# RamCOMPARE

## RESULTS

MAY 2018

# Contents



# Introduction

Rarely have the results of a project been as eagerly anticipated as those of RamCompare. Over 70 rams have been on-test over the past two years and many breeders are extremely keen to see how their breeding ranks for traits such as growth and carcase conformation. This is the first step in publishing results from the first two years of the project. Over 60 new rams are already on-test for phase two of the project.

Experience overseas shows the sheep industry wants information that enables comparison between rams of different breeds. Access to multi-breed progeny test data in New Zealand, Australia and Ireland has revolutionised the use and uptake of high genetic merit stock in these countries.

The results of the first two batches of rams through RamCompare coincides with Signet Breeding Services starting to use combined breed analysis (CBA) for all performance-recorded terminal sire breeds. The use of CBA will enable more frequent analyses, the provision of new traits, more accurate analysis of crossbreeds and a degree of comparison between breeds that are run together.

Like RamCompare, this new approach represents a major change for the sheep industry and an opportunity to provide commercial farmers with information to identify the most profitable rams for their flocks. This is an exciting time for terminal sire breeders and their customers.

We trust this report is informative and welcome your feedback.

We would like to thank all the farmers, partners and funders involved in RamCompare for their work and enthusiasm.

**Samuel Boon, Liz Genever and Bridget Lloyd**
**AHDB**

# What is RamCompare?

**RamCompare is the UK's first commercial progeny test for terminal sire rams. During the course of two seasons, more than 4,000 ewes have been mated to over 70 leading rams through artificial insemination (AI) and natural mating. Data on growth and carcase traits have been collected from their lambs under commercial conditions, fed back directly into genetic evaluations and used to produce new estimated breeding values (EBVs).**

**The ambition of RamCompare is to provide commercial farmers with the ability, through new EBVs, to select rams that produce progeny that are more likely to meet target market specifications. These EBVs will be used by pedigree breeders to enhance the breeding of rams for commercially important traits.**

## Why was RamCompare needed?

- To compare the performance of progeny by different rams from different breeds for a variety of traits
- To collect data that could be used to validate the combined breed analysis
- To determine whether commercial abattoir data could be used to produce EBVs for carcase traits
- To assess a recommendation from the 2015 AHDB Genetic and Genomic Review on how genetic improvement could be enhanced in the UK sheep industry

## What have we learnt?

RamCompare has proven that robust data can be collected throughout the supply chain – farms, abattoirs and cutting rooms – and used in genetic evaluations.

It has led to new approaches for assessing the performance of pedigree animals; for example, providing the evidence to change the way ultrasound scanning data is collected and analysed.

New approaches to enhance genetic linkage between recording flocks have been developed, including the provision of semen from RamCompare-tested rams back into the pedigree sector.

RamCompare has provided a dataset of phenotypes for hard-to-measure traits, including those influencing lamb survival, primal yields and tenderness. It has also helped improve understanding of the best ways to collect, store and analyse DNA information, which can be used in further genomic evaluations.

## Who was involved?

Six farms located across the UK were involved in data collection. The information collected included:

- Ewe records – breed, age, weight and body condition score throughout the year and sire group
- Lambing records – including sire and dam, number born, birth weight, ease of birth, deaths and fostering information
- On-farm lamb performance – weights at around 56 days, 90 days and at sale, and ultrasound muscle and fat depth measurements at around 90 days
- DNA samples for future research
- Carcase information – carcase weight, conformation and fat class

Saleable meat yield (by weighing primals) and tenderness score on loins (shear force) were collected from a proportion of the lamb crop (around 15 female lambs per sire).

Nearly 6,000 lambs were recorded from birth to slaughter over the first two years of RamCompare, with over 100,000 individual measurements taken.

## What have we done with the information?

During the initial data-gathering phase, RamCompare has actively communicated with commercial farmers and pedigree breeders at events, shows and via newsletters and the farming press.

Three new EBVs have been generated: carcase conformation, carcase fat class and carcase weight – and are published here for the first time. An EBV for days to slaughter is still being developed.

Data collected on farm, such as ultrasound measures of muscle and fat depth, have been used to enhance existing EBVs and some of these are included in this report.

# Meet the farmers

**Antony Pearce, Moat Farm, Buckinghamshire**
Rams tested: 15 (3 Charollais, 4 Hampshire Down, 5 Suffolk, 3 Texel)
Lambs recorded: 908

Antony manages a 500ha mixed enterprise at Moat Farm. As a rural business adviser, benchmarking is critical to all decision making for his farm businesses, with costs of production carefully tracked.

His February/March lambing flock of Aberfield-cross Beulah ewes is focused on optimising lamb growth rates, with high stocking rates and carefully monitored grass performance. No concentrates are fed to ewes, instead he winters them on forage rape and lucerne hay immediately prior to lambing. Lambs are finished on grass with a small amount of concentrates.

Percentage of lambs recorded from each breed.





**Duncan Nelless, Thistleyhaugh, Northumberland**
Rams tested: 16 (3 Charollais, 6 Hampshire Down, 3 Suffolk, 4 Texel)
Lambs recorded: 1,525

Thistleyhaugh is a 404ha upland family farm with a large organic sheep enterprise. Lambs are born in April/May and are finished from ten weeks using clover-rich leys. The RamCompare flock consisted of second-tier ewes drafted out of Duncan's Signet-recorded Lleyn flock.

Percentage of lambs recorded from each breed.






**Ian Robertson, Chawton Park Farm, Hampshire**
Rams tested: 16 (5 Charollais, 5 Hampshire Down, 3 Suffolk, 3 Texel)
Lamb records collected: 1,691

Ian has a long history of involvement in data collection. He farms 270ha of grassland on the edge of the North Hampshire Downs. At the beginning of December, Ian turns RamCompare sires out with over 70 ewes as single-sire mating groups for four weeks to ensure concise lambing. Commercial ewes lamb outdoors in May, alongside his pedigree Lleyn flock, with lambs finished off forage and some creep in the autumn.

Percentage of lambs recorded from each breed.

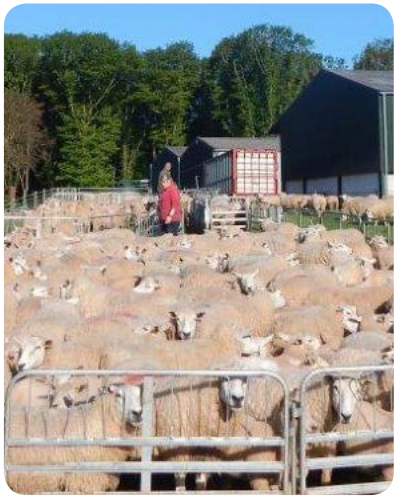
Percentage of lambs recorded from each breed.

**Sion Williams, Bowhill Estate, Selkirk**
Rams tested: 16 (4 Charollais, 1 Hampshire Down, 4 Meatlinc, 3 Suffolk, 4 Texel)
Lamb records collected: 1,345

The RamCompare flock is located at the Buccleuch's Bowhill Estate (3,563ha) and forms part of a sheep enterprise extending to 5,200 breeding ewes. Aberdale-cross Scottish Blackface ewes have been used within the project.

