

Genetic Improvement



CAMP Welsh Mountain Group Breeding Scheme

CAMP Welsh Mountain Group Breeding Scheme was started by fifteen North Ceredigion hill farmers in 1991. Each contributed twenty in-lamb ewes to the central nucleus flock, which is located at ADAS Pwllpeiran.

The main aims at CAMP are to increase the carcass weight and to improve the carcass conformation. The Welsh Selection Index is used by the flock. In addition the group is working towards the whole flock being ARR/ARR scrapie genotype.

Measuring eye muscle and fat depths has become an important element in the selection process and in the quest for improved carcass. Breed characteristics and suitability is also important in selecting replacements.

Around 15 ram lambs are selected annually, overwintered and scrutinised for final selection the following autumn. Two or three will be used on the nucleus flock of 300 ewes, the remainder offered to members on a rota basis

The ewe lambs are selected from the top half of the index subject to breed type and conformation, shorn and away wintered in their first year.

Genetic progress of 1kg in weaning weight was achieved within the first five lamb crops. The percentage of lambs classified "R" was increased from 29% in 1992 to 53% in 2003. The CAMP group are very proactive and in recent years have become a testing ground for many initiatives, including providing rams for the Welsh Mountain Sire Reference Scheme.

Scrapie Genotyping

CAMP was one of the first group breeding schemes to carry out scrapie genotyping under the Welsh Sheep Strategy Scheme.

In 2002 CAMP was involved with HCC through Farming Connect in an Embryo Transfer Programme. The programme uses multiple ovulation embryo transfer (MOET) techniques to increase the number of progeny that will be scrapie resistant. 10 ewes of ARR/ARR scrapie genotype were inseminated with semen from a high index ram with ARR/ARR scrapie status. Multiple embryos were collected for each ewe and implanted into ewes with non-desirable scrapie genotypes.

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:

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