



# Breeding Profitable Sheep for Ireland

Flock Book Participation  
Consultation Meeting  
6<sup>th</sup> November 2008



# Agenda

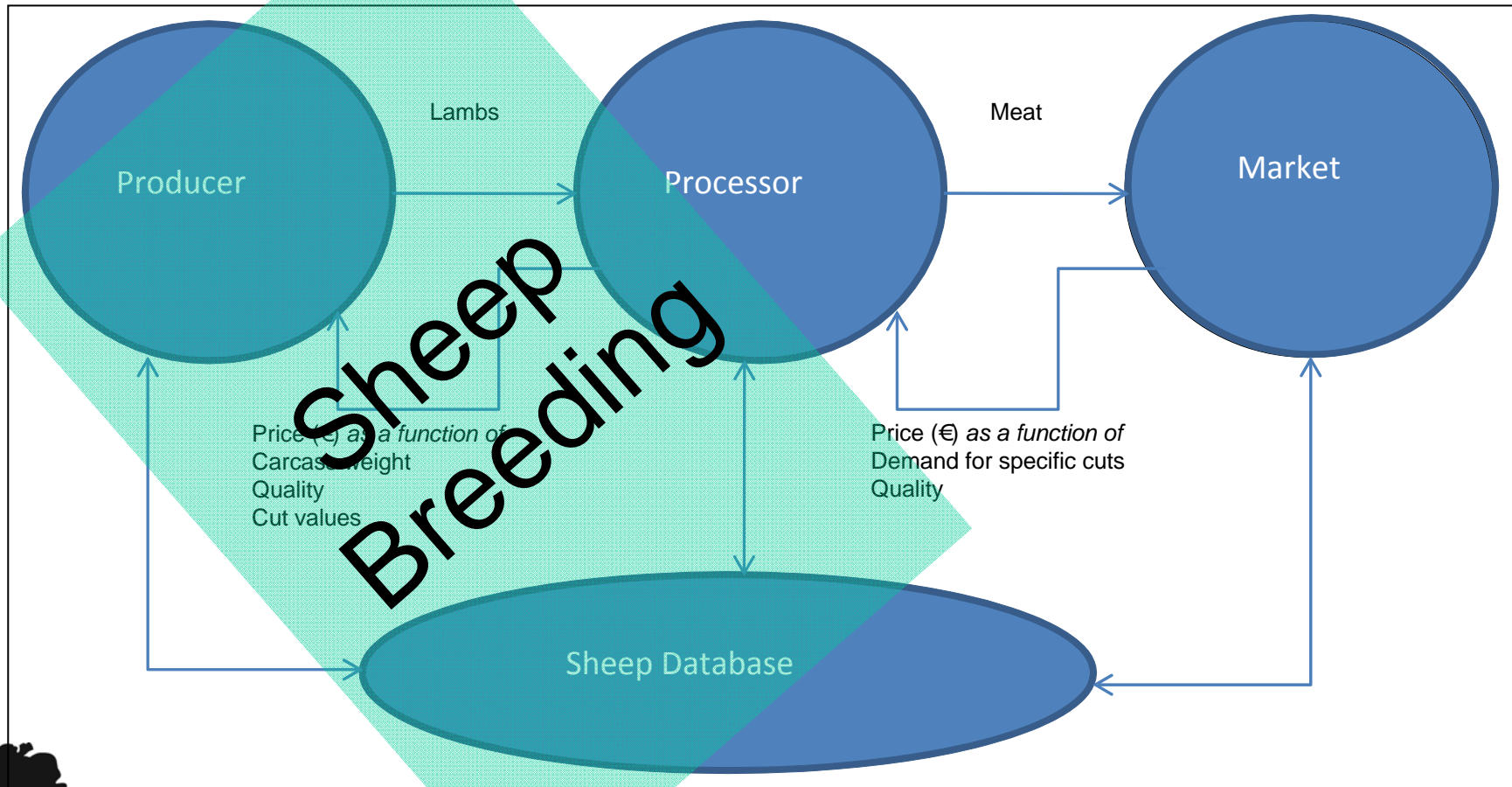
1. Welcome & introductions
2. Apologies – attendance sheet, email addresses please
3. Sheep Ireland Plan & Progress Report
4. Cattle Herd Book Experience
5. Flock Book Services
6. AOB

