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*Summary only*

BREEDS OF SIRE FOR EXPORT LAMB PRODUCTION

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A LONG-TERM EXPERIMENT designed to measure the influence of the ram on the within- and between-breed variation in the growth rate and carcass quality of their lambs was described. The sire breeds used to date included the Romney, Southdown (stud and flock), Dorset Down, South Dorset Down, Cheviot, Border Leicester, Suffolk, South Suffolk, Hampshire, Dorset Horn, Poll Dorset, Merino, Ryeland, English Leicester and Lincoln. The purchasing policy has been to attempt to buy the average type of ram available to the commercial producer. Eight seasons' lambs have been produced and the trial is continuing. At least 10 rams from each of the various breeds will be progeny tested over Romney cast-for-age ewes. Each sire breed will be studied over at least two seasons and in at least two locations. Lambs have been run under common environmental conditions between birth and slaughter. The lambs from each sire are randomized to three groups which are slaughtered on an age basis. Detailed slaughter and carcass composition and quality information has been collected. The within- and between-breed variation in some important economic carcass characteristics in the lambs from different sires was discussed.