

JULY 2017

For this year's sales, ewe lambs must be tagged with a yellow electronic tag in the left ear and a

WHITE

coloured tag in the right ear

**2017 SALE DATES:
WELSHPOOL:**

- Wednesday, 13th September (Ewes)
- Thursday, 14th September (Ewe Lambs)
- Thursday 12th October (Ewes & Ewe Lambs)

BUILTH WELLS:

- Friday, 15th September (Ewes & Ewe Lambs)
- Tuesday, 17th October (Ewes & Ewe Lambs)

RUTHIN:

- Saturday, 16th September (Ewes & Ewe Lambs)

Welsh Mules Sheep Breeders Association Newsletter

Welsh Mule Sheep Breeders Association Ltd; Gorseland, North Road, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 2WB Phone No 01970 636688;

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Preparing for the association's 2017 Sales

It seems that the association's annual sales come around more quickly every year. It feels like the last sale was held just a matter of a few weeks ago but nevertheless its time to submit entries for the 2017 September sales. All association members will be receiving their sale entry forms with this newsletter. All completed forms need to be returned to the relevant auctioneers by **Monday 31st July**.

In accordance with what has become the association's normal practice, an open sale draw will be held so that any member can be present to witness proceedings. The draws for all four of the association's September sales at the three venues of Welshpool, Builth Wells and Ruthin will be held at the offices of Welshpool Livestock Sales at Buttington, Welshpool at 6.30pm on Wednesday 9th August, prior to the meeting of the association's executive committee. Members may make a note of their selected place in the sale draw but are requested not to note the place of other members. The association's auctioneers have the right

to amend the draw to ensure that long runs of any vendor's pens are kept together for convenience and not split apart.

An announcement on the arrangements for the sale draws for the October sales (which will take place locally at the sale venues) will be made at the September sales.

2017 Sale Draw:

The draw for the all the association's September 2017 sales will be conducted at 6.30pm on Wednesday 9th August 2017 at the offices of Welshpool Livestock Sales, Buttington, Welshpool, prior to the meeting of the executive committee of the association



The marquee at the association's Builth Wells sale was the centre of attention at the October sale last year

Ewe Lamb Competition:

Please submit your entries for the ewe lamb competitions to the association's auctioneers by 9.00am on the day of sale.

There will be two classes of competition as usual, one for white-faced ewe lambs, the other for coloured-faced ones. The champion will be selected from the winners of the two classes.

2017 Shows and demonstrations:

The Welsh Mules will be present at the NSA stand in Royal Welsh Show in Builth Wells at the end of the month to promote the association's sales in the autumn.

There will be a display of very high quality stock to see, led, as usual, by John & Richard Thomas of Tanhouse, Dolau Llandrindod Wells.

We would welcome visits by members in particular and encourage you to stay a while to help our field officer, Marcus

and members of the executive committee who'll be manning the stand, to talk to potential buyers that call in.

The association has already been to two NSA events, the NSA Wales event in May and the NSA South West one in June.

Both events were very well attended although the weather at NSA Wales put a little bit of a damper on the day. There were encouraging enquiries received and the hope now is that those can be converted into actual sales in the au-

turn.

The association's 2017 advertising programme has been revamped a little; it will be a mix of local, regional and national advertising. The main focus will be the Farmers Guardian and Farmers Weekly. We returned to advertise in the NSA's journal, the Sheep Farmer, two years ago and have agreed to maintain that following review. Finally, we'd welcome any story to support our promotional campaign, if you have any.

Sale Entry Forms: Reminder for Performance Mules producers

Members who are selling both 'Performance' Welsh Mules and the regular Welsh Mules need to remember to complete the reverse of the relevant sale entry form to choose the order that wish to sell their sheep. The following shows an example from the sale entry form of a member selling nine lots of sheep, three of them being 'Performance' Welsh Mules and he/she wants to sell them last. He/she should do that by indicating that by placing the letters **PM** against the relevant lot numbers.

Lot No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Place Performance Mules to be sold							PM	PM	PM



These ewes were sold at the Builth Wells sale last year. We are regularly looking for photos of good quality Welsh Mule sheep that we can include in our pamphlets, demonstrations or website. If you have any, please email to info@welshmules.co.uk Thank you.

***** The association is now on Facebook. Please 'Follow' us to obtain the latest information on the association's activities including sale results.**

For your information - Last year's sale results

Welshpool	2015		2015	
	Nos	Av Price	Nos	Av Price
September:				
Yearlings	7203	139.96	6576	133.77
Ewe lambs	8979	101.25	8185	95.15
October:				
Yearlings	996	130.08	972	115.99
Ewe lambs	7105	84.06	6861	82.15
Builth Wells				
September:				
Yearlings	3591	134.03	2737	136.19
Ewe lambs	7860	101.55	8036	92.75
October:				
Yearlings:	460	128.59	751	112.89
Ewe lambs	7921	84.91	7453	83.65
Ruthin				
Yearlings	1642	136.22	2604	112.72
Ewe lambs	2328	86.39	2835	76.27

COMMENT:

The association's reputation as a source of high quality breeding ewes has been gained as a result of many years of hard effort by members who have consistently presented ewes of a superior standard at sales. It's essential that the standard is maintained not just through inspection but by vendors being careful as to what is brought forward—as indeed most are. A gentle reminder therefore to avoid some of the topics that have raised concerns in recent years. We stress that these are not major issues and are not a serious problem but it's important to be vigilant.

