

## 2012 News & Events

**Canada's 2012 Outstanding Young Farmers:** Martin Brodeur Choquette and Johanne Cameron  
December 4, 2012 - [English](#) / [Français](#)



### SheepBytes ration balancer now available

A newly launched online software application aims to help reduce the single biggest input cost for lamb producers. Over forty percent of the cost of getting a lamb to market is the cost of feed. SheepBytes is an online tool that helps adjust feeding rations not only to make them more cost effective, but also to provide optimal flock nutrition for sheep in every stage of production.

“Test users, producers, veterinarians, nutritionists, consultants, college students and staff helped assess the program to make sure it meets the needs of today’s producer,” says Margaret Cook, Executive Director of the Alberta Lamb Producers (ALP). ALP will be marketing SheepBytes as well as arranging industry training. “The lamb market is a tough one and we are working to ensure that producers have every possible opportunity to make their operations profitable and their lamb competitive.”

This new web-based program has been developed through lamb industry collaboration. Nutritional expertise was provided by Dr. Susan Markus and Barry Yaremicio, Alberta Agriculture & Rural Development with contractor Dale Engstrom. This version is a re-make of an older Alberta Agriculture DOS based program used by Alberta producers since the early 1990s, SheepBytes was funded by the Alberta Livestock & Meat Agency as part of an ongoing commitment to help Alberta producers lead the way in innovation and production by the development of high-quality products.

“Developing new electronic tools along with the skills to implement new technology has been the focus of collaborative industry projects,” says Susan Hosford, project manager and Industry Specialist with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development. “Cloud computing technology makes the SheepBytes application accessible by lamb producers across Canada and the United States. It incorporates the 2007 National Research Council nutrient requirements for fine-tuning rations for larger, more productive ewes.”

SheepBytes users can input their own feed test results for rations suited to their flock. Another option is to use the generic ‘Feeds Library’ that includes average analyses of feeds from Eastern and Western Canada. Rations can be formulated for lambs, ewes, or rams at any and all stages of production, body

weight or body condition score. SheepBytes can calculate the different ingredients in a batch of feed, yardage costs or estimate feed wasted during feeding. It can generate feed reports and feed inventories. SheepBytes also can take into account different types of water and environmental conditions. Users can input the cost of each feed in a variety of rations.

“Flock profitability isn’t all about least-cost rations, though SheepBytes can compare feeds and rations to help manage costs,” says Hosford. “A profitable flock is one where feeds and feeding are managed for optimal animal nutrition and flock performance.”

The program is made up of modules that can be accessed via desktop, cell phone or mobile applications so the information can be put to use in the field. Feed company nutritionists or veterinarians can even be given access to consult on any ration or feed problems that producers may have.

“Through government, industry and ALMA support we’ve been able to keep the cost of SheepBytes very low for end users,” says Cook. “This technology can be used to help improve the profitability of all operations, from the very small to the largest flocks. To improve flock nutritional expertise and to provide training on SheepBytes, courses will be available for Alberta producers, feed companies and private animal nutritionists.” The program is available by on-line subscription at [www.sheepbytes.ca](http://www.sheepbytes.ca). Individual subscribers will pay an initial \$100 fee for the first year with a \$50 annual renewal. Commercial subscribers will pay a \$300 annual fee. Commercial subscribers have added tools to help manage multiple clients and numbers of rations.

“Market fluctuations, increasing foreign competition and increasing costs are just part of the challenges that producers face today,” says Cook. “Alberta producers continue to lead the way in using technology to gain every business advantage possible and to raise the best product we can. SheepBytes is yet another tool to support them in doing that.”

For more information, to try out the free demonstration, or to sign up for a subscription to the program, visit: [www.sheepbytes.ca](http://www.sheepbytes.ca).

### **Manitoba Sheep Association Annual Show and Sale Catalogue**

August 14, 2012

### **Catalogue de Vente / Sales Catalogue - Rimouski and Richmond**

July 31, 2012

### **First Shipment of Canadian Lambs Reach Vietnam**

July 9, 2012 - [Click to view results](#) / [Français](#)

### **Government of Canada increases sheep compensation amounts**

June 6, 2012 - [View results](#)

### **Results of the 2011 Genetics Survey**

April 25, 2012 - [View results](#)

## **Sheep Industry Letter in Support of Scrapie Eradication**

April 5, 2012

Dear Editor,

The Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency, along with the Canadian Sheep Federation, Canadian Sheep Breeders Association and the Canadian Livestock Genetics Association, would like to express their collective concern over the 41 missing Shropshire sheep.

