

# Genetic Improvement



## Elan Valley & Cwmdauddwr Group

The Elan Valley and Cwmdauddwr Ram Group was formed in 1994.

Farmers initially sent ram lambs away over the winter for performance testing, to try to improve the quality of rams being used in the well established flocks, with the rams of best type and performance selected for use within group flocks.

The group soon became involved in Sire Reference recording as a progression of their work.

Breeders selected, on type & performance, a nucleus flock of about 60 ewes, on which to focus their recording.

Two of the top performing rams on ram performance test are run with 30 ewes from each of the nucleus flocks.

The rams are shared willingly by their owners, who have seen real benefits from co-operative breeding, which has helped improve the quality and marketing of their lambs.

Use of these reference rams allow direct comparisons to be made between all of the flocks, allowing all of their stock to be recorded within the same Sire Reference Scheme.

Stock rams are selected from the nucleus flocks.

All of the flocks in the group participated in the Welsh Ewe Genotyping Scheme and are members of the National Scrapie Plan.

The group have been testing their sheep for Scrapie susceptibility since 1996.

Having selected sheep for a number of years on Scrapie genotype, performance figures and type, has allowed all-round improvement of the flocks.

Only ARR/ARR rams are put forward on the ram selection day.

The main aim of the group is to produce high quality breeding stock suitable for crossing with terminal sires, and also hardy enough to thrive in a mountainous environment. Through targeting improvement work, they are succeeding to produce heavier lambs which will survive & grow well on the hill.

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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