

North Dakota Lamb & Wool
Producers Association



 HETTINGER RESEARCH EXTENSION CENTER
NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

NDSU
Extension Service
North Dakota State University

NDSU
Department of Animal Science
North Dakota State University

2010 Performance Ram Test

Attention North Dakota Sheep Producers:

You are invited to participate in the **2010 Performance Ram Test** at the NDSU Hettinger Research Extension Center. The purpose of the test is to compare growth and carcass traits among ram lambs raised under a similar environment. Consignors will be provided with average daily gain, rib-eye area, and fat thickness data for each ram. During the duration of the test updates on ram performance will be posted on the Hettinger Research Extension Center website (located at: www.ag.ndsu.edu/HettingerREC/) every 28 days. At the end of the **70-day testing period** (May 20th to July 29th) finalized data and index rankings will be sent to all consignors. **A new Index will be utilized this year which incorporates ADG, loin eye area, and backfat, but also accounts for ram birth date, heritability of these traits, and economic impact on producer profitability of these traits. The resulting Index will attempt to combine these into a PROFITABILITY INDEX.**

An award will be given to the #1 Indexing ram within each breed. Rams placing in the **top 2/3 of each breed** will be considered "Performance Ram Test Certified." Producers will be allowed to consign these rams to the Eastern North Dakota (location to be determined) or Hettinger Ram Sale (**only if they are a North Dakota resident, or have prior approval of the Sale Manager**). Within a breed, the highest Indexing Ram Test Ram available at each sale will lead the breed in sale order (exp. the #1 Suffolk may lead the Suffolk section at Hettinger, with the #3 Suffolk leading the Suffolk section in Eastern ND). However, the total number of rams at each sale a producer may consign is still limited to the sale guidelines. Following the Top Ram, sale order will return to the guidelines set by the respective sale. Rams that are not eligible for certification will be allowed to sell as "Performance Tested," but must be included into the consignment limits set by the Hettinger or Eastern ND Ram Sale.

There is no minimum or maximum number of rams a consignor may consign. Crossbred rams are allowed, but all crossbred rams will be assigned to a "Crossbred" category.

In order to be eligible, rams must be **born between January 15th and March 1 of 2010**. Rams must be delivered to the testing facility at the Hettinger Research Extension Center from **May 10th to May 18th**.

Attached you will find the consignor and HREC agreements, the entry form, and a NDLWPA membership form. If you have any further questions regarding the 2010 Performance Ram Test please feel free to contact one of the following:

Mr. Wyman Scheetz, NDLWPA President, Columbia Breed Representative (701-794-8743)
Mr. Brent Kuss, NDLWPA Secretary, Dorset and Polypay Breed Representative (701-752-4354)
Mr. David Pearson, NDLWPA Suffolk and Rambouillet Breed Representative (701-567-4488)
Mr. Lyle Warner, Hampshire Breed Representative (701-255-1183)
Dr. Christopher Schauer, HREC Director/Animal Scientist (701-567-4323)

Hettinger Research Extension Center Agreement Form

The HREC agrees to:

1. Conduct the 2010 Performance Ram Test at the HREC in Hettinger, ND under the co-management of Christopher Schauer and Dave Pearson.
2. Weigh and tag rams and give an enterotoxemia booster at delivery.
3. Allow rams a three-day adjustment period, followed by a 70-day testing period. Rams will be self-fed a 17% Crude Protein, 85% Total Digestible Nutrient complete feed. The ration will consist of approximately 15% alfalfa pellets, 15% market lamb pellet, 60% corn, and 10% oats. The protein and energy contents of this diet will be adjusted as needed.
4. Worm all rams once during the adjustment period and give each ram an enterotoxemia booster during the middle of the testing period.
5. Weigh rams every 28 days. Progress reports will be posted online (www.ag.ndsu.edu/HettingerREC/) within one week of each weighing.
6. Ultrasound all rams at the end of the test for determination of rib-eye area and fat thickness.
7. Pen rams in groups based on weight as feasible.
8. Provide the following information to all breeders on all rams completing the test:
 - ◆ Starting and Ending Weight
 - ◆ Average Daily Gain
 - ◆ Actual and Adjusted Fat Thickness (scanned at the 12th rib)
 - ◆ Actual and Adjusted Rib-Eye Area (scanned at the 12th rib)
 - ◆ Scrotal Circumference
10. Notify breeders immediately should a ram not perform well due to health problems.
12. Permit consignors to inspect their rams and the facility at any time provided the Hettinger Research Extension Center is contacted in advance (701-567-4323).

Consignor Agreement Form

The consignor agrees to:

1. Deliver ram lambs to the Hettinger Research Extension Center in Hettinger, North Dakota from May 10th to May 18th.

Rams will:

- ◆ be born between January 15th and March 1, 2010
 - ◆ be completely healed from docking and be unshorn
 - ◆ have been vaccinated for enterotoxemia with CDT toxoid 2-4 weeks before delivery
 - ◆ have been weaned at least one week prior to delivery
 - ◆ have at least one R allele at codon 171, either by test results or RR parentage
 - ◆ be scrapie tagged with flock of origin identified
 - ◆ go on test May 20th and come off test July 29th (70-day test)
2. Complete the information requested on the attached entry form.

In order to comply with North Dakota health regulations, all rams will be tested for Brucella ovis (ELISA) at the end of the performance test. **All animals must be accompanied by health papers, and originate from a footrot and scrapie free flock.**

3. Provide the reservation form, signed agreement, and entry fee for each ram at the time of delivery to HREC. The entry fee for each ram will be \$100.00 (checks must be made payable to: Hettinger Research Extension Center). This fee covers feed and veterinary costs for the duration of the test.
4. All consignors must be paid members of the North Dakota Lamb and Wool Producers Association. Membership is open to anyone. Dues are \$20 per year. **Please provide a separate check for dues, payable to NDWPA.**
5. Pay any additional expenses at the completion of the test or extraordinary expenses incurred on a particular ram, such as individual health care by a veterinarian.
6. Remove immediately any ram which the management or consulting veterinarian feel should be removed for health reasons. After pro-rating days on feed, ram owners will be refunded appropriately.
7. With the exception of health, as mentioned in item 6, to leave all rams on test for the entire test period.
8. When possible, to have all rams accustomed to a 16% protein, complete pelleted feed. *Note: experience at other test facilities has shown that rams accustomed to a feed similar to the testing ration will adjust more smoothly to their new environment.*
9. **Rams delivered will be accompanied with an appropriate health paper indicating that the flock of origin is free of foot rot and scrapie.**
10. All shorn wool will be the property of the HREC and credited against total test costs.
11. The HREC (or its employees) are not liable for loss, injury or reduced value of rams on the test.
12. To carry insurance on rams if desired, as none is carried on them by the HREC.

I have read the above statements and agree to fulfill them.

Producer Signature: _____

Date: _____