On April 2, 2012, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency notified the public of a breach of quarantine in relation to scrapie control measures taking place in Trent Hills, Ontario. 41 sheep belonging to Montana Jones were slated to be destroyed and tested for scrapie as part of an ongoing scrapie investigation by the CFIA.

Industry members and producers alike can sympathize with the devastating and emotionally charged events that surround a scrapie investigation. A positive case of scrapie is a devastating event for any and all producers involved regardless of the nature of their operation and leads to both economic hardship and the destruction of carefullycrafted breeding programs.

Scrapie eradication efforts are, however, essential to the continued growth and vibrancy of the small ruminant industry in Canada. Positive cases of scrapie continue to pose a considerable threat to the health of the national sheep flock and goat herd. Scrapie is a devastating neurodegenerative disease with a long incubation period, for which there is no 100% effective live test. Infected animals can live and spread the disease in flocks and herds without being detected or exhibiting signs of illness.

Any situation where a positive case of scrapie is identified certainly speaks volumes to the need for moving towards scrapie eradication in our country, so these devastating situations cease to exist. Current scrapie control measures have made great strides in reducing the occurrence of the disease in Canada and contravening those measures jeopardizes the efforts made to better our national disease status.

Not only is scrapie eradication important to the industry, the international perception of pro-action in disease control is essential. Recognition of domestic efforts to minimize the risk of disease can help build a robust trade based industry on both domestic and international levels where international trade is essential to the vibrancy and long-term sustainability of the Canadian livestock species. Canada's ability to control the spread of scrapie dictates our ability to trade and interfering with that process jeopardizes the strides made towards domestic and international confidence in our animal health programs.

The events this week impact all livestock sectors because they undermine Canada's ability to demonstrate that we have robust and effective disease control programs in this country.

Actions taken by the group calling itself the "Farmer's Peace Corps" seriously risk the health and success of the Canadian sheep and goat industries. Moving potentially diseased animals during their greatest period of infectivity risks spreading the disease to an even larger number of animals. The most common

pathway for the spread of scrapie is through contact with birthing fluids, and the animals removed from Ms Jones' farm are apparently due to give birth in the next few weeks. There is concern that this group may be ill-equipped to deal with biosecurity issues that surround this disease. Additionally, any premise or animals associated with this breach of quarantine risk falling under the same control measures applied to the original animals that were taken. What was initially a destruction order for 41 animals could quickly turn into the required destruction of hundreds of potentially infected sheep and goats.

Producers and industry groups alike would urge those involved to re-think the actions they have taken and the impact those actions have had on the small ruminant industry. As devastating as the loss of these 41 animals will be to the producer, it does not justify the impact this recent series of events has had on the survivability of the industry. Moreover, this action makes a mockery of the sacrifices that other producers have made over the years in the shared commitment to rid Canada of this disease scrapie.

Sincerely,

Murray Hunt, General Manager, Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency

Jennifer Haley, Executive Director, Ontario Goat

Stacey White, General Manager, Canadian Sheep Breeders Association

Rick McDonald, Executive Director, Canadian Livestock Genetics Association

Jennifer MacTavish, Executive Director, Canadian Sheep Federation

## **Des vigneron des Prairies et des producteurs d'ovins du Québec se partagent le titre de Jeunes agriculteurs d'élite du Canada de 2012**

**Ancaster, ON [4 décembre 2012]** – Des vigneron saskatchewanais et des producteurs d'ovins québécois de première génération sont les Jeunes agriculteurs d'élite (JAÉ) du Canada de 2012. Sue Echlin et Vance Lester de Perdue, en Saskatchewan, ainsi que Martin Brodeur Choquette et Johanne Cameron de Saint-Charles-sur-Richelieu, du Québec, ont été choisis parmi sept couples de lauréats régionaux du Canada lors du concours national qui avait lieu récemment à Charlottetown, à l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard.

Les récents lauréats partagent une détermination et une motivation à poursuivre leur passion de vivre de l'agriculture. Sue Echlin et Vance Lester ont converti leurs champs de foin pour chevaux en vignoble. Living Sky Winery produit maintenant du vin à partir des fruits cultivés à la ferme. Le fait qu'ils n'avaient pas de racines agricoles n'a pas empêché Martin Brodeur Choquette et Johanne Cameron de réaliser leur rêve d'être agriculteurs à temps plein, un rêve qu'ils réalisent avec leur exploitation ovine et de cultures commerciales de première génération.

