

## RamCompare Scheme

(Reference DMA 002/2015<sup>1</sup>)

Research to be undertaken by the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) will support the introduction of high-quality genetic materials into the national flock of sheep. This will accelerate the enhancement of the genetic quality of the flock. That research will be funded by parafiscal taxes and private money. This RamCompare scheme will provide a foundation for that research to be undertaken. It will comprise the provision of rams and semen straws to a number of sheep farmers in the United Kingdom, in co-operation with and supported by Hybu Cig Cymru – Meat Promotion Wales (HCC), Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) and Agrisearch.

AHDB will purchase a number of rams of high genetic quality in co-operation with the relevant breed societies. Four rams will be provided to each of six objectively selected flocks in year 1 of the scheme and another four rams will be provided in year 2, with any infertile or dead rams being replaced. AHDB will also provide each of the flocks with 120 straws of semen from reference rams in both years 1 and 2.

Additionally, another 80 objectively selected flocks will each receive 25 straws of semen from the reference rams in year 1 and perhaps again in year 2. In year 2, other objectively selected flocks may receive 25 straws of semen from the reference rams. The total number of flocks receiving straws in year 2 will not exceed 80.

No ewes will be provided by AHDB under this scheme. The rams and any resulting lambs will be the property of the farmer concerned and the farmer will be responsible for all costs incurred in relation to these animals and will keep any monies received as a consequence of their sale or slaughter. Subject only to their death or the prior written agreement of AHDB, the rams must be retained in the ownership of the relevant farmer for at least five years under good husbandry conditions including compliance with all relevant regulations and codes of good farming practice.

AHDB will arrange for the collection and distribution of the rams and semen to the farms, which will have been selected objectively so that such accelerated enhancement will be achieved. The ram breeders must be members of a performance-recording scheme such as, but not limited to, the Signet scheme operated by AHDB, in relation to the relevant breed.

This scheme will enable AHDB to provide the above rams and semen using parafiscal money derived from compulsory levies paid by the sheep industry in England in compliance with the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board Order 2008. No payment will be made to the farmer under this scheme. HCC and QMS will reimburse AHDB for agreed costs relating to farms in Wales and Scotland respectively. Agrisearch will contribute to the overall project.

This scheme will run from 1 May 2015 until 31 December 2017, and will be limited to a maximum total payment of £400,000. AHDB reserves the right to discontinue or postpone the scheme at any time without notice, but rams and semen already provided will not be required to be returned.

**An application form is annexed to enable you as a sheep farmer in the United Kingdom to apply to participate in this scheme.**

**The form must be received not later than 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2016.**

Applications will be considered applying objective conditions that will ensure compliance with the objectives and conditions of this scheme and the associated research scheme.

We look forward to receiving your application.

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<sup>1</sup> This document is available at <http://www.ahdb.org.uk/procurement/>.

## Legal Matters

The award of a grant under this RamCompare Scheme will constitute 'State aid'. The aid will be provided as agricultural *de minimis* aid under Commission Regulation (EU) 1408/2013<sup>2</sup>, which prohibits any undertaking from receiving more than €15,000 of agricultural *de minimis* aid over a rolling three year period. Any agricultural *de minimis* aid granted over the €15,000 limit may be subject to repayment with interest.

AHDB must check whether an award under this scheme will breach that limit. The application form therefore requires you to inform AHDB if you have received any agricultural *de minimis* aid over the last three years (from any source). You would have been told that the aid was *de minimis* aid granted under Regulation (EU) 1408/2013 or Regulation (EC) 1998/2006. No other type of funding counts towards this maximum.

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs ('Defra') requires AHDB to record and provide Defra with the identity of recipients of agricultural *de minimis* aid, together with the amounts granted and date(s) of grant. The data will be provided to HCC and QMS and may be provided to any organisation granting *de minimis* aid and will be passed to UK or Union authorities on request. AHDB and Defra may be required to release information, including personal data and commercial information, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

You will only be eligible to participate in this scheme if you agree to participate in the associated research. That will require you to co-operate and assist in the collection and provision of data relating to the rams, semen, ewes and lambs indicated above. You would receive payment for the services you provide in doing this under that research scheme. For the avoidance of doubt, that payment will not comprise agricultural *de minimis* state aid and will not be paid under this RamCompare Scheme.

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<sup>2</sup> Commission Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to *de minimis* aid in the agriculture sector; OJ L352, 24 December 2013, p.9. An electronic copy will be provided on request.

**RamCompare Scheme  
Application Form**

To apply to participate in this scheme, please complete and send this form to:

**AHDB (RamCompare Scheme), Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2TL**

Name of Applicant: .....

Name of Business: .....

Business Address: .....

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..... Post Code: .....

Telephone: .....

Mobile phone: .....

E-Mail: .....

I am interested in participating in the RamCompare Scheme and the related research. Please contact me to discuss this.

My business is a farm that produces lambs in the United Kingdom and will be operating within a performance-recording scheme.

I understand that AHDB will maintain records of any aid granted to me under the scheme and will provide this information and relevant information about my business including personal data if required to do so by British or Union authorities or for the proper management and operation of this scheme and the associated research scheme.

*Declaration:*

In the current fiscal year and the previous two fiscal years:

\* I have not received any agricultural *de minimis* aid<sup>3</sup>

\* I received a total of £ ..... of agricultural *de minimis* aid

(\* delete/complete as appropriate)

I will inform AHDB of any future grant of agricultural *de minimis* aid that I may receive from any source prior to AHDB making any grant under this scheme

Signed ..... Date: ....., 201...

Position in the business: .....

<sup>3</sup> The only funding that you need to include when you are making this declaration is *de minimis* aid provided under Regulation (EU) 1408/2013 or Regulation (EC) 1998/2006. It may or may not have been described as agricultural *de minimis* aid.

AHDB, HCC (in Wales), QMS (in Scotland) and the relevant UK and EU authorities reserve the right to examine the recipient's records to ensure the accuracy of this declaration.