



Leading Sheep Sheep Management Alert



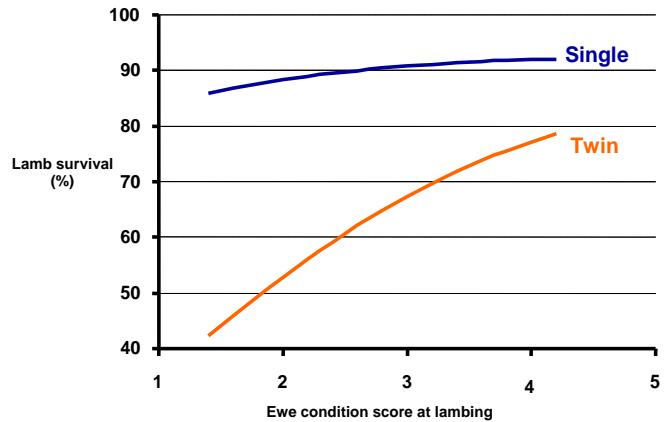
Scanning and feeding – it's time to manage for more lambs

You may be wondering "should I scan my sheep?". Well, these are some of the things you should think about:

- Pregnancy scanning is a great management tool to help you improve your profits, particularly if you use the information to manage your flock differently.
- The more dry ewes there are in the mob, the more benefit there is from scanning.
- You may get extra value from scanning if feed quantity or quality is likely to be limiting over pregnancy
- Scanning allows for better feed allocation to the ewes that need it most, especially those ewes bearing lambs.
- Scanning will give you a benchmark of the number of foetuses present, which you can use to gauge lamb survival.
- Scanning allows you to know likely lamb marking percentages; hence you can plan your CFA sale numbers.

1. Advantages of Scanning

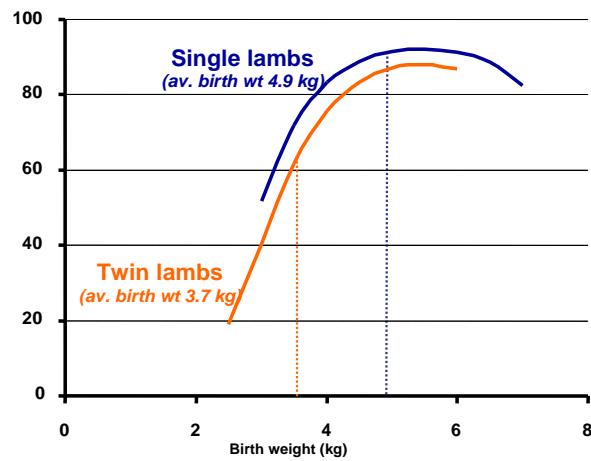
1. More precise flock management – aids in identifying the most productive ewes.
2. More targeted use of feed supplements – splitting your sheep up and not feeding dry ewes.
3. Those ewes that are pregnant can be allocated the better paddocks (better feed and better shelter for lambing).
4. Dry ewes can be run as wethers or culled and sold if needed.
5. Identifying and culling unproductive ewes can improve flock fertility.
6. Identifying twin-bearing ewes and giving them extra feed can improve lamb survival rate by up to 25%.
7. Scanning and segregating sheep into smaller mobs can help avoid mis-mothering.
8. More accurate identification of where reproductive losses are occurring.



Lamb survival increases with improved ewe nutrition
(Source: Lifetime Wool)

2. Disadvantages of Scanning

1. More mobs to manage.
2. More labour intensive when scanning and managing for multiple births.
3. Potential for mis-mothering when twinning mobs are run together under high stocking rates at lambing.
4. Potentially an additional and unnecessary cost.
5. Opportunity cost of scanning and extra labour.



Lamb birth weight drives survival (Source: Lifetime Wool)



3. Should I wet/dry or scan for multiples?	4. Cost of Scanning?
<p>1. The more twin bearing ewes in the mob, the greater the benefit from scanning for twins and managing these ewes separately.</p> <p>2. If more than 90% of ewes are scanned in lamb (90 foetuses/100 ewes joined), the value of scanning for multiples becomes higher than the benefit of scanning for wet/dry alone.</p> <p>3. Scanning for multiples is very beneficial, provided the ewes are managed for maximum lamb survival rate.</p>	<p>1. Wet and dry 50-60cents/head and twinning 70-80c/hd.</p> <p>2. The cost of scanning has little impact on the profitability of scanning.</p> <p>3. Deciding whether to scan has much more to do with the proportion of drys and multiples (twins and triplets) in the flock and how they are managed.</p> <p>4. The decision should be made on the quality of the service provided and the likely benefit from scanning.</p>
5. Plan for successful scanning	6. Managing your sheep after scanning
<p>1. Joining for more than two cycles reduces scanning accuracy (35 days = 2 cycles).</p> <p>2. Ewes should be off feed for at least 4 hours before scanning.</p> <p>3. Try and organise scanning to be done at the same time you have the sheep in the yards for another reason e.g. crutching or drenching, to help reduce mustering costs. Scanning by itself is a relatively cheap exercise; mustering and labour are the most expensive part.</p> <p>4. It is best to scan ewes between 80 – 100 days after joining commences, to give the best results for multiples. Once it goes over 110 days, foetuses become hard to identify and it doesn't give you enough time to alter your management practices.</p> <p>5. Make sure that if you go to the trouble of scanning that you use the information.</p>	<p>1. Dry ewes. - Around 5% dry ewes is normal each year. More than 7% means that you may have a problem. Check ewe condition score and live weight at joining and ram fertility. - Options for dry ewes: cull, rejoin, identify (ear notch) dry ewes, or cull ewes that fail to rear a lamb twice.</p> <p>2. Single bearing ewes - If pasture is of adequate quantity and quality, just monitor these ewes and do nothing unless the situation changes e.g. shearing, cold weather. - If pasture is not adequate, then energy and protein supplementation will be needed (lupins, faba beans or corn). - Lamb single ewes in large mobs of more than 500. - Control predators in lambing paddocks.</p> <p>3. Twin-bearing ewes - Monitor ewe condition score with target condition score of 3. - A grain supplement will better prepare the ewe for lambing by providing milk in the udder, lifting lamb birth weight, and reducing pregnancy toxæmia. - Lamb in mobs of no more than 250.</p>

Where to find out more Information?

- [Click here](#) to listen to Chris Shands (NSW DPI) and Pat Hegarty "Colanya" Longreach talk about the value of pregnancy scanning on a webinar that was recorded on the 28th May 2012.
- [Sheep CRC – Pregnancy scanning](#)
- [Making More from Sheep – Wean more lambs](#)

Leading the Way

Leading Sheep is an education framework for leading the adoption of new technologies and practices to increase the productivity of the Queensland sheep industry. Leading Sheep is an active, regionally-based project initiated by Australian Wool Innovation and operates in partnership with the Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) and AgForce. For more information, visit www.leadingsheep.com.au or call DAFF on 13 25 23.

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