« Chaque année, les JAÉ ont l'unique occasion de mettre en valeur des familles agricoles du Canada qui exemplifient l'esprit et l'innovation qui stimulent l'industrie. Lorsqu'on prend en considération la persévérance qui a poussé les lauréats de cette année à démarrer un vignoble dans les Prairies canadiennes et à établir une exploitation d'élevage à partir de zéro, c'est signe que l'agriculture canadienne n'a jamais été aussi forte », a déclaré le président des JAÉ, Derek Janzen.

Une visite de vignobles en Colombie-Britannique a été la source d'inspiration pour la création de Living Sky Winery, le vignoble de Sue Echlin et Vance Lester près de Perdue, en Saskatchewan. Aujourd'hui, l'exploitation compte 1500 pommiers et amélanchiers de Saskatoon en pleine production. Leurs vins primés, y compris le vin de rhubarbe, de framboise et de chèvrefeuille, sont produits à partir de fruits produits à la ferme ou achetés localement.

Produire des produits de haute qualité et porter attention aux tendances à la consommation sont les pierres angulaires de leur exploitation. Étant donné que la demande continuait de croître, Living Sky Winery a étendu sa sélection pour y inclure du porto, des vins de glace, des mistelles et du cidre.

Après avoir converti leurs champs de foin pour chevaux en vignoble, Sue et Vance ont pris une importante décision d'affaires, ils ont embauché un œnologue avant même de planter leur premier arbre fruitier. Sue et Vance travaillent avec des représentants du gouvernement et des intervenants de l'industrie des spiritueux de la Saskatchewan pour faire avancer cette industrie relativement jeune, mais lourdement réglementée.

Martin Brodeur Choquette et Johanne Cameron avaient en commun un rêve ambitieux : vivre de l'agriculture. Le fait que leurs parents ne possédaient pas d'exploitations agricoles ne les a pas arrêtés. À l'âge de 15 ans, Martin a commencé à constituer son troupeau en achetant sa première brebis. À la fin de ses études à l'âge de 20 ans, il était déjà en mesure de vivre de son troupeau de 350 têtes.

Pendant ce temps, Johanne constituait également un troupeau tout en étudiant pour l'obtention d'un baccalauréat en agronomie et d'une maîtrise en reproduction ovine. À l'époque, son troupeau comptait un champion suprême ainsi que plusieurs grands champions.

Depuis leur rencontre en 2004, Martin et de Johanne ont jumelé leur amour de l'agriculture et leurs connaissances en production ovine pour bâtir une entreprise prospère, soit les Bergeries Marovine (MH), qui comprend actuellement un cheptel de près de 1200 têtes, dont 650 brebis, et 85 hectares de terre cultivée.

Sue Echlin et Vance Lester de la Saskatchewan ainsi que Martin Brodeur Choquette et Johanne Cameron du Québec ont été choisis parmi sept lauréats régionaux de 2012 qui comprenaient les candidats suivants des cinq autres régions : Mark et Sally Bernard (région de l'Atlantique), Corey et Heidi Van Groningen (région de l'Ontario), Dustin Williams et Laura McDougald-Williams (région du Manitoba), Robert et Angela Semeniuk (région de l'Alberta et des Territoires du Nord-Ouest) et Peter et Nicole Tuytel (région de la Colombie-Britannique et du Yukon).

Célébrant ses 32 ans, le concours des Jeunes agriculteurs d'élite est un concours annuel qui reconnaît les agriculteurs qui exemplifient l'excellence dans leur profession et qui font la promotion de l'énorme contribution de l'agriculture. Le concours est ouvert aux jeunes de dix-huit à trente-neuf ans qui tirent la majorité de leurs revenus de l'agriculture. Les participants sont choisis dans sept régions du Canada et deux gagnants sont choisis au niveau national chaque année. Les commanditaires nationaux du concours sont CIBC, John Deere, Bayer CropScience et Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada. Le concours national reçoit également l'appui de AdFarm et de Gestion agricole du Canada.

