie, the no vote will be successful.

6.6 VACANCIES ON THE BOARD: Vacancies may occur during the term of a Board member by death, resignation, removal, disqualification, incapacitation, or by expansion of the Board at the discretion of the Board.

- a) Any director may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Board through the President. The resignation of any director shall take effect upon receipt of the notice, or at such later date as shall be specified in such notice. The acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.
- b) Any director may be removed from the Board for just cause by the affirmative vote of 2/3's of the currently existing members of the Board or by a majority vote of the general membership participating in the vote, provided they have been members of the association for 6 months prior to the vote. Any director shall have the right to speak on his/her own behalf before a vote and removal by the Board or by the Membership. Any director so removed

has the right to appeal to the Membership and/or arbitration.

c) In the event a vacancy occurs in a Board position, other than the President, the other members of the Board shall elect a new Board member to serve until the next general membership meeting, at which time the members shall elect a member to fill the unexpired term. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the Vice President fills the vacancy, and the office of Vice President is filled by the Board. Board vacancies shall be filled within 60 days after the position becomes vacant.

6.7 COMPOSITION AND DUTIES OF BOARD OFFICERS: The officers of the Board shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

a) The **PRESIDENT** shall be the chief officer of the AGSS and shall perform the duties of general supervision of the business and affairs of the AGSS. (S)he shall preside at all meetings of the Board, and of the membership. (S)he shall sign in the name of the corporation all documents or instruments which are necessary and proper to be executed in the course of the corporation's business. (S)he shall be an ex-officio participant of all committees appointed by the Board.

b) The **VICE PRESIDENT** shall, in the absence of or the incapacity of the President, act in the capacity of the President.

c) The **SECRETARY** is subject to the ultimate will of the Board and in compliance with the provisions of the bylaws and:

- shall record the proceedings of all board and membership meetings. If a meeting goes into closed session to deal with matters of personnel, the secretary shall not take minutes except as shall be ordered by the Board,
- shall insure that the members of the board and all members of the association receive a copy of the minutes within 10 days of the meeting,
- shall be responsible for maintaining all official documents, minute books, and such other matters entrusted to the secretary's keeping,
- shall see that all such documents are kept under proper care and safekeeping,
- shall ensure that a register containing the names and addresses of all members is being properly kept and maintained by the Board,
- shall record and keep a permanent file of any letter ballots received from the general membership,
- and shall perform such other activities as may be set by the Board.

d) The **TREASURER** of the Board shall be responsible for the financial administrative policies established by the Board and shall perform the duties of supervision over the responsibility for the funds, securities, receipts, and disbursements of the corporation. The Treasurer is responsible for bringing any questionable expenditure to the attention of the Board in a timely manner and shall see that a timely record of the financial activity of the AGSS be properly preserved. (S)he shall be empowered (without regard to the will of the Board or the members) to require from any director, officer, staff worker, or associate of the AGSS any financial documents, reports, or statements

giving such true information as may be desired with respect to any and all financial transactions of or with the corporation.

6.8 SUBORDINATE AGENTS AND ADVISORS TO THE BOARD: The Board may appoint such other agents and advisors to the board as it may deem necessary or advisable. The appointments shall be for such period and with such authority, and for such compensation and duties as the Board may determine. Such agents and advisors may not be Board members, but may be required to participate in board meetings.

6.8 a) An advisory committee consisting of 3 individuals shall be appointed to preview and evaluate any Gotland ram being proposed to be used for LAI purposes before their offspring can be recorded or registered with the AGSS, and if meeting the AGSS breed standard will be accepted and entered upon approval of the advisory committee. Animals previously recorded on another organization's registry will be accepted only if all rams listed in their 3-generation pedigree are approved by the advisory committee.

6.9 COMPENSATION: Directors shall serve without compensation except that they may be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred in the performance of duties as a director or officer of the AGSS at the discretion of the Board.

Article VII BOARD MEETINGS

7.1 BOARD MEETINGS are held for the purpose of conducting corporate business and shall be held at least once a year. The Board shall meet for the first time within 10 days after an election. Board meetings may be held by personal attendance of the Board members and/or by participation via conference call or electronic media. The time of the meetings shall be set by the President with the approval of the Board, or by agreement with the majority of the Board. Voting on items discussed at the meeting can be conducted electronically. The setting of the time preferably occurs as one of the last items on the agenda of the preceding Board meeting.