The flock were lambed indoors in March to facilitate data collection. Lambs were weighed every fortnight from June and weaned at 12 to 14 weeks when they moved to red clover leys or silage aftermath for finishing.

Percentage of lambs recorded from each breed.



**Philip and Charlie Whitehouse, Bradley Farm, Gloucestershire**
Rams tested: 15 (4 Charollais, 4 Meatlinc, 4 Suffolk, 3 Texel)
Lamb records collected: 1,013

The sheep enterprise is part of a mixed 903ha farm, which also has combinable crops, a suckler herd and 1,000 milking goats, in addition to the 1,000 ewe Lleyn flock.

The ewes lamb in February and are finished rapidly on grass and concentrates. Philip is fascinated to see which rams produce the fastest-growing progeny.

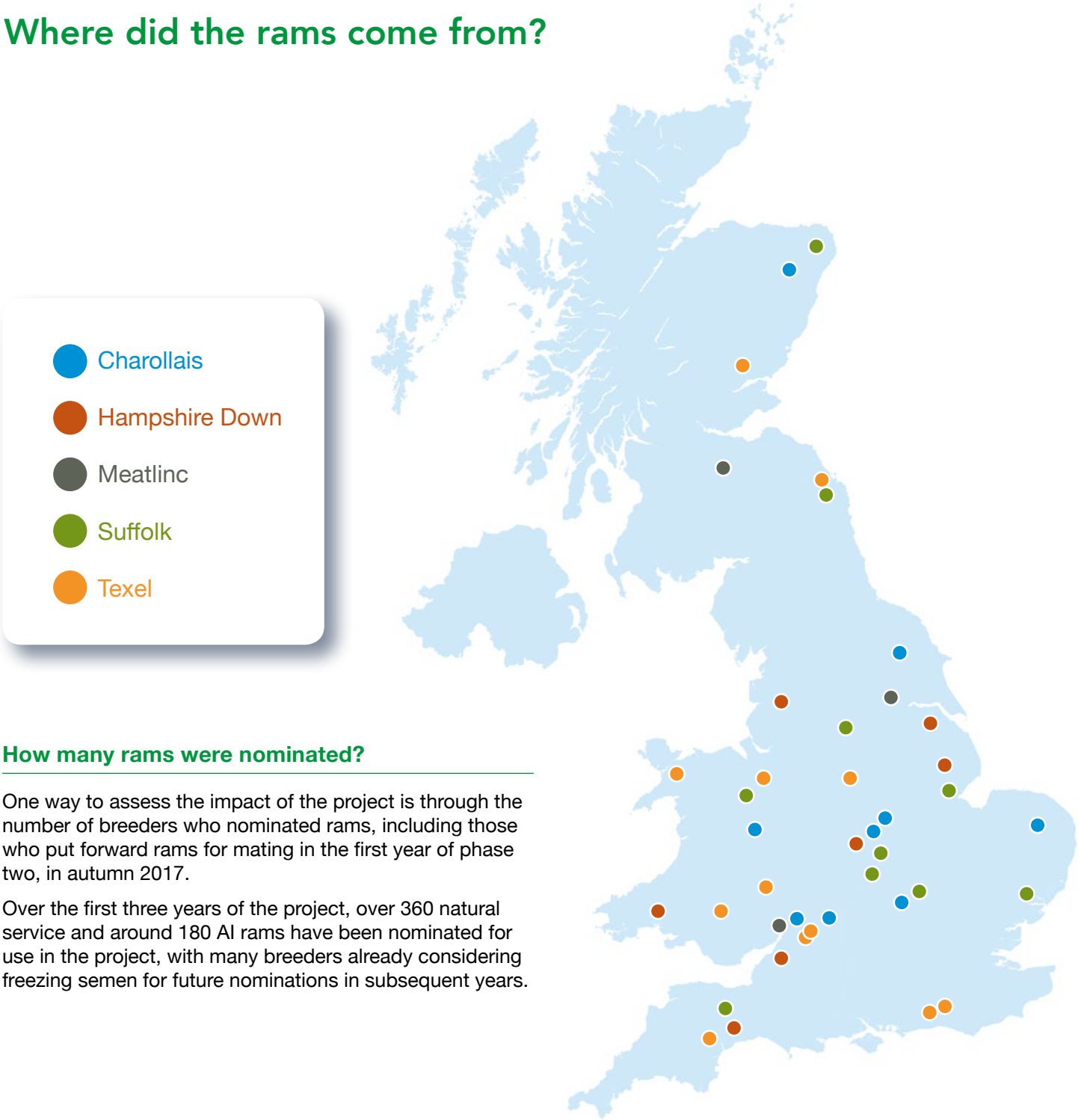
Percentage of lambs recorded from each breed.

**Sion and Claire Williams, Beili Ficer Farm, Carmarthenshire**
Rams tested: 16 (4 Charollais, 5 Meatlinc, 3 Suffolk, 4 Texel)
Lamb records collected: 942

Sion and Claire Williams have built their 265ha sheep enterprise at Beili Ficer from scratch, utilising technology and benchmarking to drive their "forage bred – performance led" breeding policy.

Aberdale and Aberfield ewes were lambed in February 2016 and March 2017, respectively. All lambs were left entire and finished lambs drawn fortnightly. The first crop of February-born lambs were finished by the end of July in 2016 and the target for March-born lambs (2017) was to finish the majority by early autumn.

# Where did the rams come from?




## How many rams were nominated?

One way to assess the impact of the project is through the number of breeders who nominated rams, including those who put forward rams for mating in the first year of phase two, in autumn 2017.

Over the first three years of the project, over 360 natural service and around 180 AI rams have been nominated for use in the project, with many breeders already considering freezing semen for future nominations in subsequent years.

| | Mating 2015 | | Mating 2016 | | Mating 2017 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Natural Service | AI | Natural Service | AI | Natural Service | AI |
| Total nominated | 103 | 88 | 240 | 70 | 89 | 80 |
| Total used | 31 | 8 | 36 | 13 | 39 | 28 |
| **Breakdown of rams used by breed** | | | | | | |
| Charollais | 9 | 2 | 10 | 3 | 10 | 2 |
| Hampshire Down | 4 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 |
| Meatlinc | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| Suffolk | 7 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 11 | 9 |
| Texel | 7 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 8 |
| Other breeds | Not tested in Phase I | | Not tested in Phase I | | 5 | 6 |

Note: Some rams were used in more than one season

# How much data was collected and how it has been used?

In the first two years, the following records were collected and either incorporated into the new combined breed analysis (CBA) to support the relative ranking of different breeds or to produce brand new EBVs.

| Measurement | Number of records | Average | Standard deviation | Use |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Birth weight** | 6,706 | 4.41kg | 1.18kg | Enhance existing EBV in CBA |
| **Lambing ease** | 7,701 | | | Work ongoing within CBA |
| **Eight-week weight** | 5,801 | 21.10kg | 4.75kg | Enhance existing EBV in CBA |
| **Scan weight^** | 5,685 | 29.33kg | 6.20kg | Enhance existing EBV in CBA |
| **Muscle depth^** | 5,578 | 21.7mm | 3.58mm | Enhance existing EBV in CBA |
| **Fat depth^** | 5,578 | 2.09mm | 1.01mm | Enhance existing EBV in CBA |
| **Abattoir records** | 5,898 | | | Produce new EBVs |
| **Primal weights** | 1,773 | | | Future research |
| **Tenderness** | 845 | | | Future research |
| **DNA sample** | 5,685 | | | Research opportunity |

Note: EBV = estimated breeding value, CBA = combined breed analysis, ^ = measurements taken at 88 days

## New carcase trait EBVs

**Dr Abbygail Moran at EGENES, Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), has analysed the carcase data. Measurements have been analysed to take into account influences such as sex, rear type, age at slaughter and differences in farm management, teasing out the influence that genetics have upon each trait.**

**Heritability values were reported for the following traits:**

- **Carcase weight = 0.33**
- **Carcase conformation = 0.37**
- **Carcase fat class = 0.55**

**Work has been undertaken looking at days to slaughter, but when results were adjusted for carcase weight and fat class, very little genetic variation was observed within the early part of the trial.**

## Interpretation and a note of caution

Results are published in the following tables. These show leading sires within the project over the first two years. The results have been updated, with the inclusion of a further 1,500 carcase records for lambs born in late spring 2017, which were finished later in the year.

