



Getting more lambs on the ground

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Fertility:

- The number of ewes pregnant (conception)

Fecundity:

- The number of foetuses per ewe

Reproductive rate:

- The number of foetuses per 100 ewes joined (as a percentage)

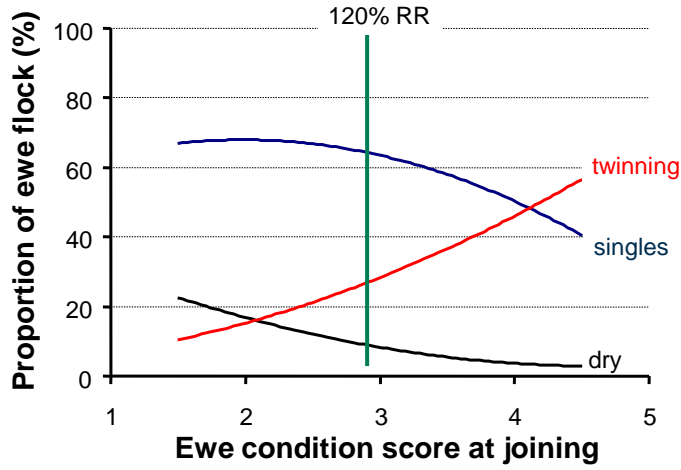
Lamb survival:

- Lambs born and alive at 48 hours

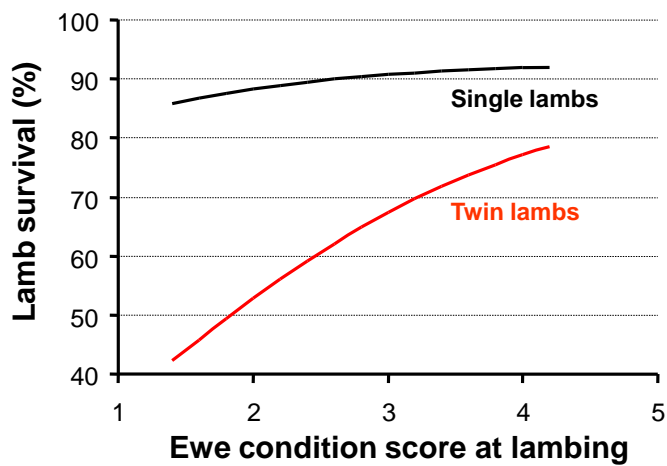




Joining – reproductive rate



Lambing





More ewes in lamb

WA average for reproductive rate (of those flocks scanned for twins) is ~120%

# ewes joined	Scanned dry	Scanned single	Scanned twin	Survival rate	Marked single	Marked twin	Marking %	Overall survival
100	5	70 ewes	25 ewes					
		70 lambs	50 lambs	90% single 50% twin	63 lambs	25 lambs	88%	73%

What if you lifted your ewe reproductive rate to 150%?
with 'normal' lamb survival

# ewes joined	Scanned dry	Scanned single	Scanned twin	Survival rate	Marked single	Marked twin	Marking %	Overall survival
100	5	40 ewes	55 ewes					
		40 lambs	110 lambs	90% single 50% twin	36 lambs	55 lambs	91%	61%



Lamb survival

Singles



Twins



90% survival of singles and 50% survival of twins



Most ewes autumn lambing LOSE condition by lambing

- A loss of ½ condition score reduces survival by 1-2% in singles but 10-15% in twins (double that in bad weather).
- This reduces weaning % by 7-15%.

Do you know which ewes are having twins?

- Knowing gives you power! The power to do something about survival and to be efficient in your hand feeding.

Scan for twins, not just wet/dry

- Extra cost of scanning for twins is minimal
- Remove the dries and run as wethers or sell post shearing.



Improved lamb survival with 120% (normal) reproductive rate

# ewes joined	Scanned dry	Scanned single	Scanned twin	Survival rate	Marked single	Marked twin	Marking %	Overall survival
100	5	70 ewes	25 ewes					
		70 lambs	50 lambs	95% single 75% twin	66 lambs	38 lambs	104%	86%

Lifting reproductive rate AND survival works best

# ewes joined	Scanned dry	Scanned single	Scanned twin	Survival rate	Marked single	Marked twin	Marking %	Overall survival
100	5	40 ewes	55 ewes					
		40 lambs	110 lambs	95% single 75% twin	38 lambs	83 lambs	121%	81%



Is it worth all those twins?