# Background

- Strategy Project Team
  - Irish sheep industry meeting (~50 people)
  - Excellent contributions & feedback
  - Provided “pointers” for recommendations
  - Review with key stakeholders
  - Final Report
- Interim Sheep Board
  - Adopted recommendations with minor changes
  - Implementation proceeding – Flock Books are focus today

# Place in the Supply Chain

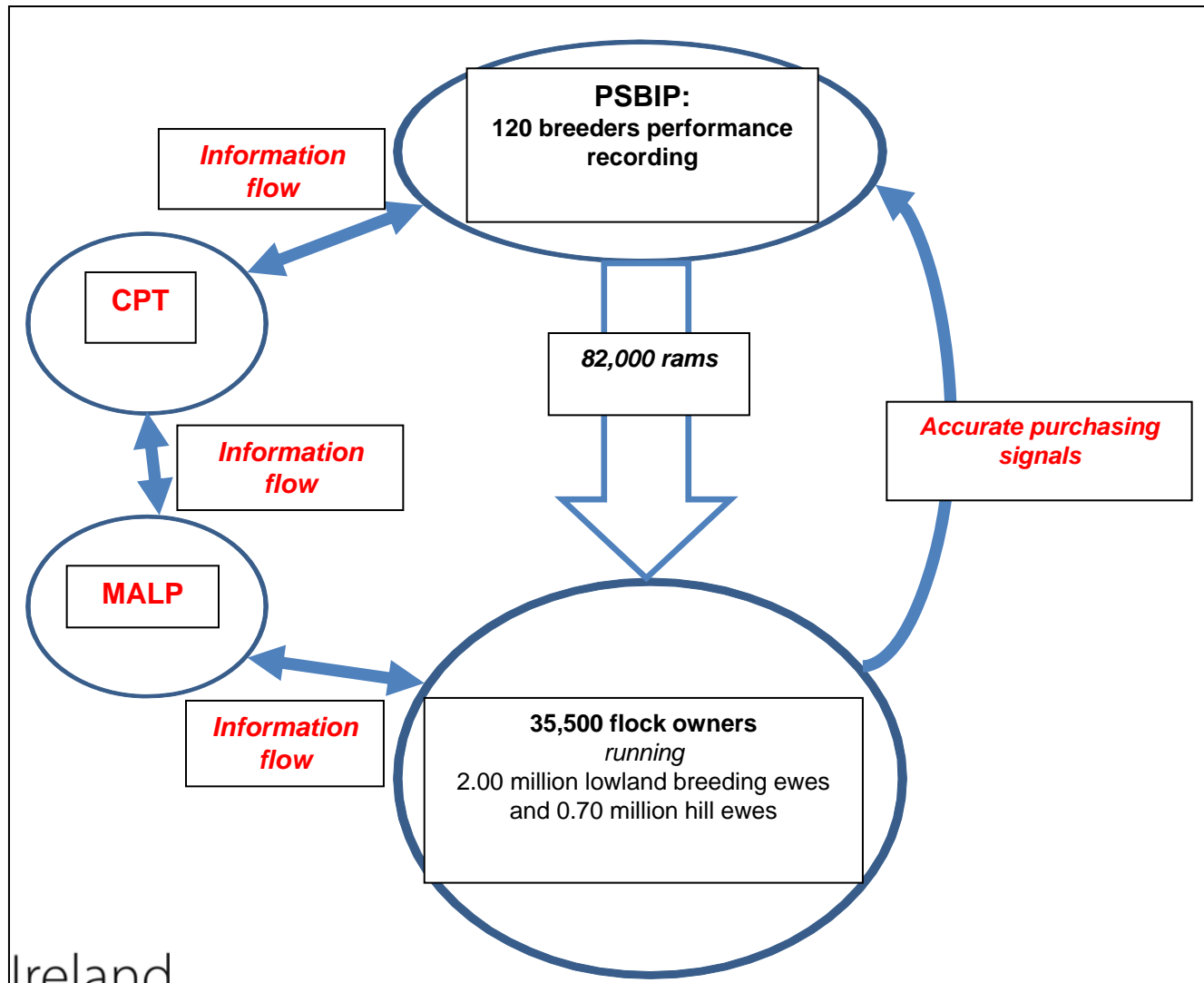
*a long-term highly-profitable Irish sheep industry*