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**Pour obtenir une photo des lauréats des JAÉ de 2012, communiquez avec :**  
Joan Cranston, directrice du concours, Jeunes agriculteurs d'élite du Canada  
(905) 648-0176 • cranstonclydes@yahoo.com • www.oyfcanada.com



# News Release

For immediate release

## First Shipment of Canadian Lambs Reach Vietnam

**Ottawa, Ontario, July 9, 2012** – Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz announced today that the first shipment of Canadian lambs successfully entered Vietnam. The first ever commercial sale of Canadian live ruminants to Vietnam, worth \$50 000, is paving the way for an expanded market.

"Evident by today's good news, the Canadian industry is benefiting from new market access secured by the Harper Government," said Minister Ritz. "This is the first shipment of many, as Vietnam is a promising market, a strong trading partner, and a door to Southeast Asia for Canadian farmers."

Minister Ritz congratulated OC Flock Management, a member of the Canadian Livestock Genetics Association (CLGA) from Bowden, Alberta, as the first Canadian company to ship lambs to Vietnam. In August 2011, the Harper Government secured new market access for its breeding cattle, sheep, and goats. Taking advantage of this new market access, and building on several years of collaboration between Canadian and Vietnamese industries, OC Flock Management shipped lambs to Vietnam to be used for breeding purposes.

"CLGA would like to thank all of the people who have worked so hard to make this finally happen—our Government of Canada partners, member companies, and our colleagues in Vietnam," said Rick McDonald, CLGA Executive Director. "We congratulate CLGA member OC Flock Management for securing this agreement with the Goat and Rabbit Research Centre. This first ever delivery of sheep strengthens the Canada-Vietnam partnership and signals the beginning of the next phase in the development of the nucleus herd project."

This announcement is one more example of the strong and successful partnership between the Harper Government and the agriculture industry, who worked hand in hand to gain access for breeding cattle, sheep, and goats to the Vietnamese market. Canada is now competing for its share of an industry with an estimated market value of close to \$50 million.

To consult the August 14, 2011, news release, please visit:  
[www.agr.gc.ca/cb/index\\_e.php?s1=n&s2=2011&page=n110814](http://www.agr.gc.ca/cb/index_e.php?s1=n&s2=2011&page=n110814)

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For more information, media may contact:

### Media Relations

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario  
**613-773-7972**  
**1-866-345-7972**

### Meagan Murdoch

Directrice des communications  
Cabinet de l'honorable Gerry Ritz  
**613-773-1059**



# Communiqué

Pour diffusion immédiate

## Premier envoi d'agneaux canadiens au Vietnam

**Ottawa (Ontario), le 9 juillet 2012** – Le ministre de l'Agriculture, Gerry Ritz, a annoncé aujourd'hui l'arrivée au Vietnam du premier envoi d'agneaux canadiens vers ce pays. Cette toute première vente commerciale de ruminants vivants du Canada au Vietnam, une transaction de 50 000 dollars, ouvre la voie à un éventuel élargissement de l'accès au marché vietnamien.

« Comme en témoigne la bonne nouvelle d'aujourd'hui, l'industrie canadienne profite de ce nouvel accès obtenu par le gouvernement Harper, a déclaré le ministre Ritz. Il s'agit du premier de nombreux envois vers le marché prometteur du Vietnam, un pays qui représente un solide partenaire commercial pour le Canada et une porte d'entrée sur les marchés du Sud-Est asiatique pour les agriculteurs canadiens. »

Le ministre Ritz a félicité la société OC Flock Management Inc. de Bowden (Alberta), un membre de l'Association canadienne de l'industrie du bétail et de la génétique (ACIBG), d'être la première entreprise canadienne à expédier des agneaux vers le Vietnam. En août 2011, le gouvernement Harper a obtenu un nouveau débouché pour les bovins, les ovins et les caprins reproducteurs du Canada sur le marché vietnamien. OC Flock Management Inc. a profité de ce débouché et de plusieurs années de collaboration entre les industries canadienne et vietnamienne pour expédier des agneaux de reproduction au Vietnam.

« L'ACIBG tient à remercier toutes les personnes qui ont travaillé d'arrache-pied pour mener à bien cette initiative, y compris ses partenaires du gouvernement du Canada, ses entreprises membres et ses collègues du Vietnam, a déclaré M. Rick McDonald, directeur exécutif de l'ACIBG. Nous félicitons la société OC Flock Management d'avoir conclu une entente avec le Centre de recherche sur les caprins et les lapins. Cette toute première expédition d'ovins renforce le partenariat Canada-Vietnam et marque le début de la prochaine phase de l'élaboration du projet de troupeau souche. »

Cette annonce est un exemple parmi tant d'autres de la collaboration étroite et fructueuse entre le gouvernement Harper et le secteur agricole. Les deux partenaires ont conjugué leurs efforts pour obtenir l'accès des bovins, des ovins et des caprins reproducteurs du Canada au marché vietnamien. Le Canada est désormais en mesure de concurrencer pour se tailler une place sur ce marché, dont la valeur est estimée à près de 50 millions de dollars.

