

2020-2021 Annual Newsletter

Dear Member,

2020: What a year! We had no idea what the future held at the time of the annual meeting and dinner in February last year and that we would be in a national lockdown six weeks later. The global pandemic is still with us and we have been forced to postpone the annual meeting and dinner for the time being and create a brand new newsletter.

For the first time ever the five-county committee was held virtually via Zoom, which was a new but exciting experience for us all. Unfortunately the summer shows and the Royal Welsh Show at Builth Wells had to be canceled. We give thanks to all the shows, large and small, that hosted online virtual shows keeping the competitive tradition alive. During the summer there was concern that it would not be possible to hold the ewe and ram auctions in their normal format during the autumn. However, thanks to the detailed planning of the auctioneers all were run smoothly and it was a very good season for all of us with regard to selling fat and store lambs, ewe lambs, breeding sheep and old sheep and rams.

The 2020 Auctions

Here are a few of the highlights of the year;

Denbigh Sale @ Llanrwst

104 of the 134 rams were sold for an average of 1,280gns with 30 selling for over 1,000gns each.

- 1.) Gwynfor and Beryl Williams, Ty Newydd Pennant sold a Yearling Ram for 10,000gns jointly between Ken Owen Tyddyn Mawr and H. P. Roberts, Gyrn, Llanuwchllyn, Bala.
- 2.) Ty Newydd Pennant also received the second highest price for a ram that sold for 8,100gns to E. L. and M. L. Evans, Grugor Isa, Bylchau, Denbigh.
- 3.) A ram was sold by T. G. Evans and Rhys ap Gwyndaf, Hafod Dinbych, Pentrefoelas for 7,000gns to D. G. Jenkins, Tanrallt, Tal-y-bont, Ceredigion.



Arfon Sale @ Llanrwst



158 rams were entered and 134 sold for an average of 825gns with 20 rams selling for over 1,000gns.

- 1.) A ram belonging to I. R. Williams, Tairmeibion, Talybont, Bangor was sold for 9,000gns to H. W. Nutting, Cwmrhwyddfor, Tallyllyn, Tywyn.
- 2.) A Price of 5,400gns was received for a ram owned by T. T. Roberts and Company, Bryn Cynhadledd, Llanbedr, Conwy and sold to H. Davies, Cefn Coed, Maenan, Llanrwst.
- 3.) A ram by H. Davies, Cefn Coed, Maenan, Llanrwst sold for 5,300gns to I. R. Williams, Tairmeibion, Talybont, Bangor.

Meirionydd Sale @ Dolgellau

220 rams were up for sale and 165 were sold for an average of 1,147gns with 16 rams selling for over 3,000gns.

- 1.) The highest price achieved was for a yearling ram from R. J. Roberts & Son, Dysefin selling for 11,400gns and purchased by H. W. Jones, Llwynsarn, Rhydymain.
- 2.) The second best price was 10,000gns for a yearling ram bred by M. Jones, Darngae, Trawsfynydd and purchased by G. Williams & Daughter, Ty Newydd Pennant.
- 3.) The third highest price of 9,000gns was achieved by H. W. Jones Llwynsarn and purchased by T. T. Roberts of Bryn Cynhadledd.



The highest average for the sale went to the Cwmrhyddfor family who cleared all 8 rams at an average price of 2,968.75gns.

Maldwyn and Ceredigion Sale @ Dolgellau

103 of the 110 ram lots were sold – an outstanding clearance rate of 93%.

- 1.) The highest price achieved was for a yearling ram from E. W., M. M. & D. Jenkins, Ty'n y Graig, Tal-y-bont selling for 6,000gns and purchased by B. Owen, Tai Pella.
- 2.) The second highest price was for a yearling, again from E. W., M. M. & D. Jenkins, Ty'n y Graig selling for 4,500gns and purchased by G. L. & L. S. Jones, Cwm y Geifr.
- 3.) The third highest price of 2,600gns was achieved by G. & L. Jones, Maes y Cilyn and purchased by D. B. & E. D. Evans of Penyglog.



Llangollen Sale

As a result of Covid-19 the sale had to be relocated and held for the first time in Oswestry mart and it is very likely that the sale will remain at this site.

The top price of the day was 1,000gns for a ram by Gwyndaf Evans, Hafod Dinbych which was sold to the Defaidty family.



