

JANUARY 2014

The AGM of members of the association is to be held on Wednesday, 5th February 2014 at 7.30pm at the offices of Welshpool Live-stock Sales, Butting-ton Cross, Welshpool

2014 SALE DATES:

WELSHPOOL:

- Wednesday, 10th September (Ewes)
- Thursday, 11th September (Ewe Lambs)
- Thursday 9th October (Ewes & Ewe Lambs)

BUILTH WELLS:

- Friday, 12th September (Ewes & Ewe Lambs)
- Tuesday, 14th October (Ewes & Ewe Lambs)

RUTHIN:

- Saturday, 13th September (Ewes & Ewe Lambs)

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Welsh Mules Sheep Breeder's Association Newsletter

Welsh Mule Sheep Breeders Association Ltd;
Gorseland, North Road, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 2WB

Review of 2013 Sales

Prices eased back on 2012 highpoints at the association's sales last autumn sales. There were higher numbers of sheep forward and many buyers said that that the difficult spring, higher feed costs and lower prices for finished lamb over the season meant that they weren't in a position to pay as much. Nevertheless, a number of vendors managed to obtain satisfactory prices for the ewes on offer.

At the first sale in September at Welshpool, yearling prices averaged £131, with D I Roberts & Son, Stingwern, Brooks obtaining the best price of £190 with a pen sold to E H Penry, Gwern yr Ychain, Llan-dysul.

Ewe lambs averaged £98 the following day with Eric Hughes, High Park Farm, Stone Heath obtaining the highest price of £168 for the pen that won the cup for the best entry of ewe lambs: it was bought by R A Jones, Llys Helyg, Llan-erfyl, Welshpool

The sale at Builth Wells followed a similar trend to Welshpool with yearlings averaging £124; H & E Powell, Llwyngwilym, Rhayader topped the market for a pen of yearlings sold to J Mills, Wooton, Almley for

£195. RG & BM Jones & Son, Ty Mawr, Garth, Builth Wells won the ewe lamb championship and achieved the best price of £158 for a pen sold to Lewis Farming, Nash Farm, Milson, Cleobury Mortimer. The ewe lambs averaged £95 overall.

At Ruthin, yearlings sold for an average of £108, with RD & CE Davies, Ty Canol, Llanfair TH winning the Keith Evans Memorial Award for the best entry of yearling ewes and achieving the highest price of £142 for yearlings sold to Mr Morris, New Santley, Santley, Wrexham. Ewe lambs prices fell back to £80. GP Williams & Co, Bryn Dansi, won the ewe lamb competition and received the best price for a pen of ewe lambs at £116 from H & E Powell, Llwyngwilym, Rhayader.

The October sales followed the trend set in September. Yearlings at Welshpool averaged £110, with the top price of £145 achieved by Messrs Beynon, Great Whitton, Swansea for a pen sold to RP Richards, Glanleri, Borth. Ewe lambs averaged £82 with J Thomas & Son, Tanhouse, obtaining the best return of £128 for sheep purchased by JMJ & MJA Evans,

Blaencarreg., Llanybydder.

Yearlings at Builth Wells averaged £125; the top price of £152 obtained by DG Jones, Esgair, Erwood, Builth Wells from J Phillips & Son, Hill Farm, Llan-ishen, Cardiff while ewe lambs averaged £82 with the top price being £136 for a pen sold by RG & BM



Dilwyn Davies, Ty Canol, receives the Keith Evans Memorial Cup for the best yearling ewe entry at the Ruthin sale from Keith's sister, Rita with chairman Brian Roberts and judges, Michael Price and Owen Jones looking on.

Website & promotions appeal

The association's website has been running for over a year now and has proved a useful way of providing information about the Welsh Mule and about the association. We're keen to obtain more stories

about the breed to publish not just on the website but in pamphlets and on posters as well. We are particularly interested in receiving stories about buyers who have had good results when producing

finished lambs from Welsh Mules and photos are particularly welcome. If you feel that you have a suitable contribution, please contact the field officer or secretary, contact details on back page.

