

Genetic Improvement



Bridfa Suffolk Sheep Breeding Scheme Ltd

Past... Present... and the future?

The BRIDFA flock has demonstrated its progress by steadily improving its average Lamb index over the last nine years to 317 points.

By becoming a member of the Suffolk Sire Reference Scheme in 1994, a number of technical obstacles to genetic improvement have been removed enabling the attributes of the country's highest indexed rams to be incorporated into the flock via artificial insemination. The individual index is measured by growth rate, back fat cover and eye muscle depth.

In the early years, a cyclical breeding programme was utilised, whereby four or five ram lambs were retained for mating on non related families. Since 1994 semen from two or three Reference Sires has been supplemented by the highest indexed homebred ram available.

At present the flock specialises in the sale of high index Scrapie resistant yearling rams at the early NSA Builth Wells Sale in August each year. At the 2000 and 2002 sales the flock received the highest priced Suffolk group average of £525 for 15 rams sold. The remaining rams, in lamb ewes and ewe lambs are sold privately off the farm. Frozen semen for UK and Export purposes is available via CBS Technologies.

The BRIDFA Project was established in 1990 by 32 Suffolk breeders who between them contributed 46 ewes to the scheme with the objective of producing terminal sires which would produce faster growing lambs with higher muscle and lower fat content carcasses for the finishing lamb producer. In addition to this continuing programme, the flock has evolved a Scrapie Resistant Status.

Continually improving the genetic potential and health status of the BRIDFA flock and combining this with selecting animals of breed type will ensure that pedigree and commercial producers have a marketing advantage in order to secure customers for their product in the future.

**TAKE THE GAMBLING OUT OF BREEDING.....
BUY THE BEST FROM BRIDFA**

HCC supports genetic improvement through the Farming Connect Sheep and Beef Development Programme. For further details on this group, please contact HCC Industry Development team:

Hybu Cig Cymru
PO Box 176
Aberystwyth
SY23 2YA
01970 625 050
enquiries@hccmpw.org.uk
www.hccmpw.org.uk