



2022

University of Florida Ram Test & Sale

Welcome

We are very excited to initiate this unique program and to work with producers to quantify the desirable qualities of their rams. We hope that this program will provide value to your operation.

Overview

Rams will arrive at the UF Sheep Unit (2108 Shealy Drive) on Saturday morning May 14, 2022. A 12-day acclimation period will be used to adapt rams to their new environment and ration, mitigate the effect of shrink on calculated growth performance, and assess incoming parasite load with the goal being to reduce parasite levels. Following the acclimation period, rams will begin an 84-day gain test. During the test, rams will be housed on Bahiagrass pastures and supplemented with 'UF Ram Test' concentrate in their respective contemporary groups with a target consumption of 3% body weight. Data will be collected to determine body weight, body condition score, fecal egg count, and FAMACHA score on 14-day intervals throughout the test. These data will be used as an indicator of the ram's ability to cope with parasites and grow during the hot and humid Florida summer. At the end of the trial, rams will be ranked based upon their growth performance and resistance to parasites. The top performing rams will be offered at auction on Saturday, September 17, 2022.

Program Purpose

1. Standardize the environmental conditions for evaluating post-weaning performance of ram lambs as it relates to growth performance and parasite resistance.
2. Provide useful unbiased data for both the consignor and the buyer of performance tested rams.
3. Provide a source of high quality, performance tested rams for sheep producers.
4. Provide educational opportunities for the improvement of the sheep industry.
5. Provide networking opportunities for sheep producers.
6. Provide an opportunity for sheep producers to showcase their breeding programs.
7. Facilitate the transfer of desirable genetics between breeders.

We encourage you to consider consigning your rams to the 2022 UF Ram Test. Please contact us to indicate your intent to consign animals to this program. Rams must be pre-registered by May 1, 2022 in order to be enrolled in the program. Please contact Jesse Savell for enrollment or questions, at (352)494-3397 or sanspur@ufl.edu.

Schedule of Events

May 14, 2022: Arrival of weaned lambs at UF Sheep Unit (2108 Shealy Dr.)

May 19, 2022: Vaccination

May 26, 2022: 84-day gain test begins, beginning weights and measures collected

Rams with inadequate FEC reduction will be eliminated from test

June 9, 2022: Interim weights and measures collected

June 23, 2022: Interim weights and measured collected

July 7, 2022: Interim weights and measured collected; 42-day mid-point test report

July 21, 2022: Interim weights and measures collected

August 4, 2022: Interim weights and measures collected

August 18, 2022: 84-day gain test ends, final weights and measures collected

September 17, 2022: UF Ram Test Sale and Extension Program at UF Beef Teaching Unit

Rules and Eligibility

- Rams must be born between December 1, 2022 and February 15, 2022. We encourage producers to consign rams born earlier in this period as we expect them to perform better.
- Rams must be registered with a recognized breed association to participate in the sale. For breeds with open flock books or appendix registries, breed percentage will be indicated on the ram's pedigree. Commercial rams may be entered in the test, but will not be sold.
- Rams must be weaned prior to April 15, 2022.
- Rams must be pre-registered for the UF Ram Test by May 1, 2022.
- A one-time, non-refundable, consignment fee of \$100.00 must accompany each ram upon arrival on May 14, 2022 to cover the direct costs associated with the UF Ram Test.
- Rams must have a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection at the time of delivery.
- Rams must have official Federal scrapie tag identification at the time of delivery.
- Rams must be vaccinated for *Clostridium perfringens* types C, D and T at least three weeks prior to delivery to the test.
- All incoming animals will be evaluated for health-related issues on the truck before they are unloaded at the University of Florida. The University of Florida reserves the right to turn away or disqualify any animal at their discretion.
- Rams with any of the following will not be allowed in the test: Lameness, pizzle rot, presence of possible contagious diseases (abscesses, swollen lymph nodes, footrot, sore mouth, pink eye, conjunctivitis, boils, ringworm), evidence of inherited undesirable traits (ie. entropion or ectropion, overshot or undershot jaws, wool blindness), rectal prolapse, epididymitis, inguinal hernias, abnormal soft or hard testicles, external parasites, evidence of profuse diarrhea.
- Producers will be allowed to enroll up to 10 ram lambs in the test each year. Producers are encouraged to only enroll their best animals with the greatest breeding potential.
- The UF Ram Test facility has a capacity of 100 animals. Should more than the maximum capacity be consigned, the Sheep Committee reserves the right to reduce consignments in an equitable manner beginning with the largest consignors.

Testing

Pre-test Period: Upon arrival, rams will be weighed and dewormed with Levamisole (8 mg/kg), Fenbendazole (10 mg/kg), and Cydectin (0.2 mg/kg). Each animal will also be vaccinated with Ultra-choice 7 (clostridial), soremouth vaccine, and will receive a zinc sulfate solution foot bath. Other data collection upon arrival will include body condition score, FAMACHA Score, and Fecal Egg Count. Animals will be grouped based upon age and weight at the discretion of the Sheep Committee. Animals will be turned out to pasture in their assigned groups the same day and offered feed. This will begin the 12-day acclimation period. All wool breed rams will be shorn during the pre-test period. A fecal egg reduction test will be performed on May 26, 2022. Any ram not showing acceptable reduction in parasite load as determined by the consulting veterinarians (fecal egg count >500 epg) will not be allowed to participate in the test due to parasite resistance to dewormers.

