

No lag in prices with AgriLife ram test move

Sale sees almost \$150 per head up-tick over last year

Writer: Steve Byrns, 325-653-4576, s-byrns@tamu.edu

Contact: Dr. Dan Waldron, 325-653-4576, d-waldron@tamu.edu

SAN ANGELO – Moving the annual Texas A&M Ram Performance Test and sale from Sonora to San Angelo had no ill effect on prices paid for the auctioned animals, which averaged almost \$150 per head higher this year than last, said the test's coordinator.



Jake Thorne, research assistant with Texas A&M AgriLife Research, San Angelo, left, and Dr. Charles “Butch” Taylor, superintendent of the Texas A&M AgriLife Research Station at Sonora, stand with the top-indexing and selling ram of the annual test. (Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service photo by Steve Byrns)

“This was the best overall set of Rambouillet rams we’ve had on the test to date and the prices paid at this year’s sale reflected that high quality,” said Dr. Dan Waldron, Texas A&M AgriLife Research geneticist at San Angelo.

Sixteen rams sold for an average price of \$1,175, well above last year’s average price of \$1,026 per head.

The ram test had been conducted at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research Station at Sonora since 1948, but was moved to the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center at San Angelo due to budget and personnel changes, Waldron said.

The high-indexing ram was also the high-selling ram March 15 and sold to Tracy Stamatakis of Magna, Utah for \$2,700. The ram 8926 TAES, an AgriLife Research-bred animal, earned a Register of Merit Index of 147.13 and a test index ratio score of 119.9. The ram completed the test weighing 282 pounds and produced 12.8 pounds (clean) of uniformly fine wool that measured mostly 19 microns throughout the fleece, according to test results.

Robbie Eckhoff of Hawley, newly named executive secretary of the American Rambouillet Sheep Breeders Association, presented Dr. Charles “Butch” Taylor, superintendent of the Sonora station and breeder of the top ram, with a certificate of merit showing the animal met the association’s performance requirements during the test.

Stamatakis also bought four additional rams, paying \$10,800 for the five head, making him the sale’s leading volume buyer. Other volume buyers who bought two head each included VIP Ranch Company of Ozona and H. Clay Warnock of Fort Stockton.

Waldron said 76 Rambouillet rams completed the test, but the cooperating breeders decided that only those with a test index score of 100 or more could be eligible for the sale.

“The rams on the test come from some of the world’s top flocks in terms of rate-of-gain and desirable-fleece characteristics,” Waldron said. “The test’s main purpose is to identify and document superior rams to be used for flock improvement. Consequently, some breeders retain their animals rather than offering them for sale.”

The 140-day test is traditionally followed by an educational field day and sale conducted in cooperation with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

For more information on the Annual Ram Performance Test, pictures of the top indexing and selling animals and a complete listing of test and sale results, go to: <http://sanangelo.tamu.edu/performance-tests/ram-performance-test/> or <http://sanangelo.tamu.edu> and click on the “performance tests” link.

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