The 2013 Royal Welsh

The winner of the champion Welsh Mule exhibit at the 2013 Royal Welsh Show was a ewe presented by Mr Richard Lloyd, Cefn Bar-rach, Trefeglwys.

Mr Lloyd is pictured with judge Idwal Jones, Llanilltyd, Libanus



'Performance' Welsh Mules in 2014

A number of 'Performance' Welsh Mule ewe lambs are expected to be forward at the association's 2014 sales. These will be ewe lambs that can be identified as having been sired by a recorded Blue-faced Leicester Ram with an above-average performance, according to Signet performance data and therefore in the top 50% of recorded rams in the year of purchase.

Rams that were recorded in 2013, for example, would need to have a recorded index score of 98 and above on the Signet Blue-faced Leicester index to qualify to produce 'Performance' Welsh Mule ewe lambs.

Any Welsh Mule breeder who'd like to market 'Performance' Welsh Mules can contact the Welsh Mule Sheep Breeders

Association for a certificate to confirm the identity of the Qualifying Ram or rams to be used: certificates that can then be displayed on the pens at the Welsh Mule sales. All 'Performance' Welsh Mules must be identified by the initials 'PM' on their ear tags. Breeders will need to contact their tag supplier to produce appropriate tags for 2014 born 'Performance' Mule ewe lambs.

The association doesn't expect a high number in the first year but a number of buyers have expressed an interest and this will be an opportunity to test the waters. We'd be grateful if potential vendors could contact the association's secretary or Field Officer with possible numbers at the earliest opportunity.

A look back at Welsh Mule sales over the years

A review of the throughput and average prices achieved at the association's sales between 1992 and 2013 makes interesting reading; an example of the interaction of supply and demand over that time. The data uses the averages achieved at all three sale centres, at all association's sales (be they held in September or October) over a whole season: it excludes data for 2001 because of the foot and mouth crisis.

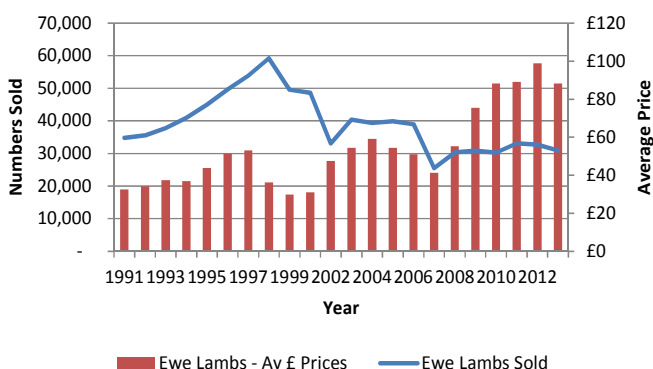
The most sheep sold through the association's sales was 82,870 in 1998 (75% more than the number in 1991 or 2013) with just over 59,000 ewe lambs forward and 23,350 yearlings. However, prices had been falling in 1998 and hit bottom in 1999 when ewe lambs averaged just over £30 and yearlings were £41.

Numbers forward have been comparatively stable since 2008 with yearlings

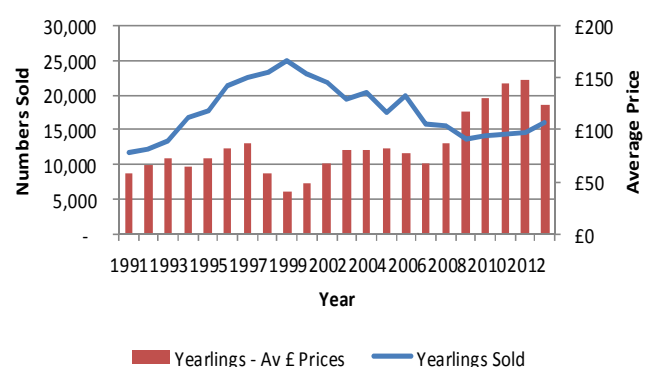
increasing steadily to 16,000 with numbers of ewe lambs sold holding at around 31,000.