7.2 GENERAL NOTICE OF THE UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS: Electronic notice of the time and place of Board meetings shall be furnished to all board members and all association members. This notice shall be given at least 7 days prior to the meeting, and shall contain a copy of the agenda.

7.3 QUORUM: A simple majority of the existing Board members (not counting current vacancies) shall constitute a quorum.

7.4 NO proxies or absentee ballots may be used at any Board meeting.

7.5 ONLY BOARD MEMBERS may vote at any Board Meeting. The act of a majority of the votes cast shall be considered an act of the Board.

7.6 OPEN BOARD MEETINGS: Any member of the Association may attend meetings of the Board of the AGSS. However, in order to address the Board or to comment to the Board, they must be recognized by the President. The official decisions and recommendations of the Board will be made available to the members of the Association within 10 days of the meeting date.

7.7 CLOSED SESSIONS OF THE BOARD: The Board shall go into closed session to deal with fiscal or personnel matters. Any non-board member may be excluded by the Board during closed sessions.

7.8 ATTENDANCE BY BOARD MEMBERS AT BOARD MEETINGS: Absence of any Board member from two consecutive meetings without notifying the President or Secretary of the Board will be grounds for the removal action on the part of the Board.

7.9 CONDUCTING BOARD MEETINGS: All meetings of the Board shall be conducted by the President or Vice President, or in the absence of both of the officers, by a member elected by the Board. Meetings, other than by electronic means, shall be conducted in accordance with the latest revised edition of Robert's' Rules of Order except as otherwise specified in these bylaws. Electronic meetings will be conducted according to Roberts Rules pertaining to electronic meetings and the bylaws of the association.

Article VIII COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

8.1 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: The executive committee consists of all officers of the Board. The President shall act as chair of the meetings of this committee.

8.2 ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES: The Board may establish committees to perform such duties and to have such powers as may be set by the Board, and these committees shall assist the Board with specialized tasks delegated to the committees. The role of the committees shall be of an advisory and assisting nature. Each committee may make its own rules of governing the conduct of its activities, provided they are in compliance with the wishes of the Board. Committees shall have no authority to exercise control over the daily management or operation of the corporation. The Board shall directly oversee all committees. Committees shall act through the authority of the Board in compliance with the bylaws. A Board member may

serve on each committee. All committees shall be appointed, dismissed, or restructured individually by the President with the approval of the board. Any Committee member may resign at any time, giving written notice to the Board. The acceptance of that resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. The President, with the approval of the Board, shall have the power to change the membership of any committee, to fill vacancies, and to discharge any member of any committee.

Article IX BYLAW AMENDMENTS

9.1 PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENTS: Proposed bylaw changes may be initiated by the Board or by petition to the General Membership Meeting, signed by not less than 25% of the members of the Association.

9.2 BYLAW AMENDMENTS: These bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed by the affirmative vote of the majority of active membership in good standing participating in the election. Proper notification as noted above shall include a clearly stated notice of what section of the bylaws is to be deleted, changed, or added; and what the exact wording of the desired change or addition shall be. No more than 30 days after the General Membership Meeting, the Secretary of the Association shall mail the proposed amendments and ballots to each active member. Results of the balloting shall be counted by the Secretary of the Association or such other person as designated by the Board, and shall be kept in his or her custody for a period of time as determined by the Board, and be subject to inspection at reasonable times by any member of the Association. The membership shall be promptly notified of the results of such balloting.

Article X DISSOLUTION AND SUCCESSION

Upon dissolution of the American Gotland Sheep Society, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all liabilities of the association, dispose of all assets of the association exclusively for the purposes of the association in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized for charitable, educational, or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization under section 501 (c) (3) or the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) as the Board of Directors shall determine.

Object

The American Gotland Sheep Society (AGSS) supports the development of Gotland Sheep that meet or exceed the AGSS Standard. The development consists of the original crossing of specific non-Gotland Foundation ewes with Gotland rams through imported semen, and breeding subsequent generations using increasing percentage Gotland animals and imported Gotland semen.

