

# CHAROLLAIS SIRES NEWSLETTER

**KEEPING PERFORMANCE RECORDED  
CHAROLLAIS FLOCKS INFORMED**



*We have all manner of plans for 2010 - Charollais Sires and Signet we will be pushing ahead with more activities and improved communications.*

## **EMAIL US YOUR QUESTIONS**

"All you ever wanted to know about performance recording - but were afraid to ask!"

We invite you to forward questions that you would like answered with regard to performance recording.

- Breeders are requested to make the questions as specific as possible.
- Questions can be supplied anonymously or with a name attached.
- As a general rule questions that relate to specific rams will not be answered in the public forum (to avoid the "why has ZZ:00001 got such a low index" type question).

Please let us have your questions by **FRIDAY 8TH JANUARY**

All your questions will be collated by Charollais Sires and forwarded to Sam.

Questions and Answers will be converted to a PDF file, emailed to everyone, as well as hosted on the Society website.

## **"BREEDER DEVELOPMENT DAY: GETTING THE BEST OUT OF BREEDING IMPROVEMENT"**

We have organised a Breeder Development Day for **WEDNESDAY 31ST MARCH 2010**. The day will be based around Arwyn and Jane Thomas's farm in Carmarthenshire.

This day will be open to anyone and will be designed to promote breed improvement and help flocks get the most out of the scheme. It is being based in Wales as in 2009, HCC offered incentives to flocks to use high index sires through AI and ET. The participating flocks are required to performance record their animals, so we are anticipating a large increase in the number of recorded flocks in Wales next year.

The format of the day will be talks in the morning, lunch followed by a short farm visit in the afternoon.

Provisional List of Speakers

- HCC - Welcome and overview of HCC Support for Breeding
- Charollais Sires - Performance Recording Activities - Carroll Barber
- Sam Boon - Getting the Best Out of Recording
- Breeder - The Benefits of Performance Recording
- CT Scanning - Kirsty McLean
- AI Company - Getting the Best out of AI / ET

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## FLOCK REVIEW SESSIONS - PREMIER SALE

Sam Boon will be present at Worcester Market on **Friday 2nd July 2010** to hold individual flock reviews. These will be 15 minute sessions, pre-booked with Sam or on the day. Sam will provide : -

- An Independent Flock Review - (Please bring your report)
- Discuss flock breeding objectives
- Identify flock strengths and weaknesses.
- Review genetic progress overtime
- Explain how to use data electronically
- Show people how to search for animals on the Internet

A reminder and flier on the event will be sent nearer the time.

## CT SCANNING 2010

English breeders will be receiving a questionnaire shortly from Signet with regard to CT scanning next year. Please do respond to this. CT scanning has great importance in our recording system and we need to continue with it. There is a danger that if insufficient demand is present for the mobile scanner to be in Nottingham, that this service will cease. We are highly aware that last year was difficult due to the lack of on-farm scanners to carry out this work prior to CT. Signet are currently appointing 3 staff to carry out this work - so this should have been resolved in good time for the Charollais work.

Please support the scanner at Nottingham, if you can. Last year Charollais Sires supported breeders to the tune of £10 per animal scanned. We may be a position to offer some financial assistance in 2010, but we need to know how many breeders are hoping to use the service.

## MATURE SIZE

The question of mature size of our breed, is one that is often debated. It would greatly help the debate if we had more data on this trait. An EBV is already included in the reports for this trait, but very few breeders actually submit weights, therefore at present it lacks accuracy. Breeders should weigh their shearling ewes at mating time. Most of our flocks have their ewes in for sponging or dividing into tupping groups, so it would not be too much extra effort to put the scales on the end of the race and record their weight. Mature weights can be supplied to Signet on their annual census form. We will send you a reminder to do this, nearer the time.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS

1. **Fat Depth Review** - EGENES will be looking at modelling alternatives on ATAN and weightings. The results will be provided to Charollais Sires for us to consider.
2. **Other Traits** - a Spark Award has been submitted looking into lifespan of recorded Charollais. We are holding fire on the introduction of a Lambing Ease score, to see what effect this has in other breeds.
3. **Recruitment Leaflet** - Adding Value to Your Pedigree Charollais flock. This will be mailed to all Charollais breeders, early in the new year.

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4. **Working with Different Management Systems** - A project is underway at SAC to look into how we deal with different environments / management systems when assessing breeding potential. For example, would the genetic ranking of lambs reared in a late lambing, shearling producing flock differ to that of lambs reared indoors in a December lambing flock. If lambs with identical genetics are ranked differently in the two different environments then it may be necessary to take this interaction into account. The final milestone of the project, which completes in March 2012 is to develop strategies, where necessary, for the inclusion of GxE (Genotype x Environment) interactions into current breeding programmes, enabling the selection of "robust" sires, as well as sires suited to specific environments /management systems.

5. BRP and Signet will produce a new leaflet on "**Recording a New Flock**"

This will give information on :-

Testing new sires

Providing pedigree data to link into known animals

Developing linkage to highlight the best

6. **Commercial Ram Buyers Leaflet** - Eblex Better REturns Programme will be producing a new leaflet to explain to commercial sheep producers how to buy the right recorded Charollais ram for their farm. Copies available from Signet.

We will keep you up to date with progress on these projects as well as informing you of deadlines and other activities.

Best wishes for lambing and let us have your questions by Friday 8th January.

Email to [carroll@charollaisheep.com](mailto:carroll@charollaisheep.com)

December 2009