

Guidelines for the 2017 West Virginia Small Ruminant Evaluation Program

Sponsors:

West Virginia University – Division of Animal and Nutritional Sciences
West Virginia Purebred Sheep Breeders Association
West Virginia Shepherd's Association

Delivery: Saturday May 13, 2017 Sale: Saturday August 19 th

LOCATION: WVU Animal Science Farm, 1245 Stewartstown Rd, Morgantown, WV 26506

PURPOSE:

1. To have a common environment and unbiased evaluation of economically important traits of young sires to be used in West Virginia flocks and herds.
2. To provide a test that is available to producers with both small and large flocks. Producers will have the opportunity to test rams and bucks for either home use or to be consigned to an annual Performance-Tested Sale. Thus both purebred and crossbred rams and meat goat bucks will be tested. Bucks should be at least 50% meat goat breed.
3. To promote performance testing of all sheep and goats in West Virginia flocks/herds and serve as an educational tool for the sheep and goat industry.
4. Provide an opportunity for purebred breeders and commercial producers to obtain performance tested rams and bucks that have been evaluated in part under similar environmental conditions.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS:

1. Rams/Bucks must carry appropriate Federal Scrapie Program identification tag at delivery.
2. No Rams/Bucks may enter from any flock under federal or state quarantine.
3. **ALL HEALTH PAPERS MUST ACCOMPANY RAMS/BUCKS BEING DELIVERED TO THE STATION. HEALTH PAPERS MUST BE PRESENTED AND CLEARED BEFORE THEY ARE UNLOADED**

4. All rams/bucks must have their feet trimmed within 10 days prior to delivery to the station.
5. Animals will be processed during the warm-up period as follows:
 - i. treated for control of internal and external parasites,
 - ii. feet soaked in a foot bath of zinc sulfate at time of delivery
 - iii. paint branded
 - iv. vaccinated for Enterotoxemia, Tetanus and Soremouth
 - v. treated for Coccidia
 - vi. Any rams not sheared within 10 days prior to delivery will be sheared prior to the On Test weigh day at a cost of \$5.00.
 - vii. genetic testing for scrapie susceptibility, which is **mandatory** for rams and will be acquired **at** the test station
6. On arrival at the test station, ram lambs/kids will be evaluated for type, soundness (reproductive, mouth, feet/leg structure), and health (including any foot problems) by a committee and veterinarian. To qualify rams/bucks must meet all of the above conditions.
7. All horned animals **MUST** have their horns tipped before delivery to the station or they will be tipped at delivery.

ELIGIBILITY:

1. A maximum of 30 rams and 30 bucks will be accepted to the test. Cooperators will be notified of the number of rams/bucks accepted as soon as possible. Preference will be given to West Virginia cooperators. However out-of-state cooperators will be accepted if space is available with priority determined by previous participation and the postmark date on nomination forms.
2. To be eligible for the 2017 test, rams/bucks must be born January 1, 2017 – February 29, 2017.
3. Rams/bucks of any meat breed are eligible for the program. However, all rams/bucks of a recognized breed must be registered and registration papers must be furnished prior to July 30. Crossbred rams/bucks also will be accepted for the test and the sale, any percentage registered ram will be considered as Crossbred.
4. Rams/bucks must be raised by their natural mothers (lambs/kids raised on nurse ewes/does and foster dams are not eligible for the sale) except that ET lambs/kids may be consigned as long as there is a minimum of three full brothers consigned. ET lambs/kids must be gestated and raised by ewes/does of the same breed as the breed of the ram lamb/buck kid.
5. It is strongly encouraged that at least three rams/bucks from the same contemporary group at weaning be consigned to the test (except as described previously for ETs).

6. Consignors of accepted rams/bucks agree to abide by all rules, regulations, terms, and conditions of the entire program, and any that might be adopted by the West Virginia Small Ruminant Test Committee for that particular test.

PROCEDURES FOR ENTRANCE:

1. Complete Nomination form and mail with \$20.00 per ram/buck nomination fee, postmarked by April 14, 2017. Make check payable to "West Virginia University". Entry fees for rams/bucks not accepted due to insufficient facility space and/or rams/bucks that do not meet entry requirements will be refunded.
2. After notification of acceptance, complete Consignment Forms and deliver them with the rams/bucks on Saturday, May 13, 2017.
3. Weigh your lambs/kids between 30 and 90 days of age to calculate an adjusted weaning weight ratio to help identify your superior gaining rams/bucks. We encourage purebred breeders to also submit data to NSIP.

Data needed to calculate adjusted weaning weight ratios include:

- i. Birth dates
 - ii. Weaning date/ Weaning Weights
 - iii. Age of Dam
 - iv. Birth type/Rearing type
 - v. Birth weights (optional)
4. Rams/Bucks will be received between 8:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. on May 13, 2017 or by scheduling another time with Dr. Scott Bowdridge.

