**What is RamCompare?**

RamCompare is the national progeny test for terminal sire breeds. The project selects leading performance recorded breeding lines – and through data collected on their progeny assesses their genetic merit for traits of commercial interest, like days to slaughter, carcase weight and conformation.

Why was RamCompare needed?

• To compare the genetic merit of different rams from different breeds

• To collect data that strengthens the National Terminal Sire Evaluation

• To determine whether abattoir data can be used to produce EBVs for carcase traits

The impact of RamCompare will increase rates of genetic gain in ram breeding flocks and by raising awareness, increase the use of performance recorded rams – enhancing product quality and flock profitability.

**Who is involved?**

Funding has been provided by AHDB, QMS, HCC, AgriSearch and Sainsburys; with Randall Parker and Dunbia supporting data collection. Additional support has been provided by a number of organisations associated with animal health, identification and livestock reproduction. It is truly an industry wide collaboration.

**What has RamCompare achieved to date?**

Over five years RamCompare will have recorded data on over 22,000 lambs by 260 different sires. These sires have breeding values for ten new traits of commercial importance, as well as being benchmarked for existing traits against each other.

Strengths and weaknesses within breeds have been identified and breeding programmes changed accordingly. We have also generated new genetic knowledge about previously unrecorded attributes, like days to slaughter and shear force.

Publications, press coverage and open days showing the commercial value of recorded genetics and the work of RamCompare have reached thousands of commercial producers.

**RamCompare Phase III**

Genetic improvement is a highly cost effective way to create permanent and sustainable change. For Terminal Sire breeds, genetic change is driven through the National Terminal Sire Evaluation and RamCompare plays a major role in strengthening this evaluation – as well as creating new information that will lead to faster rates of genetic gain.

Within RamCompare Phase III, we plan to:-

* Gain a clearer understanding of the genetic relationship between traits measured “on farm” by ram breeders and those trait on which commercial farmers are paid.
* Complete work on the genetic impact of ram selection on primal weights and shear force
* Widen the reach of RamCompare evaluations to analyse abattoir data from sources other than the core RamCompare farms