

Annual Hill Bred Ewe Show & Sale 2026

Thursday 8th October 2026

On Thursday, Penrith & District Farmers' Mart LLP held its annual show and sale of 5,249 uncrossed and crossed Swaledale, Herdwick and Cheviot ewes, shearlings and gimmer lambs, kindly sponsored by PFK Rural, Peter Horn Mobile Sheep Dipping and the Lake District National Park.

What a day! It was comfortably one of the best shows of draft ewes to grace the ring here, with buyers travelling from all over the country to buy the best. The show pens were packed with quality, drawing praise from so many.

The sale opened at 11am, with a packed ringside of buyers from the word go. The Swaledale gimmer lambs topped at £280 per head for the prize pen from Messrs G D & J P Nelson, Hedwynds, selling to Mr J Nattrass, Shield Hill Top. Their consignment went on to average £241.67. Messrs N & O Frith, Cross Keys, sold a run of quality fell lambs to average £190.25. Next into the ring were the Herdwicks, with Messrs M & J Potter, Ulcatrow, winning the Racy Ghyll Trophy for the pair of ewes. This pair of tremendous, well-bred three-shear ewes with great conformation achieved £250, selling to Mr R Mounsey, Throstle Hall. An annual consignment of genuine fell drafts from Mr D Baldry, Howtown, achieved a colossal average of £167.60 for three-crop ewes, topping at £200.

Then we moved into the Cheviots, which averaged £213.52 overall—up £51 on the year. The section topped at £260 for Messrs R E & G Dickinson, High Knipe, with a pen of three-crop ewes, their run of 100 averaged £236.37.

Finally came the eagerly awaited draft ewes and Swaledale shearlings, with pen after pen displaying exceptional quality. Ewes ranging from one-crop to broken-mouthed averaged £258.17, up £73.50 on the year, while the shearlings recorded the largest increase, rising by £103 to average £278.61. In total, an impressive 840 head sold for more than £300.

Champion honours went to the Lightfoot family, Gillside, with a tremendous pen of well-bred ewes of outstanding quality and presence. They sold for £850 per head to Henry Harvey and Son, Norfolk. The same home also took first place in the shearling class, achieving £620 per head when selling to Messrs Handley, Gunnerfleet. Their run of 308 head, comprising shearlings to four-crop ewes, averaged £345.06.

Second place in the show went to Messrs E J & R J Wear, Howe Green, with a powerfully bred pen of two-crop ewes displaying excellent conformation. They also realised £850 per head, selling to Messrs S & E Wigham, Park Burn Foot. Their run, comprising mainly three-crop ewes, averaged £370.53.

The third highest average went to the Wilson family, Undercragg with a run of 127 2 crop Swaledale ewes a very correct and even run which averaged £339.05 up £122 ahead on the year. Topping at £390 twice for 30 ewes selling to Messrs Lowis. Helped with yearly purchasers coming back year in year out. A reflection on honesty of stock.

The fourth -highest average, and one of the day's most consistent runs, came from Messrs I R & O M Wilson, High Becks. Their run of 100 two-crop ewes combined power and bone with the distinctive dark features that continue to prove so popular with buyers, making them readily sought after throughout the sale. The run topped at £360, selling to regular purchasers Messrs Lewis, Waterside, and averaged £306.70—an impressive £127 ahead of the previous year.

Flock Averages

Messrs E J & R J Wear, Howe Green, 152 @ £370.53

M/s Lightfoot, Gillside, 308 @ £345.06

M/s W E & B Wilson, Undercragg, 127 @ £339.05

M/s I R & O M Wilson, High Becks, 90 @ £306.67

Dalehead Farming, 95 @ £287.16

W H Brass, Low Row, 117 @ £283.16

M/s Folder, Wescoe, 160 @ £283.81

Mrs M Brough, Chapel House, 49 @ £283.81

Mr S Hardisty, How Hall, 204 @ £265.49

Mr G Cartmell, Hollands, 51 @ £260

A top class show entry of draft Swaledale ewes, shearlings & gimmer lambs drew much praise from the judges Mr S Allen, Hill Crest, and Mr J Bell, Birniehall Farm with Mr R Pedley, Oak Tree Farm acting as referee.