Vous pouvez consulter le communiqué du 14 août 2011 à l'adresse suivante :  
[www.agr.gc.ca/cb/index\\_f.php?s1=n&s2=2011&page=n110814](http://www.agr.gc.ca/cb/index_f.php?s1=n&s2=2011&page=n110814)

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Pour de plus amples renseignements, les médias peuvent communiquer avec :

**Relations avec les médias**  
Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada  
Ottawa (Ontario)  
**613-773-7972**  
**1-866-345-7972**

**Meagan Murdoch**  
Directrice des communications  
Cabinet de l'honorable Gerry Ritz  
**613-773-1059**





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# News Release

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## Government of Canada increases sheep compensation amounts

June 6, 2012: The Government of Canada has amended the *Compensation for Destroyed Animals Regulations* to increase the maximum amounts payable for non-registered sheep that are ordered destroyed during disease response situations.

Effective immediately, producers whose non-registered sheep are ordered destroyed may be eligible to receive up to a maximum of \$825 per sheep. In all disease response situations, compensation is based on market value of the animal, up to the maximum amount set out in the regulations.

The revised compensation maximum amount for non-registered sheep is based on a thorough economic analysis. The sheep industry and government worked closely and collaboratively during the review process.

The compensation program encourages sheep producers to promptly report animal diseases by mitigating the economic impact when animals are ordered destroyed.

Immediate disease reporting is critical for controlling animal diseases and maintaining market access for live animals and animal products.

Changes to the *Compensation for Destroyed Animals Regulations* have been published in *Canada Gazette, Part II* and posted on the *Canada Gazette* Web site, at [www.canadagazette.gc.ca](http://www.canadagazette.gc.ca).

For more information on the compensation program

- call 1-800-442-2342
- visit [www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca)

Follow us on Twitter for the latest on animal health: [www.twitter.com/CFIA\\_Animals](https://twitter.com/CFIA_Animals).

### Media enquiries:

CFIA Media Relations  
613-773-6600

# 2011 Genetics Survey

The 2011 Genetics survey was circulated to GenOvis participants and to the general industry in English and in French. This survey was done to gather information for the research project “Genetic evaluation and selection tools for profitability improvement in Canadian sheep production” underway at the Center for the Genetic Improvement of Livestock at the University of Guelph with funding from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs, the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency and the Centre D’expertise en Production Ovine du Quebec.



The response to the survey was excellent with a total of 375 surveys completed. 78 GenOvis participant surveys and 297 industry surveys were filled out. The average flock size of those participating was 208 ewes with representation from 9 different provinces. In general the survey illustrated that there are still many different production systems and breeds of sheep being used across Canada.



A few important highlights are:

- 83% of general industry respondents are interested in buying performance tested animals provided they are the breed they use and tested for traits that are important on their farm.
- 62% of all respondents have an annual production system
- 61% of all respondents use pasture and confinement.
- 56% of all respondents say the main objective of their flock is to produce market lambs.
- 41% of all respondents sell market lambs live with many selling lambs graded, direct as cuts or direct as freezer lambs or some combination of these.
- The top three breeds represented across all respondents are: Dorset, Rideau and Suffolk sheep.
- 56% of general industry respondents buy performance tested animals.
- 83% of general industry respondents would use a performance tested ram finding website.
- 81% of GenOvis respondents would prefer standard indexes rather than customizable indexes. Customizable indexes would be interesting but the resulting problems with understanding and use across flocks could be more detrimental than helpful. Indexes designed specifically for a breed could be useful.
- 61% of GenOvis respondents are satisfied with the current indexes. Others would like more traits included, the emphasis changed or the results to be less variable.



Thank you very much to all those producers who filled out the survey and provided feedback and many valuable comments. The results of the survey are below.