# Overview

- Impact of the proposed improvement scheme
  - Recommendations for:
    - Individual animal ID
    - Data recording
    - Genetic evaluations
    - Breeding and demonstration schemes
    - Industry cost-benefit
    - Support structure for development and function

# Impact of the proposed improvement scheme



# Recommendations for:

## Individual Animal Identification

# Recommendation 1

- Animal ID – the system
  - Lifetime unique identifier will underpin new developments (same tag number if loss, no re-tag on movement)
  - Modified NSIS
  - Double tagging – identical visual ID in each ear
  - Only a requirement for performance recorded animals (breeders and producers)
  - One tag replaceable by EID tag
- New Sheep Ireland ID system agreed with DAFF

# Sheep Ireland Participating Flocks - Identification\*

- Left ear – NSIS
- Right ear – NSIS
- Lost tags – replaced with same ID
- Movement to another participating flock – retain both tags, no new tag
- Movement to non-participating flock – new owners tag in right ear

\* See details on [www.sheep.ie](http://www.sheep.ie)

# Recommendation 2

- Establish Sheep Database
  - NSIS traceability requirements met
  - Database has a key role in tracking animal location
  - All movements notified to the Sheep Database
  - Particularly important with no re-tagging on movement
- Sheep database established and PSBIP data loaded

# Recommendation for:

## Data Capture and Recording

# Recommendation 3

- Data recording – EID
  - Performance recorded flocks move as quickly as possible to EID
  - Subject to cost and practicality
  - Will facilitate lower cost, more frequent, and more accurate data recording
- Cost and practicality of EID being investigated

# Recommendation 4

- Data recording – Trait recording
  - Increase timing and breadth of recording across economically-important traits
    - Earlier, later, and more frequent lamb live weights
    - Lamb mortality
    - Lambing difficulty
    - Foot problems, Dag score, Faecal egg counts
    - Ewe mature weights
- Protocols being developed for recording identification and traits

# Recommendation 5

- Data recording – Minimum recording criteria
  - Advise best practice recording protocols
  - Every effort made to include all recorded data in genetic evaluations to improve accuracy
  - These things will ensure a reasonable quality of results
  - Flock owners should be able to participate at a level they find cost beneficial to ensure the scheme is operational

# Recommendation 6

- Data recording – Recording systems
  - system to be developed to minimise costs and disruption to normal management
  - costs of all performance recording should initially be primed through Government support
  - move to a user-pays basis over time in a way that
  - maintains and enhances participation in performance recording in response to
  - demand for trait improvements by commercial producers
  - specialist services still provided by technicians

# Recommendation 7

- Data recording – Data capture
  - Range of data capture systems should be offered
  - A view of migration to widespread use to EID
  - Focus on data integrity and cost savings

# Recommendation 8

- Data recording – Provision for new genomic technologies
  - High quality blood samples should be taken from selected animals (Central Progeny Test)
  - DNA test will improve accuracy of prediction of merit
- Strategy and process being developed to collect DNA samples on MALP and breeder flocks

# Recommendations 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

## LambPlus

- Performance recording service to breeders, producers, MALP & CPT
- Web based data recording and reporting
- Protocols under development
- Genetic evaluation and other information reports
- Annual base fee plus fees for extra services, initially supported by DAFF
- Payments by direct debit

# Recommendation for:

## Genetic Evaluations

# Recommendation 9

- Genetic evaluations – Timing of evaluations
  - Evaluations conducted on at least a weekly basis
  - Modern web-based rapid turn around system
  - Data will be entered into database at many times during year with results required quickly

# Recommendation 10

- Genetic evaluations – Reporting of results
  - Draft version of the breeding objective prepared for further industry consultation
  - Use breeding objective to report sub-indexes for trait groups and overall indexes
  - Need a wide range of results for breeders and commercial buyers

# Recommendation for:

## Breeding and Demonstration Schemes

# Recommendation 1 1

- Breeding and demonstration schemes – the Central Progeny Test
  - The CPT as outlined should be implemented to start mating 2009
  - Very important in displaying differences in genetic merit and,
  - Assessing large number of rams from a range of sources across the recorded animal industry