EBVs for carcase traits are produced in a standalone analysis. For example, the EBV for carcase weight does not currently take into account an animal's scan weight EBV or the genetic group solutions used in conventional analyses. This will be done in future analyses.

RamCompare results simply rank the performance of animals on the trial. In some breeds, rams in the top 1% for a given trait were nominated, while in other breeds animals in the top 25% were nominated. The tables can only rank the performance of those animals on test, so conclusions about breed differences should be made with caution. In many cases, differences in EBVs between leading animals may be small and, as always, accuracy values should also be taken into account.

The new carcase trait EBVs will appear as part of genetic evaluations for animals with acceptable accuracy values.

Updated results will be available at:
**www.ramcompare.com**

# Leading rams for eight-week weight EBV (2016/2017)

**Interpretation:** Standardised value of 100 equals the average animal born in 2010.

| Ram ID | AI/NS* | Breed | Owner/breeder (both if different) | Number of progeny/farms | Standardised value | Accuracy (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Handbank PRH1500573 | NS | Texel | R M & E A Payne/ Peter Baber | 67 / 1 | 137 | 90 |
| Stonedge LYN:15:01124 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs D M & S Prince | 60 / 1 | 133 | 86 |
| Whichford First Class C18:15:00001 | NS | Suffolk | JB & RL Cook | 58 / 1 | 131 | 88 |
| Aspley 92W1400386 | NS | Hampshire Down | Mr George & Dr Sara Wood | 140 / 1 | 129 | 92 |
| Tilton 15YPP01267 | NS | Charollais | A D & R M Thomas | 85 / 1 | 129 | 89 |
| Kersey C41:14:00812 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs R Partridge & Son Ltd | 231 / 1 | 128 | 95 |
| Wedderburn Peleus 15WNY02086 | AI | Charollais | J D R & J L Corbett/ Barber, Walton, Dunkley & Oughton | 72 / 2 | 128 | 98 |
| Rugley RamCompare 10P:14:04080 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs E A & L Jackson | 215 / 1 | 127 | 95 |
| Rugley JER1505263 | NS | Texel | E A & L Jackson | 100 / 1 | 126 | 90 |
| Whitehead 64T1500471 | NS | Hampshire Down | Robert & Kay Vincent | 81 / 1 | 126 | 89 |
| Sampfordel HRH:15:00390 | NS | Suffolk | Mrs K A Hill | 83 / 1 | 125 | 87 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ortum Supersire 05<br>78X:F49 | AI | Suffolk | Messrs Garner & Son/<br>R J L Park | 194 / 3 | 124 | 98 |
| Court 12077 General<br>73R12077 | AI | Hampshire Down | Mike J Adams/<br>Williams, Brant, Smith & Atkinson | 83 / 3 | 124 | 94 |
| Hans Fokker 95<br>T79:13:095 | AI | Suffolk | Mr & Mrs H F Porksen | 57 / 2 | 124 | 98 |
| Kersey Nutcracker<br>C41:N22 | AI | Suffolk | Messrs R Partridge & Son Ltd/<br>A J Cony & Partners | 158 / 3 | 123 | 98 |
| Wealden<br>HTW1501312 | NS | Texel | Mr T R Healy | 85 / 1 | 123 | 89 |
| Midhope<br>L20:15:00943 | NS | Suffolk | John Key | 111 / 1 | 123 | 89 |
| Wedderburn<br>15WNY02192 | NS | Charollais | J D R & J L Corbett | 84 / 1 | 123 | 87 |
| Essie<br>H6:14:00612 | NS | Suffolk | Mrs Irene Fowlie | 150 / 1 | 123 | 93 |
| Stainton Vantage II<br>WPS1400599 | AI | Texel | Mr P K Woof/<br>Claybury Texels | 59 / 2 | 122 | 97 |
| Tynewydd<br>MDY1400927 | NS | Texel | Mr Deri John Morgan | 149 / 1 | 121 | 92 |
| Court 7739 Contender<br>73R07739 | AI | Hampshire Down | Mike J Adams | 32 / 1 | 120 | 95 |
| Roxburgh Shot Gun Willie<br>EJR1101108 | AI | Texel | Mr John Elliott/<br>Messrs D M & S Prince | 142 / 3 | 120 | 98 |
| Sandyknowe Sole Trader<br>Y13:13:161 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs Malcolm M Stewart/<br>Messrs T C & C A Harding | 47 / 1 | 120 | 96 |
| Dalby<br>14PE03089 | NS | Charollais | C R Sercombe | 214 / 1 | 119 | 94 |

Notes: BLUP run date: 01/05/2018. Analysis type: Combined breed analysis *AI = Artificial insemination, NS = Natural service

