

### **Ontario sheep farmers awarded 2017 GenOvis performance awards**

For immediate release

October 31, 2017 (Guelph, ON) – The winners of the annual GenOvis performance awards were recognized at the Ontario Lamb Banquet last week, hosted by Ontario Sheep Farmers.

A new award was handed out in 2017, the highest flock improvement award. It was created to recognize the flock with the greatest overall improvement in genetic indexes between 2015 and 2016. The inaugural winner of this award is Steve and Lisa Ernewein, Meadow Brook Family Farm.

Individual animals were also recognized with awards at the banquet. In the Dorset category, the top growth and top maternal ram lambs for 2016 were awarded to Jim and Wendy Driscoll. The top growth Rideau ram was awarded to Shelagh Finn, Lamb Lady Farm and the top maternal growth Rideau lamb went to Ted and Joanne Skinner.

In the Suffolk category, the top growth ram lamb went to Bill and Lynne Duffield, Codan Suffolks and William MacTaggart, MacTaggart Suffolks received the award for the top maternal growth lamb. In the Any Other Breeds Category, both the top growth ram lamb and the top maternal growth ram lamb were awarded to John and Eadie Steele, Shepherd's Choice.

GenOvis is a genetic improvement program designed to assist Ontario purebred and commercial sheep farmers in the evaluation of potential breeding stock and provides a measure of the comparative productivity of ewes in the flock. The program provides information that farmers can use to improve the genetic merit of their flock and monitor performance. The program maintains a large database of the performance records of tested sheep breeds in the province and the rest of Canada.

Ontario's 3,000 sheep producers are represented by the Ontario Sheep Farmers organization. With a focus on profitability and sustainability, the organization works in the areas of advocacy, industry capacity, research and market development. Its goal is to provide consumers with premium lamb and sheep products. For more information visit [www.OntarioSheep.org](http://www.OntarioSheep.org).

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