# Recommendation 12

- Breeding and demonstration schemes – the Maternal Lamb Producer Group
  - The MALP should be established for mating 2008
  - A convincing demonstration of the range of genetic merit across a range of commercial flocks
- MALP underway with 5 groups – ram transfer and mating at present

# Recommendation 13

- Breeding and demonstration schemes – CPT and MALP – emphasis on traits
  - The CPT and MALP should have a strong focus on traits not breeds
  - This should encourage vital co-operation of breed societies
- Protocols being developed for trait recording in CPT and MALP as part of LambPlus

# Recommendation 14

- Breeding and demonstration schemes – CPT location
  - The CPT must be spread over geographically diverse locations where possible
  - Because it must provide a demonstration to producers in normal farm situations relevant to their own

# Recommendation 15

- Breeding and demonstration schemes – Operations of the MALP
  - Provides the opportunity to incorporate interests of all levels of the industry
  - Designed to provide valuable information with minimal disruption to normal management
  - Critical to dissemination of knowledge to breeders and producers
- Operational protocols developed (trait recording protocols being developed as part of LambPlus)

# Recommendation for:

## Cost-Benefit

# Recommendation 16

- Potential impact of proposed evaluation scheme – Cost benefit
  - A cost-benefit analysis should be conducted to elude to the financial benefits of the scheme
  - Successful genetic evaluation scheme will provide ongoing improvements to the Irish sheep flock

# Industry cost-benefit

- Early work
  - Indicative costs ~€690,000 (CPT and MALP – in report)
    - 5 years of program
  - Indicative benefits (sensitivity)
    - 10 years
- Benefit to cost ratio of 3:1 with potential to reach 6:1

# Industry cost-benefit

Proportion of ewes mated to improved rams	Benefit CWT	Benefit NLB	Total benefit
12.5%	€ 411,123	€ 97,828	€ 508,952
25.0%	€ 822,247	€ 195,656	€ 1,017,903
37.5%	€ 1,233,370	€ 293,484	€ 1,526,855
50.0%	€ 1,644,494	€ 391,312	€ 2,035,806
62.5%	€ 2,055,617	€ 489,140	€ 2,544,758
75.0%	€ 2,466,741	€ 586,969	€ 3,053,709
87.5%	€ 2,877,864	€ 684,797	€ 3,562,661
100.0%	€ 3,288,987	€ 782,625	€ 4,071,612

# Recommendation for:

## Support Structure

# Recommendation 17

- Structure – The need for a collective support structure
  - All key sectors included – industry wide collaboration
  - Development of a permanent structure
    - Processors
    - Producers (recording and not recording)
    - Breeders (recording and not recording)
- Sheep Ireland, and [www.sheep.ie](http://www.sheep.ie) established.
- Sheep Ireland Ltd being established.
- Consideration being given to recommended structure.

# Recommendation 18

- Structure – Participation by processors
  - Breeding objective developed to reflect future industry benefits from improved carcass characteristics
  - Close consultation with sheep processing sector

# Recommendation 19

- Structure – Participation be performance recording pedigree breeders
  - Migration of existing PSBIP resource to the new Sheep Database is a priority
  - Current PSBIP breeders have a key resource
  - Improved and expanded services should be offered to these breeders as soon as possible
- Invite letters to current breeders and LambPlus services under development

# Recommendation 20

- Structure – Participation by the breed societies
  - Breed society services need to be incorporated as part of the Sheep Database
  - Represents a huge opportunity for cost efficient delivery of these services through integration with the Sheep Database
- Cattle Herd Book Experience – Nuala Hourihane of Charalois
- Discussion!

# Flock Book Services

- Administration support
  - Membership
  - Registrations
  - Billing
  - Web site

# Flock Book Services

- Flock Book Management System – web based
  - Member Information
    - Search
    - Individual customer detail maintenance
    - Flock detail maintenance
    - Linked with flock book website
    - Pedigree registrations by year by breeder

# Flock Book Services

- Flock Book Management System – web based
  - Animal Information
    - Multiple ID search
    - Individual animal detail maintenance
    - Individual Indexes & Evaluations
    - Pedigree & certificates
    - Movement history
    - Registered rams and ewes

# Flock Book Services

- Flock Book Management System – web based
  - Reports
    - Registration and Birth report
    - Sire summaries (offspring numbers etc)
    - Stock reconciliation reports
    - Pedigree reports