For more information go to www.signetfbc.co.uk

# Leading rams for scan weight EBV (2016/2017)

**Interpretation:** Standardised value of 100 equals the average animal born in 2010.

| Ram ID | AI/NS* | Breed | Owner/breeder (both if different) | Number of progeny/farms | Standardised value | Accuracy (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stonedge LYN:15:01124 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs D M & S Prince | 60 / 1 | 135 | 92 |
| Sampfordel HRH:15:00390 | NS | Suffolk | Mrs K A Hill | 83 / 1 | 132 | 93 |
| Whichford First Class C18:15:00001 | NS | Suffolk | JB & RL Cook | 58 / 1 | 132 | 92 |
| Ortum Supersire 05 78X:F49 | AI | Suffolk | Messrs Garner & Son/ R J L Park | 194 / 3 | 128 | 99 |
| Aspley 92W1400386 | NS | Hampshire Down | Mr George & Dr Sara Wood | 140 / 1 | 128 | 96 |
| Rugley RamCompare 10P:14:04080 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs E A & L Jackson | 215 / 1 | 127 | 97 |
| Midhope L20:15:00943 | NS | Suffolk | John Key | 111 / 1 | 126 | 94 |
| Wedderburn Peleus 15WNY02086 | AI | Charollais | J D R & J L Corbett/ Barber, Walton, Dunkley & Oughton | 72 / 2 | 126 | 99 |
| Lavendon Y51:13:082 | NS | Suffolk | A J Cony & Partners | 58 / 1 | 125 | 92 |
| Tilton 15YPP01267 | NS | Charollais | A D & R M Thomas | 85 / 1 | 125 | 94 |
| Kersey Nutcracker C41:N22 | AI | Suffolk | Messrs R Partridge & Son Ltd/ A J Cony & Partners | 158 / 3 | 125 | 98 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Handbank<br>PRH1500573 | NS | Texel | R M & E A Payne/<br>Peter Baber | 67 / 1 | 124 | 95 |
| Wernfawr Magnum<br>12XEV00325 | AI | Charollais | Mr D Curran/<br>J D R & J L Corbett | 184 / 3 | 124 | 98 |
| Court 12077 General<br>73R12077 | AI | Hampshire Down | Mike J Adams/<br>Williams, Brant, Smith & Atkinson | 83 / 3 | 124 | 97 |
| Kersey<br>C41:14:00812 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs R Partridge & Son Ltd | 231 / 1 | 124 | 96 |
| Whitehead<br>64T1500471 | NS | Hampshire Down | Robert & Kay Vincent | 81 / 1 | 123 | 94 |
| Lavendon<br>Y51:13:068 | NS | Suffolk | A J Cony & Partners | 70 / 1 | 122 | 92 |
| Vines 3061<br>EV:1503061 | NS | Meatlinc | E R & J E Vines | 49 / 1 | 121 | 91 |
| Sandyknowe Sole Trader<br>Y13:13:161 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs Malcolm M Stewart/<br>Messrs T C & C A Harding | 47 / 1 | 121 | 97 |
| Vines 3051<br>EV:1503051 | NS | Meatlinc | E R & J E Vines | 91 / 1 | 120 | 94 |
| Rugley<br>JER1505263 | NS | Texel | E A & L Jackson | 100 / 1 | 120 | 95 |
| Hans Fokker 95<br>T79:13:095 | AI | Suffolk | Mr & Mrs H F Porksen | 57 / 2 | 119 | 99 |
| Bould<br>15CJ01675 | NS | Charollais | G Meyrick & Sons | 67 / 1 | 119 | 92 |
| Bentley Olympic Gold<br>239:11:120 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs T C & C A Harding | 66 / 1 | 119 | 97 |
| Wealden<br>HTW1501312 | NS | Texel | Mr T R Healy | 85 / 1 | 119 | 94 |

Notes: BLUP run date: 01/05/2018. Analysis type: Combined breed analysis *AI = Artificial insemination, NS = Natural service

For more information go to www.signetfbc.co.uk

# Leading rams for muscle depth EBV (2016/2017)

**Interpretation:** Standardised value of 100 equals the average animal born in 2010.

| Ram ID | AI/NS* | Breed | Owner/breeder (both if different) | Number of progeny/farms | Standardised value | Accuracy (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hans Fokker 95<br>T79:13:095 | AI | Suffolk | Mr & Mrs H F Porksen | 57 / 2 | 154 | 98 |
| Allison 11681<br>GA:1511681 | NS | Meatlinc | George Allison | 89 / 1 | 153 | 93 |
| Ortum Supersire 05<br>78X:F49 | AI | Suffolk | Messrs Garner & Son/<br>R J L Park | 194 / 3 | 151 | 98 |
| Midhope<br>L20:15:00943 | NS | Suffolk | John Key | 111 / 1 | 150 | 92 |
| Whichford First Class<br>C18:15:00001 | NS | Suffolk | JB & RL Cook | 58 / 1 | 148 | 90 |
| Thorganby 4775<br>HRF:04775 | AI | Meatlinc | H R Fell & Sons Ltd | 106 / 3 | 145 | 97 |
| Sampfordel<br>HRH:15:00390 | NS | Suffolk | Mrs K A Hill | 83 / 1 | 144 | 92 |
| Vines 3061<br>EV:1503061 | NS | Meatlinc | E R & J E Vines | 49 / 1 | 141 | 90 |
| Allison 9618<br>GA:149618 | NS | Meatlinc | George Allison | 101 / 1 | 140 | 94 |
| Court 12077 General<br>73R12077 | AI | Hampshire Down | Mike J Adams/<br>Williams, Brant, Smith & Atkinson | 83 / 3 | 139 | 96 |
| Essie<br>H6:14:00612 | NS | Suffolk | Mrs Irene Fowlie | 150 / 1 | 136 | 96 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Handbank<br>PRH1500573 | NS | Texel | R M & E A Payne/<br>Peter Baber | 67 / 1 | 135 | 94 |
| Kersey Nutcracker<br>C41:N22 | AI | Suffolk | Messrs R Partridge & Son Ltd/<br>A J Cony & Partners | 158 / 3 | 134 | 98 |
| Thorganby 2731<br>HRF:02731 | AI | Meatlinc | H R Fell & Sons Ltd | 74 / 3 | 134 | 97 |
| Stonedge<br>LYN:15:01124 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs D M & S Prince | 60 / 1 | 132 | 90 |
| Vines 3051<br>EV:1503051 | NS | Meatlinc | E R & J E Vines | 91 / 1 | 132 | 93 |
| Rugley RamCompare<br>10P:14:04080 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs E A & L Jackson | 215 / 1 | 132 | 96 |
| Kersey<br>C41:14:00812 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs R Partridge & Son Ltd | 231 / 1 | 132 | 95 |
| Lavendon<br>Y51:13:068 | NS | Suffolk | A J Cony & Partners | 70 / 1 | 129 | 91 |
| Court 13090 Leader<br>73R13090 | AI | Hampshire Down | Mike J Adams | 90 / 2 | 129 | 95 |
| Court 7739 Contender<br>73R07739 | AI | Hampshire Down | Mike J Adams | 32 / 1 | 128 | 95 |
| Whitehead<br>64T1500471 | NS | Hampshire Down | Robert & Kay Vincent | 81 / 1 | 127 | 93 |
| Miserden Valegro<br>AAS1401351 | NS | Texel | Mr & Mrs A & S Andrews | 75 / 1 | 127 | 92 |
| Graylen<br>24Y1502085 | NS | Hampshire Down | Graham & Judith Galbraith | 144 / 1 | 124 | 92 |
| Aspley<br>92W1400386 | NS | Hampshire Down | Mr George & Dr Sara Wood | 140 / 1 | 124 | 95 |

Notes: BLUP run date: 01/05/2018. Analysis type: Combined breed analysis *AI = Artificial insemination, NS = Natural service

For more information go to www.signetfbc.co.uk

# Leading rams for fat depth EBV – leanest (2016/2017)

**Interpretation:** Standardised value of 100 equals the average animal born in 2010.

| Ram ID | AI/NS* | Breed | Owner/breeder (both if different) | Number of progeny/farms | Standardised value | Accuracy (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stainton Vantage II WPS1400599 | AI | Texel | Mr P K Woof/ Claybury Texels | 59 / 2 | 60 | 98 |
| Stonedge Wallykazam YDP1500991 | NS | Texel | Messrs D M & S Prince | 157 / 1 | 81 | 95 |
| Roxburgh Shot Gun Willie EJR1101108 | AI | Texel | Mr John Elliott/ Messrs D M & S Prince | 142 / 3 | 83 | 99 |
| Penygelli PAP1401307 | NS | Texel | Alwyn Phillips | 104 / 1 | 84 | 94 |
| Wedderburn 15WNY02192 | NS | Charollais | J D R & J L Corbett | 84 / 1 | 85 | 90 |
| Kimbolton Voyager PPK1400417 | NS | Texel | P & L Phillips | 136 / 1 | 91 | 96 |
| Logiedurno 15ZNN12375 | NS | Charollais | W C Ingram | 99 / 1 | 93 | 94 |
| Rugley RamCompare 10P:14:04080 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs E A & L Jackson | 215 / 1 | 94 | 97 |
| Penygelli PAP1501802 | NS | Texel | Alwyn Phillips | 67 / 1 | 96 | 92 |
| Logiedurno Navigator 13ZNN07239 | NS | Charollais | W C Ingram/ J & C Barber and AJ & MJ Gregory | 89 / 1 | 97 | 97 |