The total number of sheep sold in 2013 was similar to that in 1992 but a higher percentage of yearlings to ewe lambs. However, prices were significantly better at last autumn's sales - and needed to be given the ever increasing costs of production.

Ewe Lamb Prices & Nos 1992 - 2013



Yearling Prices & Nos 1992 - 2013



Last year's sale results:

		2013	2012
		Av Price	Av Price
		£	£
Welshpool			
Sept	Yearlings	130.69	152.43
	Ewe lambs	97.62	106.07
Oct	Yearlings	110.15	133.89
	Ewe lambs	81.98	91.34
Builth Wells			
Sept	Yearlings	123.88	156.36
	Ewe lambs	95.34	107.31
Oct	Yearlings:	125.10	127.81
	Ewe lambs	82.11	92.06
Ruthin			
	Yearlings	108.20	140.59
	Ewe lambs	80.39	98.08

In tribute:

The association lost two of its most ardent and hard-working supporters during the summer and autumn of 2013 when we learnt that Mr Pat Tantarum and Mr Gareth Owen had passed away. Both Pat and Gareth had made a considerable contribution to Welsh farming in other spheres, Pat most notably at the Royal Welsh and Gareth at Wynnstay Farmers but their work for the association was also very significant. They had both served on the association's executive committee for many years, had been President and in Pat's case, Life President. They'd acted as inspectors and referees at association sales and had always been willing to support the association's demonstration stands and Open Days. While we mourn their passing, our thoughts and sympathy go to both their families who bear by far, the biggest burden of loss

Welsh Mules competing at the Royal Welsh in 2013.

For more Royal Welsh Show photos, visit our website on www.welshmules.co.uk and click the tab, "Shows & Demonstrations" - (All Royal Welsh photos by Rachel Thomas, Tanhouse.)



The entry for the competitions in the Royal Welsh in 2013 was of the usual very high quality. Overall champion and winner of the class for ewes, two shear and over that had reared lambs in 2013 was R Lloyd, Cefn Barrach, Trefeglwys (see facing page) with Ben Powell, Llwyngwilym, Rhayader first in the class for shearling ewes. Lynda Lloyd, Cefn Barrach topped the class for a shearling with lambs at foot. RG & BM Jones & Son, Ty Mawr, Garth won the competition for ewe lambs while Aaron Hughes, Godregarreg, Llangadog was first in the competition open only to white-faced ewe lambs. (Photo: Rachel Thomas, Tanhouse)



**Welsh Mule Sheep
Breeders Association Ltd**

Gorseland, North Road, Aberystwyth
Ceredigion SY23 2WB
Phone No: (01970) 636688

Remember: For the 2014 sales, ewe lambs must be tagged with a yellow electronic tag in the left ear and a GREEN coloured tag in the right ear

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

2013 Sales Ewe Lamb Competition Winners



Top Left: Mr Eric Hughes, High Park Farm, Stone Heath receives the cup for the best pen of ewe lambs at the September sale in Welshpool from Field Officer Marcus Williams and association vice-chairman, Kevin Parry with judges Dylan Jones and Gareth Jones.

Top Right: Neil Jones, Ty Mawr, Garth receives the ewe lamb championship cup in Builth Wells from Marcus Williams flanked by judges Carl Thomas and Gareth Hamer with Neil's father Gwyn looking on.



Bottom left: Gaynor Jones Cornel, Cilmeri with her husband Ken and son Deri receives the Vernon Wilson Memorial Cup for the best pen of ewe lambs at the Builth Wells, October sale from association chairman, Brian Roberts, flanked by judges Mike Evans and Gareth Jones.

Bottom right: Brian Roberts was present at the association's sale in Ruthin to present the cup for the best ewe lamb entry to Dewi Williams, Bryn Dansi, Dolwen, Abergele supported by judges Michael Price and Owen Jones.