

EBLEX Ram Linkage Programme (RLP)

Objectives

- To increase flock connectedness, strengthening the quality of Signet breeding evaluations.
- To provide a short-term injection of elite genetics into a breed, with the additional benefits if these sires are widely used and their genes retained in the population.
- To increase the profile of recording within Breeds and Societies

Rules for RLP Qualification

- Nominated ram requirements are three or more EBVs within the Top 10% of the breed (based on the published Breed Benchmark at the time of nomination), and having been scanned using ultrasound or have 25+ progeny with ultrasound measurements. There are no age restrictions.
- Additional criteria which could be taken into consideration, particularly in maternal breeds, are: recorded progeny born in one or more flocks; high accuracy values for traits of interest; two generations of recorded ancestors; has been a Reference Sire with more to contribute to the breed.
- EBLEX will consider nominations twice a year in March and September. Breed Societies, Breeding Groups or Individuals can nominate rams for semen collection and nominations should be sent to Carol Davis by the dates notified in the nomination letter.
- Nominations will be competitive and open to any Signet recorded breed based in the UK, analysed on an across-flock basis, and with five or more Signet recording flocks in England.
- The Nomination process will be competitive with two rams being selected at each round (total of four rams per year). More than one ram per breed can be nominated in each round. In the event of a number of eligible rams within a breed being nominated, those with the highest EBVs/index within the breed will have the best chance of selection.
- The nominating body or individual will be informed of the outcome within one month of the deadline.

Responsibilities of successful nominating body or individual, as applicable

- Semen must be made available for three years/seasons. After three years unused semen can be disposed of.
- Semen is to be made available free of charge to any English breeder wishing to use it, whether or not they record with Signet.
- EBLEX will make one payment upon the successful collection and storage of 350 straws of semen and a second payment after the semen has been distributed.
- EBLEX will not be liable for any costs incurred in the unsuccessful attempt to collect semen from any ram or rams.
- The total payment would be £2,500 to the organisation or individual nominating the ram to cover the collection and distribution of a minimum of 350 straws.
- The money will be payable to the organisation or individual nominating the ram and £1,250 will be payable when semen has been successfully collected and £1,250 when the semen has been distributed.
- The distribution of the funding is at the complete discretion of the group/individual awarded funding. One way to distribute funds might be ram fee £750, semen collection £1500 and semen storage £250. Funds should be allocated by the applicant to ensure the storage costs for the three years are covered.
- Records must be submitted to identify how widely the semen has been used (which breeders have used the semen, how many doses, in which year/s as applicable) before the final payment will be made.
- The awarding panel must be convinced that there is a high chance that the semen collected would be used in multiple flocks. In small breeds, a written statement of intent from those breeders wishing to use the semen may be requested.