Notes: BLUP run date: 01/05/2018. Analysis type: Combined breed analysis *AI = Artificial insemination, NS = Natural service

For more information go to www.signetfbc.co.uk

# Leading rams for fat depth EBV – fattest (2016/2017)

**Interpretation:** Standardised value of 100 equals to the average animal born in 2010.

| Ram ID | AI/NS* | Breed | Owner/breeder (both if different) | Number of progeny/farms | Standardised value | Accuracy (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Graylen 24Y1502085 | NS | Hampshire Down | Graham & Judith Galbraith | 144 / 1 | 161 | 93 |
| Court 13090 Leader 73R13090 | AI | Hampshire Down | Mike J Adams | 90 / 2 | 136 | 96 |
| Midhope L20:15:00943 | NS | Suffolk | John Key | 111 / 1 | 135 | 93 |
| Ortum Supersire 05 78X:F49 | AI | Suffolk | Messrs Garner & Son/ R J L Park | 194 / 3 | 134 | 99 |
| Thorganby 2731 HRF:02731 | AI | Meatlinc | H R Fell & Sons Ltd | 74 / 3 | 132 | 97 |
| Court 12077 General 73R12077 | AI | Hampshire Down | Mike J Adams/ Williams, Brant, Smith & Atkinson | 83 / 3 | 131 | 96 |
| Whitehead 64T1500471 | NS | Hampshire Down | Robert & Kay Vincent | 81 / 1 | 128 | 93 |
| Wedderburn Peleus 15WNY02086 | AI | Charollais | J D R & J L Corbett/ Barber, Walton, Dunkley & Oughton | 72 / 2 | 128 | 99 |
| Sampfordel HRH:15:00390 | NS | Suffolk | Mrs K A Hill | 83 / 1 | 126 | 93 |
| Kelsey 13249 Lysander 18U13249 | NS | Hampshire Down | D Smith & J Atkinson | 97 / 1 | 126 | 94 |

Notes: BLUP run date: 01/05/2018. Analysis type: Combined breed analysis *AI = Artificial insemination, NS = Natural service

For more information go to www.signetfbc.co.uk

# Leading rams for carcase weight EBV (2016/2017)

**Interpretation:** The EBV for carcase weight is expressed in kilograms (kg). A ram with an EBV for carcase weight of +1 has the genetic potential to produce progeny that will be on average 0.5kg heavier at a constant age than a ram with an EBV of 0. Standardised value of 100 equals the average ram in 2017.

| Ram ID | AI/NS* | Breed | Owner/breeder (both if different) | Number of progeny/ farms | Carcase weight EBV Range: -2.59 - 2.07 | Accuracy (%) | Standardised value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Penygelli PAP1501802 | NS | Texel | Alwyn Phillips | 67 / 1 | 2.07 | 84 | 144 |
| Handbank PRH1500573 | NS | Texel | R M & E A Payne / Peter Baber | 67 / 1 | 1.75 | 87 | 136 |
| Roxburgh Shot Gun Willie EJR1101108 | AI | Texel | Mr John Elliott / Messrs D M & S Prince | 142 / 3 | 1.43 | 89 | 128 |
| Vines 3051 EV:1503051 | NS | Meatlinc | E R & J E Vines | 91 / 1 | 1.41 | 90 | 128 |
| Stonedge LYN:15:01124 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs D M & S Prince | 60 / 1 | 1.39 | 82 | 127 |
| Hans Fokker 95 T79:13:095 | AI | Suffolk | Mr & Mrs H F Porksen | 57 / 2 | 1.37 | 81 | 127 |
| Logiedurno Navigator 13ZNN07239 | NS | Charollais | W C Ingram / J & C Barber and AJ & MJ Gregory | 89 / 1 | 1.28 | 77 | 125 |
| Dalby Malachite 12PE01501 | AI | Charollais | C R Sercombe / Walton, Gregory, Moseley & Greenow | 144 / 3 | 1.26 | 92 | 124 |
| Court 7739 Contender 73R07739 | NS | Hampshire Down | Mike J Adams | 32 / 1 | 1.16 | 80 | 122 |
| Wedderburn Peleus 15WNY02086 | AI | Charollais | J D R & J L Corbett / Barber, Walton, Dunkley & Oughton | 72 / 2 | 1.12 | 86 | 121 |
| Penygelli PAP1401307 | NS | Texel | Alwyn Phillips | 104 / 1 | 0.91 | 90 | 116 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Foulrice On Ramcompare<br>14DG04690 | NS | Charollais | C W Marwood & Son | 217 / 1 | 0.90 | 95 | 115 |
| Wealden<br>HTW1501312 | NS | Texel | Tim Healey | 85 / 1 | 0.88 | 67 | 115 |
| Court 12077 General<br>73R12077 | AI | Hampshire down | Mike J Adams / Williams, Brant, Smith & Atkinson | 83 / 3 | 0.85 | 87 | 114 |
| Stainton Vantage II<br>WPS1400599 | AI | Texel | Mr P K Woof / Claybury Texels | 59 / 2 | 0.80 | 83 | 113 |
| Whitehead<br>64T1500471 | NS | Hampshire down | Robert & Kay Vincent | 81 / 1 | 0.77 | 86 | 112 |
| Cannahars<br>15KF00715 | NS | Charollais | H E G Davies / R S & J A Gregory | 60 / 1 | 0.75 | 85 | 112 |
| Whichford First Class<br>QC18:15:00001 | NS | Suffolk | Bruce Cook | 58 / 12 | 0.75 | 79 | 112 |
| Dalby 1<br>14PE03089 | NS | Charollais | C R Sercombe | 214 / 1 | 0.72 | 87 | 111 |
| Allison 11681<br>GA:1511681 | NS | Meatlinc | George Allison | 89 / 1 | 0.70 | 88 | 111 |
| Micklehills<br>14ZWA03355 | NS | Charollais | Ms Victoria Sercombe | 254 / 1 | 0.70 | 87 | 111 |
| Sandyknowe Sole Trader<br>Y13:13:161 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs Malcolm M Stewart / Messrs T C & C A Harding | 45 / 1 | 0.63 | 73 | 109 |
| Thorganby 4775<br>HRF:04775 | AI | Meatlinc | H R Fell & Sons Ltd | 106 / 3 | 0.58 | 91 | 108 |
| Kersey<br>C41:14:00812 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs R Partridge & Son Ltd | 231 / 1 | 0.55 | 90 | 107 |
| Miserden Valegro<br>AAS1401351 | NS | Texel | Mr & Mrs A & S Andrews | 75 / 1 | 0.48 | 73 | 105 |

