

Genetic Improvement



CAMDA

CAMDA is a cooperative breeding group for Welsh mountain Sheep. It has six members and a nucleus flock at Ceirnioge Bach, Pentrefoelas. The breeding objectives of the group are to produce slightly heavier ewes that lamb easily and rear heavier lambs on hill pasture.

The group was founded in 1976 and was the first group breeding scheme in the UK. The group members are upland farmers with hill flock that graze on unimproved hefts and in-bye land. The basis of the scheme was the establishment of a central nucleus that would provide a source of superior rams for the members and for the sale. The nucleus flock was formed over a three year period by selecting the best ewes from member's flocks based on their index. By 1978 the nucleus had 400 breeding ewes based on an intake of 40 ewes per member. CAMDA has remained at the forefront of developments in sheep breeding. It has introduced modern techniques into its breeding programme in recent years, including ultrasonic scanning and embryo transfer.

Selection for replacements are based on recording with a multi-trait index based on lamb growth (60%), mature size (15%), maternal ability (24%) and litter size (1%). Analysis has shown that genetic progress for weaning weight has improved on average 145g/year. About 117g/year is from improvements in direct lamb growth and 28g/year is from improvements in maternal ability.

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