## 2011 Genetics Survey Results

GenOvis # (78)	% GenOvis		Industry # (297)	Industry %	Total All (375)	Overall %
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<b>Approximately how many ewes are in your flock?</b>						
179.9		Mean	215.4		208.1	
164.9		Standard Deviation	315.6		291.2	
11		Minimum	1		1	
750		Maximum	2300		2300	
<b>What province do you live in?</b>						
4		Alberta	8		12	
		British Columbia	14		14	
		Manitoba	29		29	
1		New Brunswick	4		5	
7		Nova Scotia	10		17	
30		Ontario	128		158	
3		Prince Edward Island	8		11	
21		Quebec	79		100	
1		Saskatchewan	10		11	
<b>How long have you been performance testing your animals?</b>						
11	14.1%	1 y				
21	26.9%	2-5 ys				
14	18.0%	5-10 ys				
32	41.0%	>10 ys				
<b>How would you classify your production system?</b>						
41	52.6%	Annual	193	65.0%	234	62.40%
37	47.4%	Accelerated	104	35.0%	141	37.60%
<b>How would you classify your production system?</b>						
5	6.4%	Pasture	45	15.2%	50	13.3%
28	35.9%	Confinement	67	22.6%	95	25.3%
45	57.7%	Both	185	62.3%	230	61.3%
<b>How would you classify your production system?</b>						
45	30.6%	Winter lambing	137	28.7%	182	29.1%
57	38.8%	Spring lambing	213	44.6%	270	43.2%
26	17.7%	Fall lambing	75	15.7%	101	16.2%
19	13.0%	Lambing every month	53	11.1%	72	11.5%



GenOvis # (78)	% GenOvis		Industry # (297)	Industry %	Total All (375)	Overall %
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<b>Would you say that the main objective of your flock is to sell:</b>						
34	44.2%	Breeding stock	59	19.9%	93	24.9%
29	37.7%	Market lambs	182	61.3%	211	56.4%
2	2.6%	Wool	6	2.0%	8	2.1%
1	1.3%	Milk	4	1.4%	5	1.3%
11	14.3%	Other	46	15.5%	57	15.2%

Most of the comments indicated that they did not have a main objective but that either the first two or three or even all 4 objectives listed were equally important.

<b>Would you classify the ewes in your flock as:</b>						
36	21.8%	Hardy	130	22.9%	166	22.7%
42	25.5%	Prolific	126	22.2%	168	23.0%
59	35.8%	Maternal	195	34.4%	254	34.7%
28	17.0%	Meat	116	20.5%	144	19.7%

Most respondents selected more than one of the categories listed. Comments indicated: that the term prolific can mean a range in lambs born per ewe from 1.5 to 3.0 or more; that the term hardy can mean ability to live outdoors in winter to ability to live outdoors year round with minimal intervention and limited feed stuffs; meat was selected by many because everyone is selling it and by other who have specialized meat breeds and in general maternal is related to milking and the ability to look after lambs.

<b>Approximately what % of your lambs are sold as market lambs?</b>						
	63.8%	Mean				
	23.1%	Standard Deviation				
	0.0%	Minimum				
	100.0%	Maximum				

<b>Are the market lambs sold from your farm:</b>						
42	31.1%	Live	213	44.3%	255	41.4%
35	25.9%	Graded	80	16.6%	115	18.7%
22	16.3%	Direct as cuts	68	14.1%	90	14.6%
36	26.7%	Direct as freezer lambs	112	23.3%	148	24.0%
		Don't sell lambs	8	1.7%	8	1.3%

<b>Have you participated in genetic evaluation program?</b>						
		Currently	48	17.8%		
		In past 5 ys	11	4.1%		
		> 5 ys ago	37	13.7%		
		Never	174	64.4%		



GenOvis # (78)	% GenOvis		Industry # (297)	Industry %	Total All (375)	Overall %
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<b>What breeds of sheep are in your ewe flock?</b>						
5	3.3%	Canadian	19	3.2%	24	3.2%
23	15.1%	Dorset	110	18.3%	133	17.6%
13	8.6%	Hampshire	25	4.2%	38	5.0%
4	2.6%	North Country Cheviot	40	6.6%	44	5.8%
5	3.3%	Polypay	18	3.0%	23	3.1%
32	21.1%	Rideau	80	13.3%	112	14.9%
18	11.8%	Suffolk	94	15.6%	112	14.9%
12	7.9%	Romanov	35	5.8%	47	6.2%
3	2.0%	Texel	31	5.2%	34	4.5%
7	4.6%	Charollais	14	2.3%	21	2.8%
30	19.7%	Other	136	22.6%	166	22.0%