Notes: BLUP run date: 01/05/2018. Analysis type: Carcase traits *AI = Artificial insemination. NS = Natural service

For more information go to www.signetfbc.co.uk

# Leading rams for carcase conformation EBV (2016/2017)

**Interpretation:** Carcase conformation EBVs indicate genetic potential for conformation and units of measurement are based on a 15-point scale. Animals with a high positive value have the genetic potential to produce superior good conformation. Standardised value of 100 equates to the average ram in 2017.

| Ram ID | AI/NS* | Breed | Owner/breeder (both if different) | Number of progeny/ farms | Carcase Conformation weight EBV Range: -2.28–2.74 | Accuracy (%) | Standardised value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elkstone HME1501742 | NS | Texel | Mr Matt Hobbs | 57 / 1 | 2.74 | 93 | 147 |
| Roxburgh Shot Gun Willie EJR1101108 | AI | Texel | Mr John Elliott / Messrs D M & S Prince | 142 / 3 | 2.57 | 96 | 144 |
| Stonedge Wallykazam YDP1500991 | NS | Texel | Messrs D M & S Prince | 157 / 1 | 2.39 | 97 | 141 |
| Handbank PRH1500573 | NS | Texel | R M & E A Payne / Peter Baber | 67 / 1 | 2.22 | 95 | 138 |
| Penygelli PAP1501802 | NS | Texel | Alwyn Phillips | 67 / 1 | 2.08 | 94 | 135 |
| Foulrice On Ramcompare 14DG04690 | NS | Charollais | C W Marwood & Son | 217 / 1 | 1.68 | 98 | 127 |
| Whitehead 64T1500471 | NS | Hampshire Down | Robert & Kay Vincent | 81 / 1 | 1.60 | 95 | 126 |
| Stainton Vantage Ii WPS1400599 | AI | Texel | Mr P K Woof / Claybury Texels | 59 / 2 | 1.35 | 94 | 121 |
| Miserden AAS1401255 | NS | Texel | Mr & Mrs A & S Andrews | 167 / 1 | 1.26 | 93 | 120 |
| Sandyknowe Sole Trader Y13:13:161 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs Malcolm M Stewart / Messrs T C & C A Harding | 45 / 1 | 1.15 | 88 | 117 |
| Tynewydd MDY1400927 | NS | Texel | Mr Deri John Morgan | 149 / 1 | 1.04 | 97 | 115 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gaynes Major CMG06129 | AI | Texel | Gaynes Park Farm Ltd / Trinidad Investments Ltd | 181 / 3 | 0.96 | 98 | 114 |
| Allison 9618 GA:149618 | NS | Meatlinc | George Allison | 101 / 1 | 0.95 | 96 | 114 |
| Court 12077 General 73R12077 | AI | Hampshire Down | Mike J Adams / Williams, Brant, Smith & Atkinson | 83 / 3 | 0.93 | 95 | 113 |
| Wedderburn Peleus 15WNY02086 | AI | Charollais | J D R & J L Corbett / Barber, Walton, Dunkley & Oughton | 72 / 2 | 0.89 | 95 | 113 |
| Thorganby 4746 HRF:04746 | NS | Meatlinc | H R Fell & Sons Ltd | 86 / 1 | 0.89 | 96 | 113 |
| Thorganby 4746 HRF:04775 | AI | Meatlinc | H R Fell & Sons Ltd | 106 / 3 | 0.81 | 97 | 111 |
| Dalby Malachite 12PE01501 | AI | Charollais | C R Sercombe / Walton, Gregory, Moseley & Greenow | 144 / 3 | 0.78 | 97 | 111 |
| Penygelli PAP1401307 | NS | Texel | Alwyn Phillips | 104 / 1 | 0.74 | 97 | 110 |
| Yarcombe 141320 Quadrant 30N1401320 | NS | Hampshire Down | Messrs H C Derryman & Sons | 232 / 1 | 0.72 | 96 | 109 |
| Lowereye 13ZVY00706 | NS | Charollais | N Oughton | 126 / 1 | 0.68 | 95 | 109 |
| Logiedurno Navigator 13ZNN07239 | NS | Charollais | W C Ingram / J & C Barber and AJ & MJ Gregory | 89 / 1 | 0.66 | 90 | 108 |
| Cannahars 15KF00715 | NS | Charollais | H E G Davies / R S & J A Gregory | 60 / 1 | 0.49 | 94 | 105 |
| Rugley JER1505263 | NS | Texel | E A & L Jackson | 100 / 1 | 0.37 | 96 | 103 |
| Micklehills 14ZWA03355 | NS | Charollais | Ms Victoria Sercombe | 254 / 1 | 0.34 | 95 | 102 |

Notes: BLUP run date: 01/05/2018. Analysis type: Carcase traits *AI = Artificial insemination, NS = Natural service

For more information go to www.signetfbc.co.uk

# Leading rams for carcase fat class EBV – leanest (2016/2017)

**Interpretation:** Carcase fat class EBVs indicate genetic potential to influence fat class. Animals with low negative values have the genetic potential to produce leaner carcases; positive values indicate fatter carcases. Standardised value of 100 equates to the average ram in 2017.

| Ram ID | AI/NS* | Breed | Owner/breeder (both if different) | Number of progeny/ farms | Carcase fat class EBV Range: -2.31–3.59 | Accuracy (%) | Standardised value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stainton Vantage Ii WPS1400599 | AI | Texel | Mr P K Woof / Claybury Texels | 59 / 2 | -2.31 | 92 | 66 |
| Stonedge Wallykazam YDP1500991 | NS | Texel | Messrs D M & S Prince | 157 / 1 | -2.23 | 97 | 67 |
| Rugley Ramcompare 10P:14:04080 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs E A & L Jackson | 215 / 1 | -1.72 | 97 | 74 |
| Gaynes Major CMG06129 | AI | Texel | Gaynes Park Farm Ltd / Trinidad Investments Ltd | 181 / 3 | -1.36 | 97 | 79 |
| Penygelli PAP1501802 | NS | Texel | Alwyn Phillips | 67 / 1 | -1.27 | 92 | 80 |
| Rugley JER1505263 | NS | Texel | E A & L Jackson | 100 / 1 | -1.22 | 94 | 81 |
| Penygelli PAP1401307 | NS | Texel | Alwyn Phillips | 104 / 1 | -1.19 | 95 | 82 |
| Roxburgh Shot Gun Willie EJR1101108 | AI | Texel | Mr John Elliott / Messrs D M & S Prince | 142 / 3 | -1.18 | 94 | 82 |
| Drinkstone Union PJP1304727 | NS | Texel | R J L Park / Finlay McGowan | 113 / 1 | -1.14 | 95 | 82 |
| Wedderburn 15WNY02192 | NS | Charollais | J D R & J L Corbett | 84 / 1 | -1.03 | 93 | 84 |

Notes: BLUP run date: 01/05/2018. Analysis type: Carcase traits *AI = Artificial insemination, NS = Natural service

For more information go to www.signetfbc.co.uk

# Leading rams for carcase fat class EBV – fattest (2016/2017)

**Interpretation:** Carcase fat class EBVs indicate genetic potential to influence fat class. Animals with low negative values have the genetic potential to produce leaner carcases; positive values indicate fatter carcases. Standardised value of 100 equates to the average ram in 2017.

