

Dear Friends of Black Oberhasli,

I have the most exciting news!

Dr. Phillip Sponenberg, is a geneticist and professor at the Pathology and Genetics Research Institute at Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine in Blacksburg, VA. As many of you already know, black Oberhasli have always left goat farmers and geneticists scratching their heads, as their random appearance has never followed any predictable genetic pathway. Even black to black Oberhasli breeding's create bay as has been proven over and over again in several goat breeders barns, including my own. Well, after years of scratching his own head, Dr. Sponenberg has generously agreed to head up a study for us all on the color genetics behind the black Oberhasli! What's more, this project is likely going to be funded at no expense to us!

I am working with several Oberhasli breeders across the country in order to gather the DNA samples we need for this project. We will need DNA samples from at least 50 goats for this study. We need hair with the hair roots attached.

Here is an excellent article on how to collect hair samples. Please read it as it contains a lot of information important for the hair study.

[http://igrow.org/up/articles/AnimalID\\_SheepGoat.pdf](http://igrow.org/up/articles/AnimalID_SheepGoat.pdf)

Please note the procedures for gathering the DNA, how to avoid cross contamination, how to avoid mold and fungal growth while it is in its storage container. (Paper envelope.) Also note, we do not need a witness signature, as noted in the video. We do however, need other pertinent information. For each separate sample, please write on the outside of the envelop the following information:

- Name of Animal who donated the hair sample. Plus that animal's ID number and color.
- We also need the name, ID number and color of both parents of the animal which donated the hair sample.
- Finally we need the color and number of offspring each animal has produced. This information is needed for the parents as well as the animal who is donating the hair sample. It includes all live births, full term still born offspring, and all registered and unregistered offspring. Male and female.

Try to be as accurate and complete as possible, in order to give the researches as much information about the animal's color as it relates to genetics as possible. Omit non-related information, like milk records, show records, etc. But if, for example, you do not know color related information, leave it out. For example, a buck used for outside stud service where color of any progeny produced are unknown.

If an animal is unregistered with no ADGA ID. You can create your own ID number for that animal. Call it animal # 84, for example.

Dr. Sponenberg is hopeful that we will only need 50 samples and these samples can include bay animals. But as many of these samples as we can get should be within family lines who are known to carry black. This needs to be a three generation line. So for example, bay parents with their hair samples, a black progeny with its hair sample, and bay or black offspring with its hair sample, from that black animal when bred to bay or black with its hair sample.

We certainly will want to include a few animals who have no black in their recent pedigree at all, as a cross comparison. And animals without a family chain of hair samples can be included.

IF we need more samples, we will get them!

Included is a spread sheet for you to use with your animal, if that is helpful. (You may also contact Raspberry privately). This spread sheet also makes the information more visual, and so may be more useful in relaying the information.

Please mail DNA hair root samples to the address listed below. They will be collected and forwarded to Dr. Sponenberg when we have all the information we need.

With everyone's help, we will finally know how black Oberhasli can come from bay to bay breeding's, and why black to black Oberhasli breeding's produce bay! This is a really exciting new development in the dairy goat world, especially among Oberhasli breeders. I do hope you chose to participate in the study, and will help spread the word.

Thank you!

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