Approximately 30 additional breeds were listed under the other category

<b>What breeds of rams are in your flock?</b>						
4	2.6%	Canadian	27	4.9%	31	4.4%
27	17.8%	Dorset	93	17.0%	120	17.2%
14	9.2%	Hampshire	34	6.2%	48	6.9%
4	2.6%	North Country Cheviot	29	5.3%	33	4.7%
4	2.6%	Polypay	8	1.5%	12	1.7%
27	17.8%	Rideau	61	11.2%	88	12.6%
23	15.1%	Suffolk	99	18.1%	122	17.5%
12	7.9%	Romanov	39	7.1%	51	7.3%
4	2.6%	Texel	29	5.3%	33	4.7%
7	4.6%	Charollais	18	3.3%	25	3.6%
26	17.1%	Other	110	20.1%	136	19.5%

<b>Do you buy performance tested animals?</b>						
		Yes	150	55.6%		
		No	120	44.4%		

Comments: many commented that they wanted performance info to consider along with other factors when purchasing an animal; in many cases performance tested animals are not available for the breed; many just getting started don't feel a need for performance tested animals yet; others don't buy performance tested animals because: they prefer conformation, can tell if the animal is good themselves, don't trust the criteria, want wool information but most of the time they don't buy because they aren't available. Some look for scrapie resistance; always buy performance tested rams, use performance information but it is not the only criteria and need data to improve the flock.



GenOvis # (78)	% GenOvis		Industry # (297)	Industry %	Total All (375)	Overall %
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<b>Are you interested in buying performance tested rams?</b>						
		Yes	224	83.0%		
		No	46	17.0%		

Comments: depends on cost, more interested in type, need greater selection, only if raised on low grain diet, only buy performance tested animals, must have performance test for rams, buy them if they are available - not enough tested in the breed.

<b>Would you use performance tested ram finding website that allows you to select what traits are important to you and uses that criteria to provide a list of possible rams with owner contact information?</b>						
		Yes	224	83.0%		
		No	46	17.0%		

Comments: good idea; need to be able to use it within region; could refer to it but need to see the ram; flocks have to be large enough for the rams to be interesting; needs to be easy to use; would like milk traits; depends on the performance tests that are done; want the name attached; also need health status of the flock; would be nice to have across breed information as well.

<b>Would you be interested in buying rams that are selected to improve the grade that carcasses receive on the rail?</b>						
		Yes	232	86.0%		
		No	38	14.0%		

Comments: lack of grading is a problem for most; others have different objectives for their flocks; important to keep diversity in flocks - if all use the same criteria there will only be one breed; currently use the terminal index; if it is affordable.

<b>What traits are most important to you when selecting rams?</b>						
51	13.9%	Growth rate				
28	7.7%	Survival				
33	9.0%	Carcass - meat				
22	6.0%	Carcass - fat				
35	9.6%	Number born				
32	8.7%	Number weaned				
14	3.8%	Lambing interval				
9	2.5%	Age at 1st lambing				
40	10.9%	Growth index				
32	8.7%	Terminal index				
47	12.8%	Maternal index				
23	6.3%	Other				

Other included: fecal count, total body muscle and fat, fleece quality, worm resistance, conformation, mature size, ultrasound fat and muscle, 50 day maternal, # weaned and kg lamb/ewe per lambing and per year.

GenOvis # (78)	% GenOvis		Industry # (297)	Industry %	Total All (375)	Overall %
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What traits are most important to you when selecting ewes?						
37	17.7%	Same as rams				
15	7.2%	Growth rate				
19	9.1%	Survival				
5	2.4%	Carcass - meat				
2	1.0%	Carcass - fat				
24	11.5%	Number born				
21	10.1%	Number weaned				
16	7.7%	Lambing interval				
13	6.2%	Age at 1st lambing				
14	6.7%	Growth index				
6	2.9%	Terminal index				
28	13.4%	Maternal index				
9	4.3%	Other				

Other included: milk production, conformation, mature size and 50 day maternal.

Do you buy you replacement rams?						
22	28.6%	Always				
20	26.0%	More then 1/2 the time				
25	32.5%	Less then 1/2 the time				
10	13.0%	Never				

Do you buy you replacement ewes?						
3	3.9%	Always				
1	1.3%	More then 1/2 the time				
17	22.1%	Less then 1/2 the time				
56	72.7%	Never				

Do you think a customizable index is useful?						
46	65.7%	Yes				
24	34.3%	No				

Most comments related to the importance of having a standard index. Comments included: might be confusing; useful to have both customizable for use within flock and standard for selling and buying; concern about how to compare to rest of industry; maybe by breed; follow UK program if possible; too much information; just give rank of each animal 1,2, etc; finish the standard service before offering a personalized service; it increases the difficulty of understanding the results; not a good idea for everyone to be working in different directions; compare breeds the same way.



