



2022 Maritimes Ram Test Guidelines

A. Background Information

Typical lambing season: Winter (considered this to be Late December – Late February)

Common breeds: Suffolk, Rideau, Dorset, Clun Forest, North Country Cheviot

Earliest delivery date: Nappan bull test is completed by end of March with sale following the first week of April. Therefore, the earliest availability would be mid to late April.

B. Reported Traits

- Average daily gain
- Average daily feed intake
- Feed efficiency
- Scrotal circumference
- Adjusted scrotal circumference
- Loin depth
- Fat depth
- Weight per day of age
- 50-day weight
- Adjusted 50-day weight
- All on test weights
- Birth type (single, twin, etc.)
- Breed
- Lambing ease

C. Requirements

1. **Data required on delivery:** minimum information needed on delivery to receive all reported traits:
 - a. identification (tattoo, reg number, etc)
 - b. lambing period (start and end dates)
 - c. number of lambs to be tested
 - d. breed
 - e. 50-day weight
 - f. 50-day weigh date
 - g. born as (single, twin, etc)
 - h. raised as (single, twin, foster, etc)
 - i. lambing ease (unassisted, easy pull, hard pull, malpresented, surgical)
 - j. If enrolled in GenOvis- Lambing data and 50-day weights should be entered into GenOvis prior to registering rams for testing



2. **Breeds:** all breeds are accepted
3. **Minimum weight:** all rams must weigh at least 35kg at delivery
4. **Age:** all rams must be between 70 and 130 days of age at delivery, that is ram birthdates must be between December 1, 2021 and January 31, 2022.
5. **Weaning:** weaned and bunk broke at least 14 days before delivery
6. **Whole flock data:** submission of the above traits on your entire flock to AgSights will increase contemporary group size, improving the accuracy of performance traits and genetic evaluations

D. Dates

1. **Ram registration deadline:** April 1, 2022
2. **Delivery date:** April 8, 2022
3. **Delivery weight:** April 8, 2022
4. **Ultrasound dates:** Each weigh period
5. **Acclimation period:** April 8, 2022 to April 20, 2022
6. **Start of test date:** April 21, 2022
7. **Start of test weight:** April 21, 2022
8. **Day 14 weight:** May 5, 2022
9. **Day 28 weight:** May 19, 2022
10. **Day 42 weight:** June 2, 2022
11. **Day 56 weight:** June 16, 2022
12. **End of test weight:** June 30, 2022
13. **End of test date:** June 30, 2022

E. Test Overview

All rams are to be delivered on April 8-9, 2022. On delivery, animals will be uniquely tagged, weighed, vaccinated, measured for scrotal circumference and ultrasound measurements for carcass merit will be completed by a certified ultrasound technician. Following the 21-day acclimation period, rams will be allocated to pens based on age and weight. At this time (April 21, 2022) the performance evaluation will start with a start of test (Day 0) weight, with weights and ultrasound measures being taken on 14-day intervals over the 70-day test period. Rams will be given ad-libitum forage-based total mixed ration fed twice daily with individual ram feed intake recorded daily over the 21-day acclimation and 70-day test periods using the GrowSafe feed intake system. Rams will be housed in a group pen facility bedding frequently with access to an outside concrete yard. The end of test (Day 70) weight will be collected on June 30, 2022. At end of the test a breeding soundness evaluation will be conducted on each ram. If the consignors wish to organize a ram sale for after the evaluation, the facility will be available.



F. Reports

Reports will be sent to consignors after each weigh period. A final comprehensive report will be sent at end of test.

G. Date and Requirement Determination

Delivery/start of test dates

Genovis guidelines require ultrasound traits to be captured when ram lambs are between the ages of 73 and 135 days. Given the need to have rams complete the evaluation by August 1, 2022, the earliest possible delivery date is April 8th. This sets the birthdate requirement of December 1, 2021 and January 31, 2022.

Length of test

Seventy days is a well-accepted length of test for ram performance evaluations (Write and Greiner, 2019, Wyoming Ram Sire Test, 2019) while ensuring accurate determination of average daily feed intake for each ram. A shorter length of test could lower the accuracy of this determination, while a longer test increases consignment cost.