

Commercial buyers drive Suffolk trade at Shrewsbury

Demand for fleshy commercial Suffolk ram lambs was strong at the breed Society's National Show and Sale at Shrewsbury on Saturday (20 July), but with lamb prices tumbling by as much as 60p/kg in some parts of the country in the last seven days buyers were cautious with their spending.

Suffolk Sheep Society chief executive Lewis McClinton said he was more than satisfied with the trade, bearing in mind the current circumstances. "It was clear that both commercial and pedigree buyers had been somewhat shocked by the dramatic fall in prime lamb prices. This, understandably meant they were nervous of committing to spending too much on tups so early in the year.

"That said there was a ready demand for the right sort of tup and the top end of the pedigree trade was as strong as ever."

Leading the way in the pre-sale show, a first time for Dumfries breeders and taking the top price of 17,000gns in the following auction was the ram lamb, FHT 13084, from Ian and Judith Barbour's Solwaybank flock. Sired by Rhaeadr Rastafari he is out of a dam by Cariness Castello and was knocked down in a two-way split to the Campbell family, and Hugh Annet, for the Thrunton and Widdrington flocks, respectively, both Northumberland. The Barbour's also achieved the highest sale average.

The sale's second best price of 14,500gns came earlier in the sale when Myfyr Evans sold his first lamb in the ring, a son of the 90,000gns breed record holder, Ardlea Arbennig.

This was A12 13021, a lamb of the dam by Thurston Calzaghe. He had been in the second prize group of three in the pre-sale show and is from the same family as the sire of the champion. Taking him home were the Barbour family, re-investing some of their earnings from sale of the champion.

The Barbour family were then back in the money when they sold another from their strong pen of lambs at 8000gns. This lamb, FHT 13044, the pen leader is a son of homebred sire Solwaybank Skyfall out of a dam by Cariness Castello. He goes back to another homebred sire, Solwaybank Stylemaster on his dam's side and sold across the water to Holland with Dutch-based breeder Patrick Haccou.

Another then traded at 8000gns, with this being from the Cairness pen of Jimmy Douglas, a lamb by last year's 17,000gns National sale champion, Cairness Diamond Geezer. He is out of a dam by Langside Lightning which was also dam of 20,000gns lamb Cairness See The Stars. This one found a new home in Herefordshire, joining Viv Samuel's Monkton Flock.

The sale's next best price of 4100gns came early in the day when the noted Rookery flock of Chris Holmes and family sold the second prize lamb from the performance recorded class.

Sired by last year's Stirling sale champion Strathisla Red McGregor, this lamb, DND 13006 is out of a Williamsgill Prince William-sired dam and is from the same family as Rookery Rooney. He was claimed by Lilburn Estates, Northumberland.

A bid of 4000gns followed that with the Stockton flock of John Sinnett earning this for a lamb which had been in the first prize group of three in the pre-sale show.

This lamb, 72H: 13 2109, carries a wealth of Rhaeadr breeding behind him, being a son of Rhaeadr Mad Man out of a dam by Rhaeadr Radar and going back to former Royal Show interbreed champion Stockton Gold Bullion. This one sold in the three way split to John Key, Charles Harding and Steve Buckley, for the Midhope, Bentley and Sitlow flocks, respectively.

The Stockton offering was in to the fore again when selling another from the first prize group at 3200gns. This was 72H 132001 (lot 58), a son of Conchar PR out of a dam by Morris Les and going back to Stockton Simply The Best. He found favour with the Perrinpit flock of Michael and Roger Weaver, Gloucestershire.

And then at 3000gns was a Cairness Classic Fyvie son from Northern Irish-based breeder Gary Beacom, JFF 13 143. He is out of a dam by Strathisla Shadrach and goes back to grand dam by Strathisla Schumacher. Buying him was Buckinghamshire-based Thomas Hodges for his Knowlhill flock.

Stuart Davies of the Beaufort flock then invested 2600gns when buying from the Burnview pen of Willie and Stephanie Tait. His choice was T86 13089, a son of Cairness Sapphire out of a dam by Forkins Ferrari II and carrying an index of 2.87.

At the same money Charles Harding and John Key shared another lamb, this time from another Northern Irish breeder, Ian Donald. This was KSX 13 022, a son of Birness Bacardi out of a dam by Glenisla Sydney and tracing back to Laurelbank Home Alone.

A pair then sold at 100gns less, with the first 2500gns call coming early in the day for a shearling ram from Sandy Fraser. This was L25 12060, a Forkins Ferrari II son, out of a dam by Thurston Calzaghe. This was knocked down to Pat Greaney, Raglan.

The other to make this money was the third lamb from the Solwaybank pen of the Barbours, FHT 13086. Another by Solwaybank Skyfall he is out of dam by Glenhead Infusion and going back to an Alsnow ewe by Glenhead Commander.