



Smart Sheep

Yesterday a man stopped to look at our water buffalo, Ludo.

Martok

Monday, April 13, 2009

Courtesy Conway Family Farm

Check out more sheep profiles.

Yesterday a man stopped to look at our water buffalo, Ludo. Our sheep were gathered around the big hay bale in the yard, nibbling hay. He laughed and called them “lamb chops on legs.” We could tell that made Mom mad.

After he left, Rebaa the old black sheep came up to Mom and leaned against her legs. In Rebaa-talk that means “Please scratch my back.”

Mom laughed and said, “He has no idea how smart sheep are.”

Uzzi and I very well know that goats are smarter, but sheep are intelligent too. Sometimes they panic and run away but that’s a smart thing when you’re small and tasty, after all.

Some men at the Babraham University in England did experiments with sheep. They showed their sheep pictures of other sheep and of shepherds that they hadn’t seen for a really long time.

The sheep got food for examining pictures while the men measured activity in their brains. Some of the sheep remembered up to 50 faces. Mom says she can’t do that!

Another time they showed the sheep pictures of sheep that were stressed or calm and of people who were smiling or mad. The sheep preferred calm, smiling faces.

And did you hear about the sheep in Yorkshire who learned to roll across cattle guards commando-style, so they could visit town and eat the villagers’ yummy gardens? Pretty crafty sheep, we think.

Sheep even do agility like dogs. Mom says if a lamb can do it, so can my baby nephew Edmund (I’ll tell you about that another time).

So next time you see a sheep don’t think of lamb chops, think “smart sheep!” ‘Cause sheep are almost as smart as goats like Uzzi and me—and that’s a lot.

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