

Ian McDonnell Northern Ireland

**Select
Sheepware**tm
Management Program

Ian McDonnell has been farming sheep on the Ards Peninsula for over 30 years. Now lambing 320 Cambridge and Belclare cross bred ewes, he bought his first Cambridge Ram around 20 years ago and has now introduced Belclare Rams. He keeps around 60 replacements from the flock each year.

Always focused on increasing maternal index, he was one of the first sheep farmers to introduce Select Sheepware to his farm management systems. He bought his first event recording system five years ago and this season has used the Psion reader for the first time.



Ian said
“Introducing a reader saves hours of inputting data manually. The real advantage of using the Psion reader is that I can look up a ewe’s history when I am working with them. I’ve found this to be really valuable and it’s particularly useful when I’m making final decisions on culling.

For many years I had been looking for a system that could assist me in making decisions on which sheep should be kept as replacements. Select Sheepware has given me the opportunity to do just this. I find the reports very clear, concise and practical and I can look at a ewe’s performance over the years. I select replacements from the highest performing ewes and after a few years these decisions have resulted in noticeable improvements in lambing percentage, ease of lambing and mothering ability in the flock.

The system records vital information such as mothering instincts, for instance if the ewe follows well. Problems such as prolapse and udders are also recorded and I take this into account when making culling decisions. Real improvements to flock performance can be made by culling under performers. I just wish this technology had been around when I started farming as it’s been a real asset!”



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