

Genetic Improvement



Glynllifon Border Leicester Group Breeding Scheme Ltd

The Group was established at Coleg Meirion Dwyfor, Glynllifon, Caernarfon in 1990 when 35 in-lamb ewes were donated by Border Leicester breeders from Wales, Scotland and England. The current flock number is 50 ewes.

The purpose of the Group is to enhance genetic development, which will benefit breeders of Border Leicester Sheep, helping them to breed better sires of Halfbred ewes and to add commercial advantages to the breed in general.

Additionally, the Glynllifon flock is able to implement development programmes which individual breeders may be reluctant to carry out in their own flocks.

The Group has undertaken investigative work on milk quality in relation to lamb performance, undertaken small-scale trials using Australian Border Leicesters and also embryo transfer. At present the group is focussing on hereditary issues such as eye problems, milking ability and growth.

The flock is Maedi Visna accredited and genotyped for scrapie resistance. The Group is also a member of the Border Leicester Sire Reference Scheme introduced in 1997. The Scheme will allow access to sires of known genetic merit within the breed, which has been a major hurdle in the past when

selecting stock rams from outside the nucleus.

The selection index now places a heavy emphasis on maternal ability and litter size, supplemented by ultrasonic scanning for carcass improvement.

The selection of ewe lamb replacements to date has been based on a combination of the maternal index coupled with the Lean Index calculated on the growth rate and ultrasonic measurements of eye muscle and fat depth. Only animals which conform to breed type and are good conformation are retained for breeding. Ram lambs/yearling rams are sold through the Society sale at Builth Wells or privately from the farm.

The flock, under the daily management of Glynllifon staff, is run by a management group of Border Leicester breeders and advisors and has, since its establishment in 1990, developed along traditional as well as scientific lines.

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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