GenOvis # (78)	% GenOvis		Industry # (297)	Industry %	Total All (375)	Overall %
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<b>Would you prefer standard indexes so that all farms are using the same indexes?</b>						
57	81.4%	Yes				
13	18.6%	No				

<b>Do you think it is a good idea to have both a customizable index and standard indexes?</b>						
56	80.0%	Yes				
14	20.0%	No				

<b>Would you use customizable index?</b>						
50	71.4%	Yes				
20	28.6%	No				

Comments: although many people said that it was a good idea to have a customizable index and might use it, the comments were all related to the increased problem with understanding the index and the need for producers to use the same index. A few felt that it might be useful for a breed to have its own index.

<b>Which objectives would you most like to have an index for?</b>						
21	15.0%	Terminal - live				
19	13.6%	Terminal - graded				
30	21.4%	Maternal - accelerated				
21	15.0%	Maternal - annual				
35	25.0%	Dual purpose				
14	10.0%	Other				

Other included: natural aseasuality, lamb survivability from terminal sires, weight weaned per year, paternal characteristics with ADG, kg lamb produced per year and lifetime, terminal characteristics in an accelerated lambing program, selection for twins of a certain weaning weight that are aseasual.

<b>What indexes do you use now?</b>						
41	26.8%	Growth				
26	17.0%	Terminal				
50	32.7%	Maternal				
24	15.7%	Terminal with maternal				
12	7.8%	None				

<b>Are you satisfied with the current indexes for your flock?</b>						
43	61.4%	Yes				
27	38.6%	No				





Comments included: need more traits, would like an index for longevity and worm resistance, don't understand the current indexes, 50 day maternal (milk production) is not important enough in current maternal index, indexes are too variable and unreliable it is hard to rely on longterm index, a sheep that weans more kg of lamb per year than the average of the flock should have a positive maternal index especially if the dam has a good kg weaned - not the case currently, it is difficult to choose the correct index on the new reports, several comments indicated that their indexes have dropped in the new system, not sure if the current indexes relate to the criteria needed for Dorpers, consider measurement of scrotal circumference to improve low heritability maternal index.

### **Do you have any further comments on the survey?**

**General Comments - GenOvis Users:** good program; just started program; provide clear explanation of index, composition and objectives; keep it simple; add worm resistance; training needed; animals should be scanned, need an economic index, growth and terminal indexes are very close - do we need both, top 100 animals should be classified and need to consider conformation; would like to have a way to evaluate feeding sheep -kinds of grains, forages and amounts fed -was able to do this with DHIA for dairy; more information on how to understand reports; more work needs to be done, many producers only collect part of the data which biases the results, extension is needed.

**General Comments - Industry** - people already know what they want and who the best animals are, it is not needed; industry real needs can't be concluded from a survey; industry needs to move away from show ring type evaluation to proven scientific methods so the industry can become more competitive; need to find a better way to attach GenOvis indexes to financial return; performance and genetic testing are the right way to go to improve industry; also want to improve quality of breed and wool; want inbreeding coefficients for proposed matings available in GenOvis; need system to credit best producer with less government, no new breeds and free marketing system; meat from ruminants should be from land that cannot be used for grain production; maternal index is influenced too much by the 100 day weight; producers don't know how to use performance info need to learn to use what we have before more is developed; need to be paid for quality before this will be important; difficult to source rams from flocks that value pasture production; need less regulation; need to increase level of performance testing; important to improve the evaluation program by including health information, conformation, genotyping etc; involved in export market, 90% of inquiries request performance info; some provinces have problems with transportation and availability of tested breeding stock; would like to keep all animal information in one place ie registration etc and an easy transfer of data from handling equipment; want to see evaluations for dairy sheep; there are too many breeds; genetic evaluation is a good tool but must still know the breeder and their sheep and the proof is in the progeny; as with swine you must verify the fat in ewes because they have influence; I thought the new GenOvis was finished but if this is needed it is disappointing that it is not yet done; I don't think the new evaluation minimizes the effect of management.

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