

Trends in body weight development of 56-days-old lambs of selected breeds in Poland

Summary

The aim of the study was to identify trends in body weight development of lambs at the age of 56 days in the breeds Polish Merino, Wielkopolska, Polish Lowland and Pomeranian Sheep, between 2002 and 2012. The study indicated that the trends were positive for most sheep breeds. The most pronounced, positive changes were found for Polish Merino rams (127.3 g/year) and ewes (118.2 g/year) and for Pomeranian ewes (88.2 g/year) and rams (72.7 g/year). For the young of both sexes of Polish Lowland Sheep and rams of Wielkopolska Sheep the annual improvement was low and did not exceed 17.5 g per year. In contrast, body weight trends for Wielkopolska ewes were negative. Based on the study it can be concluded that for most sheep breeds, breeding programmes involving Polish maternal breeds of sheep have resulted in positive trends in body weight at the age of 56 days.

KEY WORDS: trends, body weight, lambs, Polish Merino