Test Period: Body weight, body condition score, FAMACHA score, fecal egg count, and scrotal circumference will be collected on 14-day intervals beginning on May 26, 2022 and ending on August 18, 2022. Scrotal circumference will only be collected at beginning, mid-point, and end. Rams will be housed on Bahiagrass pastures and supplemented with “UF Ram Test” concentrate in their respective groups with a target consumption of 3% of body weight. Pastures will be rotated every 14 days. Rams will be evaluated for parameters of parasite resistance and growth performance during the test period and compared against their contemporaries. Any animal with a fecal egg count above 1500 eggs per gram will be dewormed. If an animal that presents with a fecal egg count above 1500 eggs per gram more than once, the owner will be notified, and the animal will be removed from the test immediately, and must be removed from the facility within 7 days.

Post-test Period: Body weight, body condition score, FAMACHA score, fecal egg count, and scrotal circumference will be collected on August 18, 2022 at the end of the gain test. Parameters of parasite resistance and growth performance will be evaluated at this time. Rams will be ranked based upon their performance during the test, and ratios within contemporary groups will be calculated. Animals will be ranked based upon Fecal Egg Count and Growth Index. The Growth Index will be calculated by the average of Weight per Day of Age (WDA) and on-test Average Daily Gain (ADG). Rams that achieve an index greater than 90 for both Fecal Egg Count and Growth Index will be automatically consigned to the sale. Any animal who fails to achieve a minimum index of 90 for either trait will not be eligible for the sale. A summary of all test data will be provided to all participating producers. All rams will be inspected at the end of the test period for structural soundness and type by the Sheep Committee. Only those rams of acceptable type, quality, and soundness will be sold. The decisions of the Sheep Committee shall be final. Producers of rams that qualify for the sale have the option to withdraw their animals from the sale at the end of the test period and take them home. Owners of animals not qualifying for the sale will be notified as soon as possible at the conclusion of the test period. At this time, we would ask the owners pick up rams no later than September 17, 2022 at the conclusion of the Ram Sale to prevent any additional charges. Producers are encouraged to keep all qualifying animals in the sale in order to fulfill the mission of this program. All rams consigned to the sale will undergo a Breeding Soundness Exam prior to the sale. A ‘Satisfactory’ classification, according to the guidelines published by the Society for Theriogenology, must be achieved on BSE to participate in the sale.

Health Management

1. The health of all animals will be overseen by the UF College of Veterinary Medicine.
2. Rams showing significant parasite burden during the test period will not be eligible for the sale. These animals will be identified by the UF College of Veterinary Medicine at the scheduled 14-day health assessments. Parameters for disqualification are Fecal Egg Count (FEC) >1500 epg and/or FAMACHA Score 4 or 5 accompanied by an anemic Packed Cell Volume (PCV) of <20%.
3. Consignors will be notified if an animal becomes ill or dies unexpectedly.
4. Any ram that dies will be necropsied by the UF College of Veterinary Medicine and the consignor will be provided with the necropsy results at no cost.
5. Rams may be removed from the test by the Sheep Committee in the case of a chronic condition impairing the usefulness of the animal. The consignor will be notified and required to remove the animal within 7 days in such a case. Potential events that may result in animal removal include but are not limited to, chronic lameness, infectious disease, or persistent parasite burden.
6. Additional veterinary healthcare costs due to illness will be the responsibility of the consignor. In such a case, the consignor will be contacted, consulted, and provided with a cost estimate from the UF College of Veterinary Medicine. The consignor reserves the right to remove the animal without treatment, and at no cost, if they so desire.

Administration and Management

The program coordinators will be solely responsible for consignment, record keeping, correspondence, and general oversight related to the program. All daily management of the rams will be conducted by the UF Department of Animal Sciences staff. Faculty from the UF College of Veterinary Medicine will serve as consulting veterinarians for the program.

Liability

University of Florida personnel will make every reasonable effort to safeguard the health of the animals and to obtain professional veterinary services when necessary, but will not be responsible for the loss by fire, theft, injury, sickness, death or in any other way.

UF Ram Test Sale

- The 2022 UF Ram Test Sale will be held at the UF Beef Teaching Unit (3721 SW 23rd St.) on Saturday, September 17, 2022. Sale animals will be available for viewing the morning of the sale. Rams qualifying for the sale will be sold to the highest bidder beginning at 1:00pm.
- A maximum number of 30 of the highest performing rams will sell.
- To qualify for the sale, rams must achieve an index greater than 90 for both Fecal Egg Count and Growth Index.
- Any animal that has a fecal egg count greater than 1500 eggs per gram during the test, but still achieves an index above 90 for both Fecal Egg Count and Growth Index will still be eligible for the sale but will sell at the bottom of the sale order if space permits.
- Any animal that has a fecal egg count greater than 1500 eggs per gram more than once during the test period will not be eligible for the sale.

- Sale order will be determined in descending order beginning with the highest ratioing animal for the combined traits of Fecal Egg Count and Growth Index. In the event of a tie, the tie will be broken by the Fecal Egg Count ratio.
- All rams will sell with a Satisfactory Breeding Soundness Exam performed within 30 days of sale by a licensed UF Veterinarian.
- UF Veterinarians will be on site to provide an official Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) for interstate or intrastate travel to the purchaser's facility.
- A sale commission of 10% will be deducted from the sale price of each sale animal in order to recover sale costs and additional feed costs since the end of the gain test.

Sale Day

September 17, 2022 Ram Sale and Extension Program at Beef Teaching Unit.

TBD