| Ram ID | AI/NS* | Breed | Owner/breeder (both if different) | Number of progeny/ farms | Carcase fat class EBV Range: -2.31–3.59 | Accuracy (%) | Standardised value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Court 12077 General 73R12077 | AI | Hampshire Down | Mike J Adams / Williams, Brant, Smith & Atkinson | 83 / 3 | 3.59 | 93 | 147 |
| Court 7739 Contender 73R07739 | NS | Hampshire Down | Mike J Adams | 32 / 1 | 3.19 | 89 | 141 |
| Yarcombe 141320 Quadrant 30N1401320 | NS | Hampshire Down | Messrs H C Derryman & Sons | 232 / 1 | 2.90 | 95 | 137 |
| Aspley 92W1400386 | NS | Hampshire Down | Mr George & Dr Sara Wood | 140 / 1 | 2.65 | 95 | 134 |
| Whitehead 64T1500471 | NS | Hampshire Down | Robert & Kay Vincent | 81 / 1 | 2.50 | 93 | 132 |
| Court 13090 Leader 73R13090 | AI | Hampshire Down | Mike J Adams | 90 / 2 | 2.44 | 94 | 131 |
| Sandyknowe Sole Trader Y13:13:161 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs Malcolm M Stewart / Messrs T C & C A Harding | 45 / 1 | 2.21 | 85 | 128 |
| Yarcombe 151761 Dynamo 30N1501761 | NS | Hampshire Down | Messrs H C Derryman & Sons | 94 / 1 | 1.91 | 92 | 124 |
| Sampfordel HRH:15:00390 | NS | Suffolk | Mrs K A Hill | 83 / 1 | 1.78 | 93 | 122 |
| Hans Fokker 95 T79:13:095 | AI | Suffolk | Mr & Mrs H F Porksen | 57 / 2 | 1.49 | 90 | 118 |

Notes: BLUP run date: 01/05/2018. Analysis type: Carcase traits *AI = Artificial insemination, NS = Natural service

For more information go to www.signetfbc.co.uk

# Leading rams for overall carcase merit (2016/2017)

**Interpretation:** The index for carcase merit provides a ranking of RamCompare sires that takes into account EBVs for carcase weight, carcase conformation and carcase fat class. The index serves as a guide towards the genetic merit of sires used in a typical commercial flock. Actual financial performance will depend on the system, target market and seasonal price fluctuations.

| Ram ID | AI/NS* | Breed | Owner/breeder (both if different) | Number of progeny / farms | Carcase weight EBV Range: 2.59–2.07 | Carcase conformation EBV Range: -2.28–2.74 | Carcase fat class EBV Range: -2.31–3.59 | Carcase merit index Range: -13.36–13.90 | Accuracy for carcase merit index (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Penygelli PAP1501802 | NS | Texel | Alwyn Phillips | 67 / 1 | 2.07 | 2.08 | -1.27 | 13.90 | 86 |
| Handbank PRH1500573 | NS | Texel | R M & E A Payne / Peter Baber | 67 / 1 | 1.75 | 2.22 | -0.64 | 12.22 | 89 |
| Roxburgh Shot Gun Willie EJR1101108 | AI | Texel | Mr John Elliott / Messrs D M & S Prince | 142 / 3 | 1.43 | 2.57 | -1.18 | 11.24 | 90 |
| Logiedurno Navigator 13ZNN07239 | NS | Charollais | W C Ingram / J & C Barber and AJ & MJ Gregory | 89 / 1 | 1.28 | 0.66 | 0.07 | 7.46 | 79 |
| Dalby Malachite 12PE01501 | AI | Charollais | C R Sercombe / Walton, Gregory, Moseley & Greenow | 144 / 3 | 1.26 | 0.78 | 0.43 | 7.37 | 93 |
| Dalby Malachite 15WNY02086 | AI | Charollais | J D R & J L Corbett / Barber, Walton, Dunkley & Oughton | 72 / 2 | 1.12 | 0.89 | 0.08 | 6.95 | 87 |
| Wedderburn Peleus 14DG04690 | NS | Charollais | C W Marwood & Son | 217 / 1 | 0.90 | 1.68 | 0.10 | 6.86 | 95 |
| Foulrice On Ramcompare WPS1400599 | AI | Texel | Mr P K Woof / Claybury Texels | 59 / 2 | 0.80 | 1.35 | -2.31 | 6.73 | 85 |
| Hans Fokker 95 T79:13:095 | AI | Suffolk | Mr & Mrs H F Porksen | 57 / 2 | 1.37 | -0.03 | 1.49 | 6.49 | 83 |
| Stonedge Wallykazam YDP1500991 | NS | Texel | Messrs D M & S Prince | 157 / 1 | 0.47 | 2.39 | -2.23 | 6.45 | 94 |
| Stonedge LYN:15:01124 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs D M & S Prince | 60 / 1 | 1.39 | -1.00 | -0.92 | 6.14 | 84 |
| Penygelli PAP1401307 | NS | Texel | Alwyn Phillips | 104 / 1 | 0.91 | 0.74 | -1.19 | 6.09 | 91 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Whitehead 64T1500471 | NS | Hampshire Down | Robert & Kay Vincent | 81 / 1 | 0.77 | 1.60 | 2.50 | 5.26 | 87 |
| Vines 3051 EV:1503051 | NS | Meatlinc | E R & J E Vines | 91 / 1 | 1.41 | -1.54 | 0.34 | 5.06 | 91 |
| Elkstone HME1501742 | NS | Texel | Mr Matt Hobbs | 57 / 1 | 0.19 | 2.74 | 0.49 | 4.52 | 85 |
| Wealden HTW1501312 | NS | Texel | Tim Healey | 85 / 1 | 0.88 | -0.15 | -0.56 | 4.51 | 70 |
| Court 12077 General 73R12077 | AI | Hampshire Down | Mike J Adams / Williams, Brant, Smith & Atkinson | 83 / 3 | 0.85 | 0.93 | 3.59 | 4.40 | 88 |
| Dalby 14PE03089 | NS | Charollais | C R Sercombe | 214 / 1 | 0.72 | 0.32 | -0.17 | 4.20 | 88 |
| Cannahars 15KF00715 | NS | Charollais | H E G Davies / R S & J A Gregory | 60 / 1 | 0.75 | 0.49 | 1.01 | 4.19 | 87 |
| Sandyknowe Sole Trader Y13:13:161 | NS | Suffolk | Messrs Malcolm M Stewart / Messrs T C & C A Harding | 45 / 1 | 0.63 | 1.15 | 2.21 | 4.00 | 76 |
| Thorganby 4775 HRF:04775 | AI | Meatlinc | H R Fell & Sons Ltd | 106 / 3 | 0.58 | 0.81 | 0.26 | 3.98 | 92 |
| Micklehills 14ZWA03355 | NS | Charollais | Ms Victoria Sercombe | 254 / 1 | 0.70 | 0.34 | 0.58 | 3.88 | 88 |
| Gaynes Major CMG06129 | AI | Texel | Gaynes Park Farm Ltd / Trinidad Investments Ltd | 181 / 3 | 0.39 | 0.96 | -1.36 | 3.79 | 94 |
| Court 7739 Contender 73R07739 | NS | Hampshire Down | Mike J Adams | 32 / 1 | 1.16 | -0.80 | 3.19 | 3.76 | 82 |
| Whichford First Class C18:15:00001 | NS | Suffolk | Bruce Cook | 58 / 1 | 0.75 | -0.30 | -0.79 | 3.72 | 82 |

Notes: BLUP run date: 01/05/2018. Analysis type: Carcase traits * *AI = Artificial insemination, NS = Natural service

For more information go to www.signetfbc.co.uk

# Changes to sheep genetic evaluations

## RamCompare and the combined breed analysis

The launch of RamCompare results coincides with a major change to the way terminal sire evaluations are delivered in the UK, with the launch of the CBA.