I. Foundation Ewes

The Foundation ewes used in the first cross must be purebred ewes from the following ten (10) breeds, or ewes produced from crossing these breeds with themselves and/or with Gotlands. No other breeds or crossbred breeds are allowed to have their progeny recorded or registered with the AGSS. Any animals born prior to 7/1/2009, do not have to meet this criteria as the AGSS was formed in July of 2008, and any pre-existing animals and /or breedings shall grandfather into the Gotland registry. However, any offspring of less than 50% Gotland foundation ewes must be of a higher percentage than the dam to be recognized by the AGSS.

- Northern Short tailed Breeds
 - Shetland Sheep (S)
 - Icelandic Sheep (I)
 - Finnsheep (N)
- Longwool Breeds
 - Wensleydale (W)
 - Lincoln (L)
 - Cotswold (C)
 - English Leicester (E)
 - Border Leicester (B)
 - Bluefaced Leicester (F)
 - Teeswater (T)

Determining Percentage

The sire and dam Gotland percentages are added together and divided by two and rounded to the lower full number. This number is the percentage Gotland of the offspring. For example, a 50% dam crossed with a 75% sire results in a 62% offspring. A 62% ewe crossed with a 75% sire results in a 68% offspring.

II. Registration Procedures

Only Active AGSS members in good standing may record, register or transfer sheep with the Association

An animal is eligible to be included in the American Gotland Sheep Society program as follows:

- Foundation ewes - prefix "F"
All Foundation ewes must be listed with the AGSS, and will have up to a two letter suffix assigned (shown in Item II) representing their breed or major breeds if a crossbred. If applicable, the first letter is the breed of the sire and the second letter is the breed of the dam.
- Recorded stock - prefix "R"
All Recorded stock will born after 7/01/2009 must be no less than 50% Gotland unless a descendant of a grandfathered animal born before 7/01/2009. All recorded stock born after 7/01/2009 and not a descendent of a grandfathered animal will be no less than 50% Gotland with Ewes up to 74% Gotland and Rams up to 86% Gotland. First cross lambs sired by use of imported 100% Gotland semen will be recorded as 50% Gotland. Successive generations will be recorded or registered if they come from parents who are recorded or registered with the AGSS.
- Less than 50% ewes but not less than 25% ewes may be grandfathered into the records provided they are bon before 7/1/09 and recorded before 7/1/10. Their offspring may be recorded as long as they are a higher percentage than the dam and are recorded before 7/1/2012. After that date all animals recorded with the association must be 50% or higher.
- Recorded Animals need not adhere to the AGSS Standard, although greater merit shall be given to animals that most closely resemble the AGSS standard.
- Registered Gotland stock - no prefix
Ewes at least 75% Gotland blood, and Rams at least 87% Gotland blood may be registered.
- Sheep submitted for AGSS Registered status shall meet the breed standard set forth by the American Gotland Sheep Society. Otherwise worthy sheep who do not meet the AGSS standard may be recorded with the Association and used in breeding programs. This would include sheep with patterned fleece, fleece color other than gray, sheep with atypical tails, horns or excessive white spots, but not sheep with jaw deformities, undescended testicles or other known genetic abnormalities.
- Gotland rams whose semen is imported for use in North American Gotland breeding programs will be registered with AGSS at no charge. These rams will have the suffix "AI".

- New rams being accepted into the AGSS Ram registry for use as LAI. shall be reviewed by the Advisory Committee and if meeting the AGSS breed standard shall be accepted and entered upon approval of the Advisory Committee. A 3-generation pedigree must be presented and the animal must be registered with the appropriate Gotland breed organization in their country of origin before they can be registered with the AGSS.
- All animals that are the product of the LAI procedure must have a signed breeding certificate signed by the LAI technician performing the LAI procedure to be recorded or registered with the AGSS.
- At some as yet undetermined future dates, the registry may be closed to further additions of foundation ("F") and recorded ("R") animals.
- Registered Gotland sheep with a genotype of QR at codon 171 will be designated "Ram or Ewe of Merit".
Registered Gotland sheep with a genotype of RR at codon 171 will be designated "Elite" rams or ewes.
- If the codon 171 status is known at the time of registration, it will be noted on the registration. Examples of Foundation, Recorded, and Registered Numbers

Prefix	Number	Suffix	Type	Breed	Percentage
F	123456	S	Foundation Ewe	Shetland Sheep	
R	123456	50	Recorded Animal	Gotland	50%
	123456	88	Registered Animal	Gotland	87%
	123456	AI	Imported Semen	Gotland	100%