Awards

Congratulations to Gwynfor and Beryl Williams, Ty Newydd Pennant, Gwytherin on winning the shield for the highest average price at the ram sales for the second year running, a great achievement! Unfortunately it is not possible to award the 'Ram of the Year' shield this year.

Many thanks to the Roxan tag company for its sponsorship of £400 towards the Dolgellau ram sales. It was decided to focus on the second sale and congratulations to the three successful buyers whose names were drawn from a hat and who receive the following prizes; £125 - Jones, Pant y March, Bala; £75 - Pugh, Blaencywarch, Llanymawddwy and £50 - Jones, Cadwst Mawr, Llandrillo.

We are also grateful to the company for offering to sell tags to Cymdeithas Defaid Mynydd members at their discounted prices, see attached brochure. Please contact Dei Williams for further details.

Promoting Taste



During the year progress was made with regard to the promotion of Welsh mountain meat on the basis of its taste. At the beginning of the year a group of members visited the Kepak abattoir in Merthyr and began discussions about creating a bespoke agreement and we trust that these discussions can continue in 2021.

In conjunction with HCC a zoom meeting was held recently to learn more about their 'Welsh Lamb Meat Quality Project' scheme which emphasizes grass-raised lambs as they are naturally higher in minerals e.g. iron, omega 3 and zinc.

New Logo!

We received funding from Cywain towards branding work and here is a quick glimpse at the work undertaken to date.

Once completed the logo will be available for the use of all the society members, be that whilst donating a lamb to a neighbour or within retail.



Winning 2 stars in the True Taste Awards

One of the highlights of the year was seeing the society's leg of lamb win 2 stars in the true taste awards. We would like to thank Glyn Williams (Cae Poeth) for his willingness to supply lamb for the occasion but due to the last minute cancellation of the event we were unable to use. A special thanks to the Arfon crew and to Eifion, Ann and Wiliam Williams, Hendre Hywel for providing a leg of lamb when the event was re-organised. The lamb was slaughtered at the Cae Iago Slaughterhouse and hanged for 9 days before being sent to Dorset. Here is the feedback received:

Welsh Mountain Sheep Society Lamb - Leg of Lamb

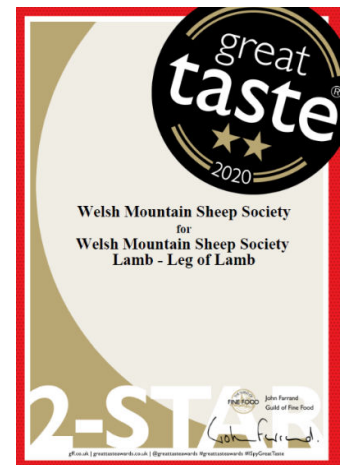


2-Star

Glorious aroma, smells like Sunday lunch and fills us with anticipation. Sticky, succulent meat with excellent fat and skin. That fat has melted into the meat and rendered it so moist. The flavour is heading towards hoggett, being so deep and rich. The taste of this lingers and is supremely satisfying. Really, this is how meat should be.

Rich, delicious lamb, with a beautiful clean sweet flavour and a wonderful texture. It's not too fatty, yet it has basted itself to delicious tenderness. There is an intrinsic, saline mineral quality to the flavour. And the meat round the knuckle - wow! - it's so soft and packed with flavour, it could almost be confit.

Beautifully cooked leg of lamb with appealing savoury aromas and the appearance of moist and succulent meat. Buttery flesh with a rich balanced level of lambiness. Sweet, grassy notes with herbal tones and a clean and fresh finish. Especially rich, satisfying, savoury complexities in the meat around the bone.



High praise indeed for special qualities that will hopefully make our mountain lamb more popular on plates and within kitchens across Wales.

Plans for 2021

Although it is very difficult within current circumstances to be able to plan ahead as is our custom, we cannot nevertheless stand still. We must continue to develop and be active in order to ensure a viable and sustainable Society for the future.

In 2021 we are aiming to achieve the following:

- We will continue to work on promoting taste;
- Hold our Open Day at Cae Poeth, Llanuwchllyn during September if circumstances allow;
- We will create new interpretation products for the society;
- We will revamp the website.

Thanks

I wish to thank Elain for her enthusiasm and for the great team work. Many congratulations to her and Guto on the birth of their young son Celt back in July and best wishes to the family at their new home in Pontllyfni.

Warm regards and best wishes to you all.

Beryl Evans,

Chairwoman