



# P L & L F Baber



## *Breeders of Top Quality Stock Rams*

### **Our Aim**

We pride ourselves with producing rams 'FIT FOR PURPOSE', as a result of recording and using GENETICS NOT COSMETICS. We aim to sell rams at sensible prices for commercial lamb production.

### **Easier management**

Rams must be able to thrive in the conditions in which you intend to keep them. A fit healthy ram will have the desire and ability to serve more ewes **and** get them in lamb. There is no point in buying a ram which has spent half its life with his head in a trough or been fed up to 4lbs a day to get them ready for a show or sale. Think about what the ram will look like in a year's time, how many ewes he will have got in lamb and how good the lambs will be.

### **Ram Costs**

The number of lambs sired by a ram can vary enormously from just 50 if a ram lamb is only capable of serving 35 ewes and only survives one year, up to over 500 lambs if he is capable and used on 75 ewes for 5 years. We are successfully mating over 100 ewes to some of our rams.

### **Number of lambs produced in ram's life**

Ram's working life	Nos. of ewes per ram		
	35	50	75
1 year	53	75	113
3 years	158	225	338
5 years	263	375	563

The costs per lambs can then be calculated

### **Cost per lamb produced**

Ram's working life	Nos. of ewes per ram		
	35	50	75
1 year	£7.05	£4.93	£3.29
3 years	£2.35	£1.64	£1.10
5 years	£1.41	£0.99	£0.66

We must aim to get the ram costs down to less than £1.00 per lamb, by being in the green area of the table, not the red area!

### **Lamb performance.**

A ram selected from a performance recorded flock will produce lambs which will grow faster and produce heavier carcasses which grade better, and therefore earn more money. When this is then taken into account we arrive at a situation where rather than a ram costing £300-£500 pounds, being a pain to look after and not producing many lambs. It is now possible to buy rams which are easier to look after and because of their performance figures their lambs will actually produce more profit so that the ram can be a real investment with a profit rather than a cost to the business. **Most of our rams have been awarded Gold or Silver Order of Merit awards from the Eblex Better Returns Programme, certifying that they are in the top 10% or 25% of the breed for growth rates and muscling.**

### **Our rams are now reared entirely on grass.**

For several years we have been reducing the dependency on supplementary creep feed. Last year again we reared and over-wintered all our ram lambs without supplementing with any creep or concentrates. Over the winter, as part of a trial they were over-wintered at 900 feet on just grass and Rumenco feed blocks. This means that all their own performance records are measured against their ability to grow whilst sucking a ewe, fed purely on grass, and then after weaning they themselves are selected for their ability to forage and continue to grow and over winter largely on grass.

### **Worm Resistance**

We are one of the few flocks who are selecting rams with natural resistance to worms. As a result of the progress which we have made we are now increasing the interval between drenches for our own stock, thus saving on both time and drench. This year we didn't need to drench our lambs for the first time until two weeks after weaning, towards the end of July.

*Peter and Louise Baber  
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**Weir Park Farm. Christow. Exeter. Devon. EX6 7PB  
Tel: 01647 252549 peter@baber.co.uk**