



Sheep Breeders Round Table 2019

Becoming the best sheep industry in the world

Biennial Conference 15-17 November 2019

Radisson Blu Hotel, Herald Way, Pegasus Business Park, East Midlands Airport, Derby DE74 2TZ

Chairman – Charles Sercombe, Treasurer – Chris Lloyd, Secretary – Liz Genever

Committee – Jonathan Barber, Samuel Boon, Emma Steele, Joanne Briggs, Gwawr Parry, Sarah Millar, Elizabeth Earle



#SBRT19

www.nationalsheep.org.uk/sbrrt

Friday 15 November

10.00	Registration	
10.30	1: Developing a resilient UK sheep industry	Chaired by Kim Matthews, AHDB Session funded by iSAGE 
10.40	Georgios Banos , Professor, Department of Computational Biology, Animal Breeding and Genomics, SRUC, Edinburgh Georgios.Banos@sruc.ac.uk	Introduction to iSAGE Georgios will introduce the EU funded project which is looking at innovation in sheep and goats.
11.00	Marion Johnson , Organic Research Centre, Berkshire marion.j@organicresearchcentre.com	Farm assessment tools Marion will be talking about why tools are important to the UK sheep industry and what they can tell us.
11.30	Ann McLaren , researcher, SRUC Hill & Mountain Research Centre, Criannlarich Ann.McLaren@sruc.ac.uk	How can we assess genetic resilience in our sheep flocks? Ann will discuss her work on genetic resilience, with some examples from the SRUC's Scottish Blackface flocks.
12.00	Coffee break	
12.30	Liz Genever , Independent sheep consultant, Lincolnshire liz@lizgenever.com	Focusing on body condition to optimise lamb production Liz will be talking about the first two years of AHDB's Challenge Sheep project, which is looking at the impact of body condition score and weights on sheep fertility, lamb growth rates, and lifetime performance. The project is tracking nearly six thousand ewes over their productive lifetime.
13.00	Tim Dunn , Breck House, Bransdale, Fadmoor breckhouse@moorsweb.co.uk and Kate Phillips , Independent Sheep Consultant katephillips58@aol.com	Ensuring sheep production in the hills is productive Tim will speak about the North York Moors Swaledale Project that concludes this year. The project focuses on improving the productivity of the hill sector and demonstrates that detailed performance recording is possible in a harsh hill environment.



13.30	Lunch	
14.30	2: Update on activity in the UK	Chaired by Jonathan Barber
14.35	Samuel Boon , <i>Signet Manager, AHDB, Stoneleigh</i> samuel.boon@ahdb.org.uk	Providing the sheep industry with the tools Samuel will provide an update on Signet's new terminal sire evaluation and the commercial progeny test, RamCompare.
15.05	Gwawr Parry , Industry Development Officer, Hybu Cig Cymru, Aberystwyth gparry@hccmpw.org.uk	Update on Welsh Hill Ram Scheme Gwawr will discuss the new scheme funded by Rural Development Programme and how it is using technology to record data.
15.20	Updates from AHDB (Emma Steele), HCC (Gwawr Parry), QMS (Sarah Millar) and Agrisearch (Elizabeth Earle)	Update from the levy boards Each of the levy boards will provide an update on how new knowledge on genetics is leading to changes on sheep farms.
16.00	Coffee break	
16.30	3: International session	Chaired by Sarah Millar, QMS
16.35	Reinard Everts , veterinarian and managing director of NSFO (Dutch Sheep and Goat Breeders Organisation) dierenarts@nsfo.nl	International sheep session – Focus on Netherlands Reinard will provide an introduction to the Dutch sheep industry and will discuss the development of EBVs on worm resistance on saliva tests and type, muscling, legs, proportionality and head based on farm inspections. Plus an update from their 'Internet of Sheep' project on predicting worm burdens and footrot research.
20.00	Drinks reception	
20.30	Conference dinner The after-dinner speaker will be Andrew Loftus, Commercial Director, Sellmylivestock.com	What are the opportunities for the UK sheep industry?

