

Genomics soon to be a reality for Irish Sheep Farmers

Introduction

Sheep Ireland is in charge of identifying and promoting the most profitable sheep genetics in Ireland through the use of performance records and genetic evaluations.

Work to date

Over 13,000 Pedigree Sheep have been genotyped, these animals will form the basis of our reference population for Genomic proofs which are to be released to breeders in 2018.

Currently 97% of our breeders record their lambing information online.

Over 1200 DNA tags & genotypes have been ordered via our online ordering service.



Ciara Long,
Sheep Ireland

Ordering a DNA tag and genotyping online is as easy as 1, 2, 3.

1. Log into your Sheep Ireland account.
2. Locate and select the animal you wish to order a genotype for via the Genomic Ordering Screen.
3. Pay for your selected animals online.



Simple, easy, and cheap – how the process works

- The breeder will receive the DNA tags within 2-3 days of the order being placed online.
- A breeder can order a DNA kit for any animal in their flock with the current genotype status displayed e.g. Genotyped, Sample in storage, Sample sent to lab etc. This makes it easier for breeders to prioritise which animals should be genotyped. The Genotype status will also be displayed for the sire and dam as they may require further action.
- The breeder takes the DNA sample from the animal and the tag (with the animals ID on it) will remain in the ear.
- The samples are returned to Sheep Ireland, which are logged on the database and placed in storage until the next batch of samples is sent to the lab.
- Breeders can track their order online once it has been placed.
- Breeders that took part in the Ovigen research project can order DNA tags and genotyping at a subsidised rate (between €3 - €8), all other breeders can order at full cost (€18).
- Currently Ovigen flocks are parentage verified via genomics, with results displayed on breeders personalised results report online.

What does the future hold?

- The process of automating the loading of genotype results directly from the laboratory to the database is due to begin in the coming weeks, this will update the breeders results report screen automatically.
- Suggested sire/dam (when they are missing or incorrect), genomic evaluations, scrapie and other major genes will be visible on the results report screen.
- Genomic proofs will be circulated to a number of breeders in spring 2018.