



# RamCOMPARE

## NEWSLETTER

Autumn/Winter 2016

Welcome to the third RamCompare newsletter. The project aims to drive genetic improvement forward through the inclusion of commercial data in genetic evaluations. Its first year is now complete, with data being analysed from lambs born in 2016.

## RamCompare Update

Lamb growth has been closely monitored throughout the season, with the collection of birth, 90 day and sale weights.

Over 3,600 lambs were born in 2016, sired by 39 different rams. The eight sires used via artificial insemination (AI) averaged 30 lambs each. The aim for natural service sires was to achieve 50 lambs per progeny group and this was achieved in all but one group.

The six project farms are now into their second breeding season, with an additional five sires complementing the AI team and 24 new rams selected for natural service groups.

A total of 68 rams will be tested over the two-year duration of the project, with full analysis being made available from November 2017.



Bridget Lloyd  
Project Coordinator



### In this newsletter:

- Year-two rams and their estimated breeding values (EBVs)
- Get connected with RamCompare – free semen available to performance recorded flocks
- How to engage with RamCompare

Keep up to date with project developments by visiting [ramcompare.com](http://ramcompare.com) or follow us on twitter [@RamCompare](https://twitter.com/RamCompare)

## RamCompare sires 2016

We were delighted with the ram nominations received for both AI sires and natural service (NS) rams for year two of the project, with over 300 rams presented (72 AI sires + 240 NS rams). This demonstrates a keen interest in the project from pedigree breeders who are eager to be involved and we are grateful for the support of the project.

All rams selected have high estimated breeding values (EBVs) in the top 20% for their breed and offer variety to genetics already on test.

One or two rams provided to each farm last year will be given a natural mating group for a second year, to provide linkage between the years.

## Results

Following the second year of the project a full genetic analysis will be undertaken. Results will be presented in tables showing the top 25 rams across all five breeds involved for eight-week weight, scan weight, muscle depth and fat depth EBVs. Data from the project will be used to develop new EBVs for days to slaughter and carcass weight.

## Combined breed evaluations

AHDB Beef & Lamb is funding a project at Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) that will utilise RamCompare data to validate a new terminal sire evaluation. This combined breed genetic evaluation will allow multiple terminal breeds of sheep to be evaluated simultaneously and where good genetic linkage exists, animals from different breeds can be compared via the resulting EBVs. This approach will be tested during 2017.

## Ram selection for second year

Rams were selected based on their EBVs and breeding lines. Linkage between other flocks was important, especially for the AI sires. Breeders could have up to two rams selected for the project and were paid a fixed fee for semen and rams.

### The AI rams are:

#### Wedderburn Peleus – 15WNY02086

Sired by Parkgate Outlaw, he brings new genetics into RamCompare with trait leading EBVs for growth and carcass traits, progeny are expected to be fatter than some of the breeding lines on test.

#### Stainton Vantage II – WPS1400599

This Anglezarke Uno son represents a widely used bloodline that is new to RamCompare. He has excellent EBVs for growth and muscling, as well as tending to be leaner than many of the sires on test.

#### Hans Fokker 95 – T79:13:095

A modern Suffolk by the influential Sandyknowe Etterick 07-1. A trait leader for early growth and muscling across the loin from a well-known breeding line.

#### Court 12077 General, 73R12077

This Whitehead Crusador son brings high EBVs for growth and muscling to the project.

#### Thorganby HRF:04775

The top Meatline ram in the country. He is ranked as a trait leader for the yield of muscle in his carcass and has superior EBVs for gigot muscularity.

## Sires joining the AI team 2016

AI rams are used in the project to create linkage between flocks. Five new sires have been selected for performance testing in 2017 and their semen will be used on two or three of the trial farms (see Table 1).

Data collected from their progeny will help to strengthen statistical comparisons made between other rams already on test and those that will be used for natural mating.