Every extra lamb weaned is worth between \$52 and \$74
– after accounting for all costs

Lamb price	Flock type		
	Merino	Merino + Termin	
\$3/kg	27	43	
\$4/kg	39	56	54
\$5/kg	52	74	70
\$6/kg	65	100	87

More if you're
understocked!

- cost of husbandry of extra lambs
- cost of feeding extra pregnant & lactating ewes
- cost of twins (lower Bwt, less wool, more feeding to get to weight)
- + wool value (1100c/kg)



Twins are harder to manage

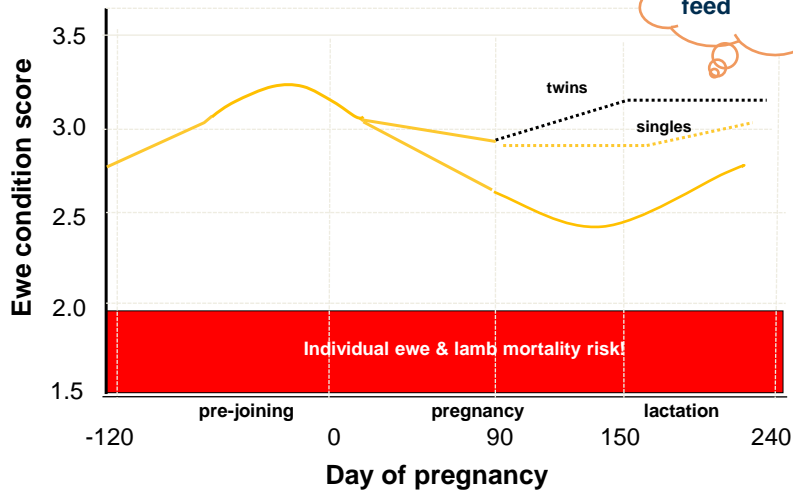
BUT you will get them anyway!

- **Make sure you join for 2 cycles only (eliminate late born twins)**
- **If your scanner does it - identify early and late drop**
- **Allocate best feed to twinning ewes (limit feed to singles to protect against dystocia)**
- **Keep the twinning ewes in > condition score 3.**
This means NOT letting them slip lower than the condition you want them to lamb in
- **Allocate best paddock (shelter and predator control) to twinning ewes**
- **Where possible ID the twin born lambs - allows sensible selection later**
- **Don't delay weaning until the smallest lamb is OK**
- **Get twinned ewes back up to good condition for next joining**

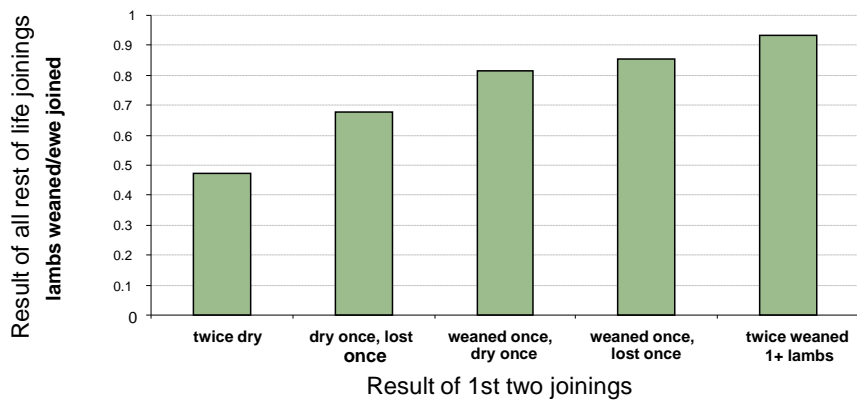


Lambing on dry feed

Allocate twins the best feed



Later-in-life lambing performance





Resources:

agric.wa.gov.au/livestock-animals/livestock-species/sheep
for calculators, tips on joining and pregnancy, marking and weaning

Join a Lifetime Ewe Management group (Jon England, Narrogin)

Participate in the Lamb Survival Initiative (Katherine Davies, Northam)

Look out for 'Bred well, fed well' and 'What killed my lamb' seminars

Register for Ovine Observer newsletter (agric.wa.gov.au/newsletters)

