



Breeding Profitable Sheep for Ireland – LambPlus[®]

Progress report – Interim
Sheep Board

17th September 2009

Overview

- Progress on 20 Recommendations:
 1. Animal ID - System
 2. Animal ID - Database
 3. Data Rec. - EID
 4. Data Rec. – Traits & Flex.
 5. Data Rec. – Rec. Criteria
 6. Data Rec. – Rec. Systems
 7. **Data Rec. – Data Capture**
 8. Data Rec. – Genomics
 9. Gen. Evaluations – Timing
 10. Gen. Evaluations - Report
 11. **Breeding Schemes - CPT**
 12. **Breeding Schemes - MALP**
 13. **Breeding Schemes – CPT & MALP**
 14. **Breeding Schemes – CPT Location**
 15. Breeding Schemes – MALP Operation
 16. Impact of Gen.Eval Scheme
 17. Support Structure
 18. Structure - Processors
 19. Structure – Pedigree Breeders
 20. Structure – Flock Books

7.Data Rec. – Data Capture

- Pedigree Flocks
- Web
 - Improvements to web screens identified.
 - Work underway.
 - Web Improvement work must be finished **before** Lambplus Service can be promoted & new Flockowners signed up.

1 1 .Breeding Schemes - CPT

Flock Selection

- Initial Plan was:
 - **3 Flocks**
 - **2100 Ewes**
- 8 Applications received
- 2 eliminated on size
- 6 Flocks visited
 - 3 Outdoor/3 Indoor Lambing
 - It became evident that Outdoor Lambing over such a short period would have been too high risk.
- Set list of questions used for all visits.
- Interview Panel: Tim Byrne, Tim Keady, Pat Donnellan & Stephen Potterton

1 1 .Breeding Schemes - CPT

Flock Selection

- Revised Plan is:
 - **3 Flocks**
 - **1700 Ewes** (Option to go for 2050 ewes)
- 3 Applicants Selected:
 - John Large, Gortnahoe, Co.Tipperary (600 ewes)
 - Andrew Moloney, Edenderry, Co.Offaly (500 ewes)
 - James Napper, Oldcastle, Co.Meath (950 ewes)
- 2 of Selected Flocks are already MALP Participants.
- Well Respected Sheep Farmers
- Supportive of Sheep Ireland Breeding initiative.

1 1 .Breeding Schemes - CPT

Ram Selection

- ‘Well Linked’ Rams are required for use in the CPT
- Analysis of Lambplus Flocks produced ‘Ram List’.
- Owners of most ‘Well Linked’ Rams contacted.
 - Availability status of each Ram established.
- Ram Required for approx 4 weeks for:
 - Semen Collection for Straw Freezing
 - Semen Collection for Fresh Semen Insemination.
 - Possibility of Selling Ram into MALP Flock
- Final List of Rams for CPT now ready
- Flock Owners being contacted.

1 1 .Breeding Schemes - CPT

Semen Collection Facility

- Facility needed to house & collect approx 60 Rams
- UCD Lyons applied as CPT Flock.
- Not suitable for CPT but ideal for above requirement.
- Lyons has pens, lab, ewe teaser facilities available.
- Bio Security measures being put in place.
- Ideal Location – SP can be based there while Rams are in.

CPT- Trait Research Facility

- UCD Lyons flock (300 ewes) will be used for CPT Research.
 - Record Traits that are difficult to record elsewhere.
 - Genomic/DNA Technologies.



* See details on www.sheep.ie

1 1 .Breeding Schemes - CPT

Artificial Insemination

- Sheep AI Service Providers contacted.
- Sheep Ireland CPT Project is a big piece of work.
- Well resourced & skilled Service Provider Required.
- Innovis will provide Service:
- SP to be trained up on Ram Handling/Semen Collection by Innovis
- Rams will have 50 straws frozen for 'backup' in case Ram does not perform on the day.
- Approx 50 straws will be collected for Ram Owner as 'Benefit in Kind' Payment.

12. Breeding Schemes - MALP

- All DNA Parentage & Weight data collected.
- Genetic Evaluations being run.
- Ram culling & selection list drawn up.
- Ram transfer from Ped to MALP flocks to be improved



13.MALP Parentage results

- 10800 lamb DNA samples analysed with 224 rams
- 441 dead lamb DNA samples also included
- 933 progeny cant be identified to one sire only
 - Need ewe DNA to solve
- 7500 with birth date
 - Some farmers record birth date against ewe so need ewe DNA to solve

14.MALP Parentage results

- ~35 progeny/ sire (after edits)
 - A good number for genetic evaluation
 - Minimum 0 progeny
 - Maximum 209 progeny (link ram)
 - 55 of the 224 rams sired 5000 of the lambs
- At least 2 weight records for each lamb
- Ewe DNA to be collected and analysed this mating season

15. Breeding Schemes – CPT & MALP

- 24 MALP Flocks established
- 8 Flocks was what was required
- Well Linked Rams transfer from Ped – MALP Flocks not ideal.
- 2 MALP flocks now CPT's.
- Need to 'tighten up' structure of 22 MALP Flocks.
- Reserve Price v Price Offered & Breed Preferences causing MALP – Ped Flock connection to break down.
- Sheep Ireland then gets very clear signal as to which MALP & Pedigree Flocks are committed.
- All CPT Candidate Rams at Lyons (with owners permission) will be offered to MALP Flocks.

16. Breeding Schemes – CPT Location

- Ideally spread around the country
- Meath
- Offaly
- Tipperary
- Outdoor Lambing option needs to be investigated more before being followed.

AOB - Resources

- Sheep Ireland Technical Position advertised:
- Based in Bandon
- Main Functions:
 - Develop Lambplus Service
 - Increase number of flocks involved
 - Develop Screens & Reports
 - Interact with SP re: MALP & CPT
- 12 applications received by 1st of Sept.
- Interviews to take place shortly



* See details on www.sheep.ie