

Supplementation trial

Barley-supplemented lambs from 3IN1FEEDERS on Lucerne pasture achieved significantly higher weight gain compared to lambs on Lucerne pasture alone.



Barley supplement increases production

Background:

Livestock are frequently grazed on high performance crops and pastures to ensure high growth rates yet the forage consumed can have excessive protein and have limited energy and carbohydrates.

Supplementing stock with cereal grains can balance all these dietary issues and deficiencies.

Results:

Stock offered 0.22lb/day of barley gained 0.80lb/day of live weight – those without gained just 0.57lb/day of live weight.

An added benefit was that lambs were away quicker, consuming less fodder and allowing more lambs to be finished on the Lucerne pasture.

Trial outline

Duration:	approx. 50 days
Equipment:	2x 1800 in the supplement group
Quantity:	Quantity: approx. 800 lambs in the control and supplement groups
Stock type:	weaned lambs
Feed amount:	0.22lb/day of barley

Comments from the trial operator

The high quality pasture has high protein levels but doesn't always allow stock to reach potential weight gains.

Adding grain and straw helps balance the diet by increasing carbohydrates and fibre.

I introduced the 3IN1FEEDERS to lambs and ewes in spring and it didn't take long for stock to get used to the system of getting barley from the feeders.

Lambs are naturally inquisitive - grain is like lollies to them.

The study was anything but scientific – It is only over one season with one mob, but the results are exciting.

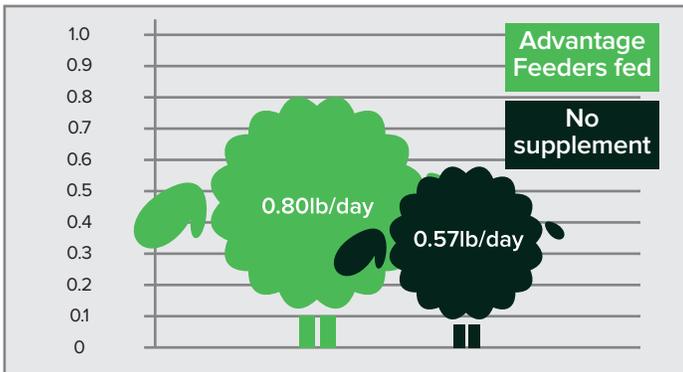
I grow 72 acres of barley to keep supplement costs low but the system should work with bought-in barley, as the returns are significant.



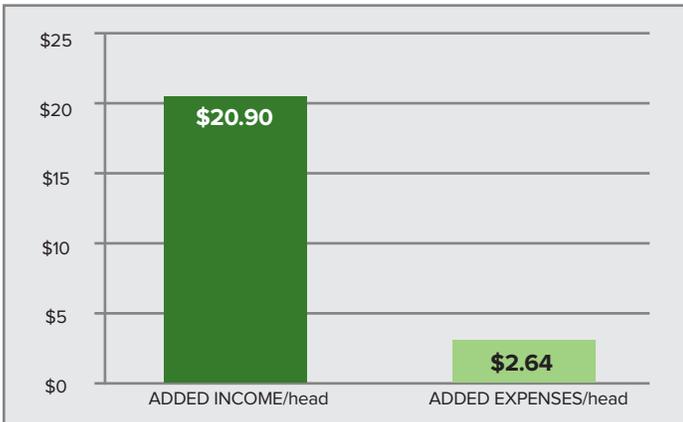
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Average live weight gain (lbs/day)



Added income versus added expenses per head



Added feeding expenses and income

Number of lambs	800
Feeding duration (days)	50
Average barley consumption/day/head (lb)	0.22
Barley cost (ton)	\$180
Total barley cost	\$792
Labour*	\$80
Depreciation**	\$ 1,242.00
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 2,114.00
TOTAL EXPENSE/LAMB	\$ 2.64
Added growth rate/day/head (lb)	0.22
Value of live weight/lb	\$1.90
TOTAL INCREASED INCOME***	\$16,720.00
TOTAL INCREASED INCOME/LAMB	\$20.90
TOTAL INCREASED PROFIT	\$14,606.00
TOTAL INCREASED PROFIT/LAMB	\$18.26

* The feeders were filled twice, taking one hour to fill both feeders each time at a rate of \$40/hour.

** This is calculated by multiplying a depreciation rate of 15% and the investment of four feeders, \$8280.

*** This doesn't include the added potential to finish more lambs on the Lucerne because they are sold quicker with lower pasture consumption.

About the trial operators

Bill and Sheila Wright operate a 950 acre dry stock farm in Cave, 28km Northwest of Timaru, NZ, where they farm 850 breeding ewes, 250 hoggets, 130 bull calves, 130 rising 2 y.o. bulls and graze 500 dairy heifers. They also finish 1500 lambs per year on 170 acres of Lucerne.