Table 1: The breeding plan for artificial insemination in year two

Breed	Name	ID	Farms					
			Beil Ficer	Bowhill	Bradley	Chawton Park	Moat	Thistleyhaugh
Texel	Gaynes Major	CMG06129		✓	✓			
	Roxburgh Shotgun Willie	EJR1101108				✓	✓	
	Stainton Vantage II	WPS1400599	✓					✓
Suffolk	Ortum Supersire 05	78X:F49		✓				✓
	Kersey Nutcracker	C41:N22	✓			✓		
	Hans Fokker 95	T79:13:095			✓		✓	
Charollais	Wernfawr Magnum	XEV:1200325					✓	✓
	Dalby Malachite	PE:1201501	✓		✓			
	Wedderburn Peleus	15WNY02086		✓		✓		
Hampshire Down	Court 12077 General	73R12077				✓	✓	✓
Meatinc	Thorganby HRF:04775	HRF:04775	✓	✓	✓			

Key:  Top 1%  Top 2-10%  Top 11-25%  Top 26-50%  below average

Table 2: The EBVs for artificial insemination rams in year two

Breed	Name	ID	Eight Week Weight Ebv	Scan Weight Ebv	Muscle Depth Ebv	Fat Depth Ebv	Index
Suffolk	Ortum Supersire 05	78X:F49	6.05	11.06	6.41	1.17	4.61
	Kersey Nutcracker	C41:N22	6.41	11.96	3.62	0.54	4.12
	Hans Fokker 95	T79:13:095	7.02	12.74	7.90	0.30	5.62
Charollais	Wernfawr Magnum	XEV:1200325	4.89	14.73	2.95	0.33	388
	Dalby Malachite	PE:1201501	3.92	9.43	4.39	-0.46	357
	Wedderburn Peleus	15WNY02086	6.47	13.48	4.23	0.84	421
Texel	Gaynes Major	CMG06129	5.35	12.28	3.47	0.43	353
	Roxburgh Shotgun Willie	EJR1101108	6.25	13.11	3.11	-0.56	424
	Stainton Vantage II	WPS1400599	5.56	11.68	3.09	-1.61	362
Hampshire Down	Court General	73R12077	5.87	10.01	4.78	0.41	332
Meatinc	HRF:04775	HRF:04775	5.82	12.93	7.40	0.82	503

Currently, EBVs of rams cannot be compared directly against different breeds. The shading indicates where the ram is according to its own breed benchmark (correct at the time of print). Tables 2 and 3 show the EBVs of rams used for AI and natural service respectively.

Four new rams have been supplied to each farm for natural service and at least one ram provided last year will be used again this season to provide linkage between the years. The rams identified for each farm, along with their EBVs are shown in Table 3.

Full estimated breeding values and pedigrees for all year two rams are available at [ramcompare.com](http://ramcompare.com).

