

Maximising ewe performance

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The Drivers Of High Production

- The number of lambs weaned
- The weight of those lambs
- Consistency

The Drivers Of High Profit

- The weight of lambs weaned per ha
- Consistency

The Components

- Scanning percentage – fecundity
- Lamb survival
- Lamb growth rate

The Drivers of These

- Genetics - sets the potential
- Feeding
Management - expresses the potential
Animal health

A High Scanning Percentage

- Static weight
- Flushing
- Body condition score
- Tail end – this sets the ceiling
- Hogget oestrus – gives 0.1 more lambs/lambing

A High Scanning Percentage

- Trace elements – Selenium!!!
- Fungi - endophytes, zearalenone
- Rams
- Genetics

Lamb Survival

- Is the bottleneck to increasing production in fecund flocks (and others)
- Over 10% of lambs die within 4 days of being born.
- Is viewed as a welfare issue internationally.
- Is very variable between flocks and years.

Lamb survival

If a lamb stands and suckles within 20 minutes of being born it has a 95% chance of being alive 90 days later

Lamb survival

- Time to stand is influenced by:
 - Ewe body condition score
 - Ewe energy status pre lamb

Lamb survival

- If a ewe needs to source more than 10% of daily demand from fat – get BOH rise.
- A raised BOH depresses the lamb - so is slow to get up.
- **PRE LAMBING FEEDING IS THE BIGGEST POINT OF INFLUENCE.**

Other factors

- Low thyroid function
- Low selenium levels
- Genetics
- Weather

Lamb Growth Rate

- The icing on the cake
- Most loss is in 2nd half of lactation
- 70% of feed consumed by lamb by weaning is grass

Factors leading to high LWG

- Genetics (up to 40 grams/day)
- Lamb birth weight (up to 15 grams/day)
- High milk production (up to 50 grams/day)
- High quality pasture (up to 100 grams/day)
- Healthy lambs (variable)

High Lamb LWG in Twin Lambs

- High milk production in ewes in early lactation
- High quality pasture in late lactation

High Ewe Milk Production

- Genetics and hogget lambing
- Hold BCS approaching lambing
- BCS > 2.5 at lambing
- Being able to consume 4kgs DM/day at 4 weeks of lactation (assume 11+ ME)

High Quality Pasture

- Quality Sward – product of the winter rotation and autumn nitrogen
- Growing pasture
- Less than 1500 kgsDM/ha
- **MUST AVOID** accumulating pasture covers

Weaning

- Lamb is a full ruminant at 8 weeks of age
- Once past peak lactation ewe feed lifts body condition

Ewe body condition scoring - how