Saturday 16 November

8.45	Registration	
9.00	Charles Sercombe	Chairman's welcome
9.10	4: Starting with the end in mind	Chaired by Charles Sercombe
9.15	Siobhan Slayven, <i>Supply Chain Development Manager, AHDB</i> Siobhan.slayven@ahdb.org.uk	How to identify the best rams to meet customers' requirements Siobhan will discuss the work that is being done by RamCompare on primal weights and meat quality and what it could mean for the industry. She will also talk about additional work on colour.
9.40	Rhys Edwards, <i>Hendre Ifan Goch Farm, Blackmill, Bridgend</i> rhysedwards21@hotmail.co.uk	The benefit of using EBVs on my farm Rhys will discuss his farming system and the results from his RamCompare lambs. He will present the on-farm events alongside the EBVs for the rams he has tested in the last two seasons.
10.05	Alison Glasgow, <i>Technical manager, British Limousin Cattle Society</i> alison@limousin.co.uk	Genomics - adding value in the beef supply chain Alison will discuss the work that the British Limousin Society are doing on genomics that present new income opportunities and adds value in the beef sector.
10.30	Discussion	
10.45	Coffee break	
11.15	5: Increased focus on ewe efficiency	Chaired by Phil Stocker, NSA
11.20	Kate Phillips, <i>Lecturer, Harper Adams University, Shropshire</i> kphillips@harper-adams.ac.uk	Selecting ewes for resilient lamb production Kate and the Performance Recorded Lleyn Breeders have been working on a European Innovation Partnership (EIP). The Harper Adams' Lleyn flock are being used to evaluate the benefit of using faecal egg counts (FEC) and saliva immunoglobulin A (IgA) EBVs to select replacements that are resistant to worms. The flock is also involved in Challenge Sheep.
11.45	Sean Fair, <i>Senior lecturer, University of Limerick</i> sean.fair@ul.ie	Understanding the biology behind fertility Sean will talk about the Sustainable Sheep Production (SusSheP) research project. One of the main themes is to understand why vaginal/cervical AI with frozen-thawed semen works well at farm level in Norway but not in other countries. His talk will focus on the differences in the biology of ewe breeds leading to differences in sperm transport, fertilisation rates and pregnancy rates.
12.10	Nicola Lambe, <i>Sheep geneticist, SRUC, Crianlarich</i> nicola.lambe@sruc.ac.uk	What is new in feed efficiency and longevity? Nicola will talk about the work that is being done in Scotland and Northern Ireland with CIEL's funded kit to measure feed efficiency in sheep. She will also discuss some of the ongoing research from the SusSheP project on assessing ewe longevity across different EU countries.
12.35	Discussion	

12.50	Lunch (and an opportunity to look at the posters)	
14.00	6: Keynote speaker	Chaired by Mike Coffey
14.00	Nic Friggens , <i>Project Coordinator GenTORE, INRA Agro Paris Tech</i> nicolas.friggens@agroparistech.fr	Precision agriculture meets the genomics revolution Nic will be talking about how phenotypes can be collected easily using precision technology and how it can be used alongside genomics to drive productivity in livestock. He will discuss the European project GenTORE which is focussing on cattle and how to optimise efficiency and resilience.
15.10	Coffee break	
15.40	7: Building up our skills	Chaired by Liz Genever
15.45	Session 1	<p>Workshops – Delegates can select three of the following options</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Marketing stock online with a focus on social media – Katie James, NSA and Andrew Loftus, SellMyLivestock.com 2. Using the new Signet tools, including database and inbreeding software – Samuel Boon, Signet 3. Understanding the impact of body condition score and liveweight on flock performance in commercial sheep flocks – Nerys Wright, AHDB 4. Rams, responsible use of antibiotics and records - Fiona Lovatt, Flock Health Limited 5. Maximising ram longevity with a focus on laryngeal chondritis (“Texel throat”) – Ben Strugnell, Farm Post Mortems Ltd and Katie Waine, University of Nottingham 6. Dealing with “iceberg” diseases with a focus on Johnes’ disease – Laura Taylor, University of Liverpool
16.15	Session 2	
16.45	Session 3	
19.00	Drinks reception - sponsored by SRUC and EGENES 	The reception includes the poster session and authors will be standing by their poster. A prize will be given to the best poster, as voted by the delegates.
20.00	Dinner	The George Hedley Memorial Award is presented annually by the National Sheep Association to recognise an individual’s outstanding contribution to the sheep sector. With the latest winner being independent sheep consultant Lesley Stubbings, the Sheep Breeders Round Table seemed like the ideal setting to commend her near 40-year involvement in the industry. A short presentation will follow tonight’s dinner, allowing Lesley to celebrate with friends, family and colleagues.



Sunday 17 November

9.00	8: Our vision and mission	Chaired by Samuel Boon, Signet This session will focus on breeders or groups of breeders with full control over their genetics and they will provide information on their marketing, successes and failures.
9.05	Robyn Hulme, EasyRams	
9.15	Chris and Andy Hodgkins, Wairere	
9.25	George Fell, Meatlinc	
9.35	Peter Baber and Tim White, Exlana	
9.45	Bobby Lennox, Maternal Sheep Group	
9.55	Dewi Jones, Innovis	
10.05	Discussion	
10.40	Coffee break	
11.10	9: What do we need to look at next?	Chaired by Gwawr Parry, HCC
11.15	Kevin McDermott, manager, Sheep Ireland, Cork kmcdermott@sheepireland.ie	Bringing the sheep industry together Kevin will talk about the work that is being done in Ireland to bring the pedigree and commercial sheep sectors into the era of genetic evaluations and how a centralised database has influenced this transition. He will also discuss how the sheep sector needs to rise to the challenge of driving continuous genetic improvement in order to remain internationally competitive and creating a sustainable industry.
12.00	Lesley Stubbings OBE, LSSC Ltd, independent sheep consultant, Northamptonshire lesley@lssc-ltd.co.uk	Capitalising on the opportunities Lesley will be discussing the range of opportunities that are available to breeders and commercial farmers to ensure profitable production systems. She will highlight some projects that she is involved in, including one on sheep's teeth and how breeders and commercial farmers could work together to collect phenotypes, and the sheep scab activity.
12.45	Charles Sercombe	Chairman's closing remarks
13.00	Lunch and close	