The CBA will evaluate all terminal sire breeds together in a single best linear unbiased prediction (BLUP) run, with results for each breed reported individually. It will deliver a series of enhancements, including more regular BLUP runs and the ability to assess the genetic merit of crossbred animals.

EBVs will change, with a new base being set for each breed and the provision of a series of new EBVs derived from computed tomography (CT) data, including spine length, a predictor of intramuscular fat and CT-derived eye muscle area.

## Weight-adjusted traits

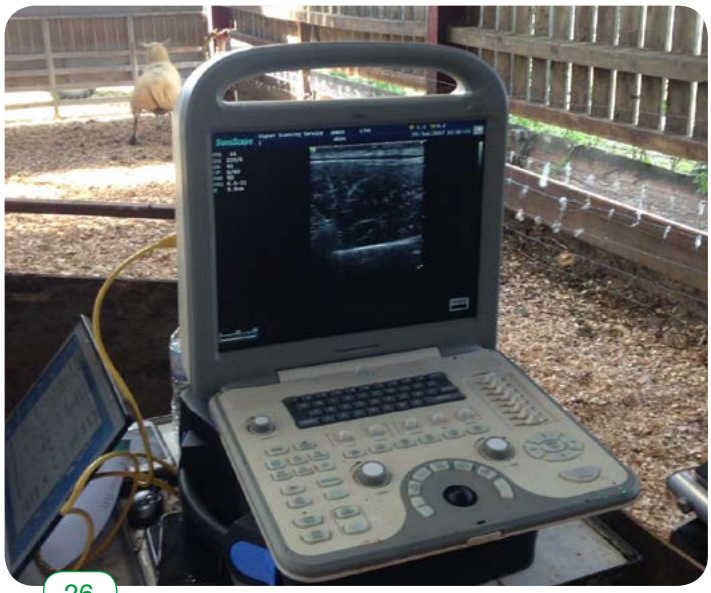
One of the biggest changes with CBA is the provision of weight-adjusted EBVs for existing traits such as muscle and fat depth. Historically, traits like muscle depth have been adjusted for age within the analysis to identify those lambs that will lay down the most muscle at a certain age, regardless of weight.

Sheep with high muscle depth EBVs might achieve them in two ways:

- Being big, as genetically bigger sheep tend to have more muscle
- Having a high muscle depth relative to their weight

Although breeders can already select for growth rate using the scan weight EBV, this new approach enables breeders to select for muscling independently from growth, ie to compare levels of muscling (and fat) at a fixed weight, rather than a fixed age.

The new approach is helpful for commercial farmers as lambs tend to be drawn on their finish (fat) and weight, not their age.



## The next steps for RamCompare

RamCompare will continue for the next three production years (2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20) and will involve eight farms in England, Wales and Scotland, plus one research farm in Northern Ireland. This means that more data can be gathered on hard-to-measure traits and rams from more breeds can be tested.

The work in Northern Ireland will link RamCompare to the equivalent scheme in Ireland: Sheep Ireland's Central Progeny Test. The progeny from Irish and UK rams will be monitored and the data analysed through both genetic evaluation systems, which will build links between the two systems. Some of the lambs will be assessed using Centre of Innovation Excellence in Livestock (CIEL)-funded feed efficiency equipment to understand whether variation in feed intake can be detected in growing lambs.

# Why should pedigree breeders get involved?

RamCompare is a partnership in which the sharing of knowledge benefits all those involved.

RamCompare has highlighted to commercial farmers:

- The performance achieved by the progeny of high genetic merit rams on commercial, grass and forage-based diets
- How to exploit genetic differences between rams from different breeds
- The financial impact of high-index rams and how to find them

For pedigree farmers, RamCompare provides a unique opportunity to promote the genetic merit of their flocks.

## Alwyn Phillips
### Pedigree breeder

Alwyn has actively selected high-performing genetics within his Penygelli Texel flock for over three decades. In the first year of the project, Alwyn drove over 500 miles to get his ram onto a RamCompare farm.

"RamCompare provides a great way for flocks to benchmark performance in an unbiased, commercial environment" says Alwyn. "Our flock is reared on forage and rams aren't overfed. RamCompare provides an alternative shop window to show customers what our genetics can do."

## James Barker
### Pedigree breeder

James supplied rams and semen to link his Signet-recorded Suffolk flock to the project.

"Sheep producers must focus on matching the right genetics to their production system and this trial is a great way to see what the leading breeding lines can deliver. We sell rams directly from the farm and our involvement in RamCompare is a key part of our marketing strategy."

## Janet Hill
### Breed Association

"We believe the Hampshire Down breed has economically important genes for commercial sheep production, particularly for systems seeking fast-finishing lambs with a good carcase" says Janet Hill, Breed Secretary. "RamCompare gives our breed the opportunity to demonstrate what it is capable of delivering and we have actively encouraged our breeders to support the trial."

# How to get involved

Any performance-recorded terminal sire breeders can nominate rams or semen for RamCompare.

## Semen available

Breeders have the opportunity to obtain frozen semen from some of the rams already tested during the first couple of years of the RamCompare project. This semen is being offered to breeders free of charge, subject to terms and conditions.

Semen is available from:

### Texel

Kimbolton Voyager
PPK1400417 (ARR/ARR)

### Charollais

Foulrice On RamCompare
14DG04690 (ARR/ARR)

### Suffolk

Rugley RamCompare
10P:14:04080 (ARR/ARR)

### Hampshire Down

Court 13090 Leader
73R13090

Go to **basco.org/sheep** to see the most up-to-date EBVs.

For more details and a copy of the terms and conditions, interested breeders should contact:

Bridget Lloyd (**bridget.lloyd@ahdb.org.uk**) or **Signet** on **024 7647 8829** or **signet@ahdb.org.uk**

A list of all the rams tested or on-test can be found at **www.ramcompare.com**

Follow **@ramcompare** on Twitter for regular updates.

RamCompare is a partnership that brings together many organisations throughout the supply chain to help take genetic evaluation in the UK sheep industry forward. All of the partners have had an important role in getting RamCompare to this point.

## FARMERS

**Antony Pearce**
Moat Farm
Buckinghamshire

**Duncan Nelless**
Thistleyhaugh
Northumberland

**Ian Robertson**
Chawton Park Farm
Hampshire

**Philip & Charlie Whitehouse**
Bradley Farm
Gloucestershire

**Sion Williams**
Bowhill Estate
Selkirk

**Sion & Claire Williams**
Beili Ficer Farm
Carmarthenshire

## FUNDERS

## COLLABORATORS

## SUPPORTERS