A fantastic show of Herdwick ewes was forward in pairs to the judge of this section, Becky Atkinson, Lambgill Bank.

The following results were awarded: -

Class 1 - Pen of 10 Swaledale Gimmer Lambs

1st GD & JP Nelson, Hedwynds – realising £280

2nd Messrs WE & B Wilson, Undercragg – realising £180

Class 2 - Pen of 10 Swaledale Shearlings

1st Messrs Lightfoot, Gillside – realising £620

Class 3 - Pen of 10 Swaledale Ewes, Receiving the Draft Ewe Trophy

1st Messrs Lightfoot, Gillside – realising £850

2nd Messrs EJ & RJ Wear, Howe Green – realising £850

3rd Mr WH Brass, Low Row – realising £360

Class 4 - Pair of Herdwick Ewes, Receiving the Racy Ghyll Trophy

1st Messrs M & J Potter, Ulcatrow – realising £250

2nd Bobsy Tyson, Town Head – realising £180

3rd Messrs Bland, Clea Hall – realising £160

Leading Prices

Shearlings

Swaledale (Av £278.61) - £620, £380, £370, £300, £290, £280, £250 Gillside; £310, £220 (2) Hollands (Cartmel); £250, £190 Deepdale Hall; £240 Low Row; £230 Beeches Farm; £200 Haltcliffe; £180 Gateghyll; £150 Knock Hall

Cheviot (Av £192.35) - £230 Town Head Farm (Lambert); £200 Clements Farm

Herdwick (Av £138.19) - £165 Anns Cottage; £150 Low Braithwaite Farm; £140 The Old Vicarage (Dawson); £140 Border Rigg

Ewes

Swaledale (Av £258.17) - £850, £400, £380, £370, £360, £320 (2), £300, £300, £290 Gillside; £850, £650, £400, £350, £340, £330, £280 (2) Howe Green; £490, £340, £300 Dale Head Farming; £450, £330, £320, £310 Wescoe; £390 (2), £360, £330, £310 Undercragg; £360, £320, £310 (2), £280 (2) Low Row; £360, £320, £300, £290 (2) Highbeckside; £340 (2), £310, £300 How Hall (Hardisty); £340 Knock Hall; £330, £290 Haltcliffe; £320 Burblethwaite Farm; £310, £300 (2) Harbour Flatt; £300, £280 Chapel House (Brough); £300, £280 Sleddale Hall; £300 Ranbeck; £280 (2) Branthwaite Farm; £280 Hollands

Cheviot (Av £213.52) - £260, £235 (3), £230 (2) High Knipe; £250, £225, £220 Dale Head; £240 Hill Top (Bell); £235, £200 Town Head Farm (Lambert)

Herdwick (Av £127.73) - £250, £175 Ulcatrow; £200, £190, £150 Howtown Hotel; £190, £170, £160 Fawcett Park; £185 Anns Cottage; £180 Town Head Farm (Tyson); £160, £150 Clea Hall

Gimmer Lambs

Swaledale - £280, £200, £175 Hedwynds; £195 (3) Cross Keys; £185 Waters Farm; £180 (2), £175 (2), £160, £150 Highbeckside; £180, £160 Hollins Farm; £175 Baggra Yeat; £155, £145, £140 Shap Abbey; £155 Hill Top (Bell); £145 Deepdale Hall; £140 Softley Farm

Herdwick - £210 Ulcatrow; £110 Mellgates; £105 (2), £100 Midtown Farm (Strong); £105 Lonkley Terrace; £105 Baggra Yeat; £100 Hollins Farm