**Table 3: The EBVs for natural service rams used in year two**

Farm	Breed	ID	Prefix	Eight Week Weight EBV	Scan Weight EBV	Muscle Depth EBV	Fat Depth Ebv	Index
Beili Ficer	Texel	PAP1501802	Penygelli	6.25	13.76	4.10	-0.22	438
	Suffolk	LYN:15:01124	Stonedge	7.53	14.54	4.99	0.78	5.27
	Charollais	15CJ01675	Bould	4.20	10.58	3.35	-0.07	342
	Meatlinc	EV:1503051	Richard Vines	5.55	11.53	5.63	0.45	356
	Yr 1: Texel	MDY1400927	Tynewydd	5.36	12.11	2.29	-0.18	354
Bowhill	Texel	JER1505263	Rugley	6.67	13.99	3.30	0.00	409
	Suffolk	L20:15:00822	Midhope	5.37	10.57	4.08	0.78	3.21
	Charollais	15ZNN12375	Logiedurno	4.19	8.42	4.43	-0.73	331
	Meatlinc	GA:1511681	George Allison	5.97	13.62	8.29	0.68	380
	Yr 1: Suffolk	H6:14:00612	Essie	7.67	13.28	6.63	0.83	6.06
Bradley	Texel	HME1501742	Elkstone	4.45	9.50	3.09	0.10	323
	Suffolk	HRH:15:00390	Sampfordel	6.14	12.39	5.15	0.71	4.58
	Charollais	15KF00715	Cannahars	4.74	11.00	3.28	0.53	333
	Meatlinc	EV:1503061	Richard Vines	5.63	13.99	5.31	0.54	379
	Yr 1: Texel	PPK1400417	Kimbolton	5.41	12.85	3.40	0.33	378
Chawton Park	Texel	HTW1501312	Wealden	7.87	16.49	3.47	0.32	446
	Suffolk	C18:15:00001	Whichford	6.97	13.60	6.70	0.46	5.54
	Charollais	13ZNN07239	Logiedurno	4.51	11.29	4.12	-0.26	382
	Hampshire Down	30N1501761	Yarcombe	5.45	9.50	2.07	0.13	303
	Yr 1: Charollais	14PE03057	Dalby	6.21	15.05	3.60	0.03	418
	Yr 1: Charollais	14ZWA03355	Micklehills	4.97	11.90	3.81	0.22	381
Moat	Texel	PRH1500573	Handbank	7.19	15.97	3.62	-0.11	480
	Suffolk	Y13:13:161	Sandyknowe	6.14	13.05	4.32	0.34	4.40
	Charollais	15YPP01267	Tilton	6.20	14.21	2.98	0.23	388
	Hampshire Down	64T1500471	Whitehead	4.96	8.80	2.51	0.52	294
	Yr 1: Hampshire Down	92W1400386	Aspley	5.40	10.08	2.43	-0.47	346
Thistleyhaugh	Texel	YDP1500991	Stonedge	4.83	11.07	4.59	-0.02	410
	Suffolk	L20:15:00943	Midhope	5.11	10.26	5.65	0.71	4.38
	Charollais	15WNY02192	Wedderburn	5.54	12.28	4.89	-0.37	412
	Hampshire Down	24Y1502085	Graylen	4.24	6.91	3.68	0.12	276
	Yr 1: Suffolk	10P:14:04080	Rugley	6.85	14.31	4.34	0.76	5.04
	Yr 1: Charollais	14DG04690	Foulrice	4.62	12.07	3.93	0.55	362



Graylen Hampshire Down – new natural service sire at Thistleyhaugh



Cannahars Charollais – new natural service sire at Bradley Farm

## Get connected with RamCompare – free semen available for performance recorded flocks

Breeders who record with Signet have the opportunity to obtain frozen semen from three of the sires used for natural service in the RamCompare project. Semen is being offered free of charge and is being made available in order to build genetic linkage between pedigree flocks and the RamCompare project. This is a great opportunity to access high EBV genetics. Conditions apply, contact us for details.

### The three sires are:



#### Charollais

*Foulrice On RamCompare, 14DG04690:*

March-born Charollais bred by Charles and Valerie Marwood, Yorkshire. He is a high-index son of Dalby Mount Aloe from a breeding line with high levels of muscling across the loin and an index over 370.



#### Texel

*Kimbolton Voyager, PPK1400417:*

Bred by Paul Philips, Herefordshire and sired by trait leading Avon Value Real Deal. This ram has an index of nearly 400.



#### Suffolk

*Rugley RamCompare, 10P:14:04080:*

Bred by Alan Jackson, Alnwick, Northumberland. A March-born ram with extremely high EBVs for Scan Weight and Muscle Depth and an index in the top 1% of the breed.

## How to engage with RamCompare

### MID MAY 2017

4pm-7pm, Moat Farm, Stoke Mandeville, Aylesbury

### EARLY JUNE 2017

4pm-7pm, Beili Ficer Farm, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire

### LATE JUNE 2017

4pm-7pm, Bowhill Estate, Selkirk

### 17-19 NOVEMBER 2017

Sheep Breeders Round Table Conference

Email: [ke.events@ahdb.org.uk](mailto:ke.events@ahdb.org.uk) to register for notification of event.



Farm walk at Chawton Park event, August 2016



Natural Service sires on display at Bradley Farm event, May 2016

Queries or information: [bridget.lloyd@ahdb.org.uk](mailto:bridget.lloyd@ahdb.org.uk) or visit: [ramcompare.com](http://ramcompare.com) Twitter: @RamCompare

#### Funders



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