COSTS:

1. \$100 per ram/buck at delivery (applied to feed, bedding, Veterinary costs, yardage and other station costs associated with recording ultrasonographic data, genetic testing for scrapie, and conducting the Breeding Soundness Evaluation). The balance will be either added to or deducted from the sale proceeds.
2. Sale costs will include a 5% commission for those rams/bucks making the sale and will be deducted from the sale proceeds.
3. If a ram/buck dies or is removed during the program, the cooperator will pay all costs accumulated to that date.

SALE REQUIREMENTS:

1. To consign rams/bucks to the post-test sale, a cooperator must be a member of the West Virginia Purebred Sheep Breeders Association. Membership dues (\$10) will be deducted from sale proceeds.
2. To be eligible for the sale, registration certificates for each registered ram/buck enrolled in the program must be provided by **July 30, 2017**: Otherwise they will be considered as Crossbred.
3. Animals in the following categories will not qualify for the sale:
 - a. Any ram with a scrotal circumference of less than 26 cm.
 - b. Rams with a USDA feeder lamb grade for muscle less than 1.0 / Bucks with a USDA meat goat grade for muscle less than 1.0
 - c. Rams/Bucks considered unsound and/or fail to pass the Breeding Soundness Evaluation.
 - d. Rams identified as QQ at Codon 171
4. After culling on the above information (item #3 a,b,c & d), the balance of culling will be based upon the index. A minimum of two-thirds and up to three-fourths of the rams/bucks in a breed will be eligible to sell. The Small Ruminant Test Management Committee will determine those numbers.
5. The index will be used to determine sale order, but will not be published. The index will be calculated as follows:
$$\text{Index} = [.4*(RFI \text{ ratio})] + [.3*(Loin \text{ Eye Area ratio})] + [.3*(ADG \text{ ratio})]$$
6. A floor price will be established for the sale based upon market conditions. Any ram/buck offered for sale that fails to bring the floor price will be the responsibility of the cooperator as soon as the ram/buck leaves the sale ring.
7. Seller agrees to guarantee ability of rams/bucks to breed and settle ewes/does if properly cared for.
8. The sale committee reserves the right to disqualify any ram/buck because of health, disposition or lack of identification, and/or if in the committee's opinion, the ram/buck appears to be misrepresented. As a cooperator, you agree to allow management to obtain blood samples for DNA testing/evaluation.

OTHER:

1. Sale order will be determined by the Small Ruminant Evaluation committee and the sale committee. They will have the flexibility to adjust sale order so some sire groups may be offered for sale.
2. Rams/Bucks will be fed in groups, according to breed and age, within facility limitations.
3. All rams/bucks must remain on feed for the entire period unless removed with written permission from the test manager. Non-sale rams/bucks will be released at the conclusion of the test. Cooperators are encouraged to send inferior rams/bucks to slaughter.
4. Cooperators are recommended to wean lambs/kids at least 2 weeks prior to delivery and have them started on ad-libitum **pelleted** feed in order to minimize stress.
5. Announcements at the sale will come from the auctioneer's box.
6. Breeds represented by fewer than two consigners will be handled in the most appropriate manner possible as determined by the Small Ruminant Evaluation committee.

LIABILITY:

Rams/Bucks in the evaluation program will receive appropriate management. Veterinary services will be used when deemed necessary by the station management and/or the program chairman. The sponsors assume no liability for loss of rams/bucks, property damage, personal injury, or the accuracy of consignor information or of data collected.

SCHEDULE:

Birth Dates	Jan. 1 - Feb. 29, 2017
Wean lambs by	April 30, 2017
Delivery to Test	May 13, 2017
On Test	May 22, 2017
21 Day Report	June 12, 2017
42 Day Report	July 3, 2017
Off Test	July 31, 2017
Ultrasound when group weighs an average of 125 lbs.	
Sale Day	August 19, 2017

Rams/Bucks will be weighed weekly to collect the gain data necessary to calculate Residual Feed Intake. On Test and Off Test weights will be taken two consecutive times and averaged to help take into account differences in gut fill. Progress reports will be disseminated at three week intervals and can be accessed on the web at: <http://sheepandgoats.wvu.edu> or our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/wvrambucktest> .

Addresses and phone numbers for reference:

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**2017 West Virginia Small Ruminant
Evaluation Program
Nomination Form
Due by April 14, 2017**

Please Print:

Owner's Name _____

Farm Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

E-Mail _____

BREED _____ Number of Rams/Bucks you want to test _____

I the owner, do hereby accept full and complete responsibility for my animals throughout the 2017 West Virginia Small Ruminant Evaluation Program. I have read and agree to abide by the rules, terms and conditions of the program, outlined in the Guidelines for the 2017 West Virginia Small Ruminant Evaluation Program.

(Owners Signature)

(Date)

Nomination Fee: \$20.00/Ram or buck (Due with this form)

Make check payable to: West Virginia University

Send nomination fee and form to: Dr. Scott Bowdridge
West Virginia University
333 Evansdale Dr
2213 Ag Science Bldg
Morgantown, WV 26506-6108