



Spring 2021 Newsletter

It's been a busy 12 months for shedding sheep & Exlana sheep in particular---the collapse of the wool market, a desire for easy to manage high performance ewes and a realisation that heavily selected recorded genetics are worth the investment have led many newcomers to the wool shedding world

Ram sales—

Our new ram sales format offering early purchase on line or over the phone proved popular and provided many buyers with quality genetics at a very affordable price---if you wish to take advantage of this option this coming season, we recommend contacting us early on to discuss options and make reservations

We delivered rams across the country from Norfolk to West Wales and the Isle of Wight to Inverness , this was undoubtedly a well-received service for many farmers at what can be a busy time of year . If you are interested in having your rams delivered please let us know and we will arrange it

The Elite ram sale held for the first time in 2020 with an online bidding option via www.sellmylivestock.co.uk was a great success with 50% of sales going to online bidders. When you have proven data, known health status, individual videos & an area delivery option it's a convenient way to make a purchase. This year the **Exlana Elite Sale will be on 3rd August 2021 at Jct 27 M5** & in a very similar format to 2020 although we do hope that more people will be able to attend in person if regulations allow

Feed Conversion Trials—

We have recently completed a new batch of individual Feed Conversion Trials at the Robert Orr Small Ruminant Facility, Rothamstead . These trials, generously sponsored by Mole Valley Farmers and using equipment on hire from CIEL , will help identify trait leaders for Feed Conversion to be used in future breeding programs

Exlana sheep are already one of the most rigorously recorded and selected maternal breeds in UK, exploring the potential to add Feed Conversion to our selection criteria can only help reduce economically & environmentally costly inputs.

This is a small but significant start to exploring the potential use of genetically superior feed efficient livestock as a cumulative and sustainable means for reducing livestock's Carbon footprint

Axiom MV Monitoring Scheme

Maedi Visna (MV) is an infectious virus of sheep which causes respiratory disease, chronic wasting and increased mastitis. You may have come across the disease in discussion with your vet looking at

cull ewe screening ie. if there are too many thin ewes or if there is excessive mastitis. The most common way to introduce MV into a flock is either with the purchase of infected carrier animals who shed the virus and infect others, or through contact with other flocks at boundaries on the farm. We have been encouraging our customers to consider screening for MV by looking at a snap-shot of the flock using a “12 ewe cull screen”. However, Axiom Vets (www.axiomfarm.com) have now launched their own MV Monitoring scheme which involves some biosecurity amendments and blood sampling an annual snap-shot of the flock. The number of animals needed to be sampled is less than full high health “MV accreditation”. Participating in this scheme would be an added benefit for establishing and maintaining the flock’s own health status and a benefit if selling breeding stock ---well worth looking at & discussing with your vet if you are interested in protecting your flock’s health status and profitability

FEC/IgA Internal Parasite Resistance Trials

Exlana breeders are taking part in this exciting work looking at the use of serum IgA levels to help predict genetic resistance to worms <https://signetdata.com/technical/projects/parasite-resistance-serum-iga/>

We hope that it will lead to a better understanding of the way in which we can predict and select for this important trait

High demand for females continues

Demand for wool shedding ewes continues to rise and customers are increasingly interested in stock from proven, recorded genetics and of known health status

We have recently arranged for an “Exlana” page on www.sellmylivestock.co.uk , ***we are already getting orders for females so if you have stock you would like to sell please let us know ASAP***

Kiwis scramble to catch up with wool shedding ---

The Kiwis have finally seen that wool doesn’t pay the bills and the demand for shedding sheep has risen dramatically in the past year, sales of females have attracted strong interest with prices often reaching 1.5 times the woolly equivalent

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