Sheep lameness is a problem for the industry generally and we'd like to ensure that it doesn't become a problem for the association. There is a threat from Contagious Ovine Digital Dermatitis, or CODD as it's referred to. CODD is not footrot. Further information about its treatment and control are noted overleaf.

In January, we reminded members about the rules and regulation surrounding tail docking. All ewes must have their tails docked between 3 and 4 inches. Tails that are considered to be too long or too short by sales inspectors will be rejected with inspectors paying special attention to tail lengths of ewe lambs.

Grateful if you would ensure that you complete all details on vaccination in the sale entry forms but in particular, if you are treating sheep with vaccines, give them the whole course and do so in plenty of time before the sale date so that the sheep are not stressed unduly when forward at the sale itself.

CLOSING DATES FOR RETURN OF SALE ENTRY FORMS:

September Sales

Monday, 31st July

October Sales

Monday, 18th Sept

REMINDER:

We would be grateful if members could ensure that they choose the correct sale entry form to complete when entering sheep for sale.

Yearlings and older ewes, please use the **YELLOW** forms;

Ewe Lambs, you need to use the **WHITE** forms and

Performance Mule Ewe Lambs, please use the **BLUE** form.

Thank You.

New President and Vice-President

At the AGM held in February, members elected Gwyn Davies, Llanfechan, Association's President for 2017. Gwyn served on the executive committee for many years and has sold Welsh Mule at the Builth Wells sales from the start. He'd been Vice-President for two years.

Gwyn's place as Vice-President has been taken by Mike Rees, Upper Pentre, Llanbister Road. A stalwart of the association, he's also been a long time member and executive committee member until he stepped down a couple of years ago. Mike regularly supported the association at shows and served as sale inspector as well.



Welsh Mule Sheep Breeders Association Ltd

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YOUR CONTACTS WITH THE WELSH MULES

The association's Field Officer, Marcus Williams has many roles to play from promoting the Welsh Mules at shows and events to following up queries after sales. He is on hand to help both vendors and buyers and can be contacted on 07768 816919.

The association's official auctioneers can be contacted at:

For the Welshpool sale:

Welshpool Livestock Sales; Buttington Cross, Welshpool, SY21 8SR
(01938) 553438

For the Builth Wells sale:

Brightwells; 33 High Street, Builth Wells, LD2 3DL (01982) 553614

For the Ruthin sale:

Vale of Clwyd Livestock Market; Plas Glastir, Ruthin LL15 1PB(01824) 702025
Jones Peckover; 1 The Roe, St Asaph, (01745) 583260

Avoiding problems with feet

One of the main concerns for sheep producers is the reported growth in the incidence of problems with sheep's feet. As an association, the Welsh Mules is trying to make sure that all sheep entered at its sales are as free as possible from foot problems. Its inspectors are being asked to make sure that sheep entered for sale are free from obvious issues. We've referred to this in the past but make no apology for bringing it to your attention again and re-produce the following information from HCC.

Contagious Digital Dermatitis of sheep (or CODD as it's referred to) is a relatively new lameness condition of sheep, first reported in the UK in 1997. It is an infectious disease that can spread rapidly through a flock. It is severe and painful and a serious welfare and economic problem to affected flocks. The cause is not fully understood but bacteria, similar to those of digital dermatitis in cattle are involved, hence cattle with digital dermatitis can be a disease risk for sheep. CODD starts at the coronary band (hoof-hair junction) and unlike footrot does not involve the interdigital space. Infection spreads down the foot separating the horn from the underlying sensitive structures; ultimately the whole hoof capsule may fall off.

Treatment and control protocols for footrot are not effective for CODD.

Consult your vet and establish a treatment plan for your flock. This may include:

- Prompt treatment
- Topical antibiotics by spray in individual cases, or footbath of the group. None are currently licensed for use in sheep; they can be prescribed by your vet and carry a standard 28 day meat withdrawal.
- Injectable antibiotics to affected individuals. These are licensed for use in sheep, one (Timlicosin) may only be admin-

istered by a vet due to human safety issues.

- Isolation of affected animals

Vaccination for footrot is not licensed to control CODD and was thought to be ineffective. However recent work has shown this may not be the case. CODD and footrot may both be present in flocks and studies have shown the presence of the bacteria responsible for footrot in the majority of feet with CODD.

Prevention

- Isolate all bought in animals (including your own sheep returning from grazing away) and footbath straight off the lorry
- Observe for lameness over two weeks
- Catch and examine any lame sheep
- Examine all, if feasible, before joining the main flock
- If in doubt, keep separate
- Avoid co grazing with cattle if any are lame or the herd have a history of bovine digital dermatitis.

Summary:

CODD is not the same as footrot.

Get a diagnosis

Prepare a treatment and control plan with your veterinary surgeon.

Treat promptly

Isolate affected sheep from sound ones

Biosecurity – do not re-introduce

(Photo: An early case of CODD)

