

Creep feeding and ewe supplement trial

An on-farm trial found that a mob of ewes carrying twin lambs that were supplemented into lambing and then their offspring up to weaning produced considerably more lamb compared to another mob that had no supplement.



Creep feeding and ewe supp. lifts lamb production

Results:

Lambs that were creep fed with 3IN1FEEDERS averaged a weight of 59.4lb at weaning while the lambs in the control mob averaged only 49.3lb.

With an estimated lamb birth weight of 9lb, the creep fed mob grew 25% faster.

The weaning rates were substantially different. The supplement mob achieved 159% while the control group were at 139%.

Other benefits include:

- Lambs were imprinted with the knowledge to feed from feeders after weaning, reducing the occurrence of a weaning check.
- The ewe lambs from the creep feeding group have a much higher likelihood of reaching target mating weight.
- Lambs reach marketable weight earlier freeing up more area to run ewes.

Trial outline

Duration: Total: 135 days
Ewe feeding: 40 days
Lamb creep feeding: 95 days

Quantity: 97 ewes in the supplement group and 99 ewes in the control group

Scanning: All ewes scanned with twins

Ewe age: 3 and 4 yo.

Diet:

Supplement group:
Ewes 0.67lb/day of Triticale
Lambs 0.44lb/day of Triticale

Control group:
No supplement

About the trial operators

Mac and Jo Fraser operate Heatherlie Partnership at Tallangatta Valley in north east Victoria, Australia. They run 6000 ewes that lamb in spring to best match stocking rates with pasture growth.



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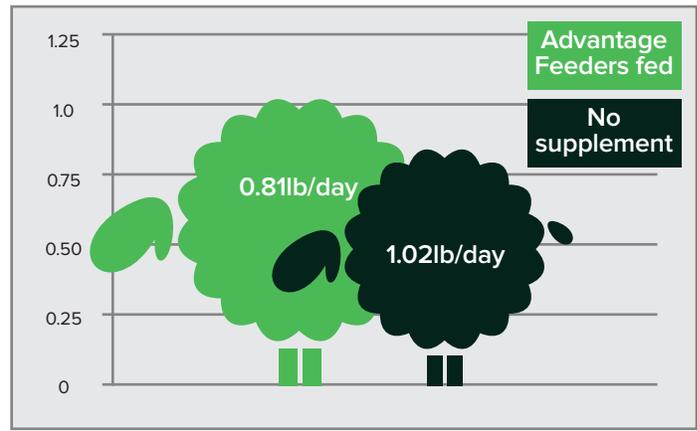
Total value less feeding expense/ewe

	Twin - control	Twin - creep fed
Ewe number	99	97
Lambs weaned	138	154
Weaning rate	139%	159%
Estimated birthweight (lb)	9	9
Average weaning weight (lb)	49.3	59.4
Age at weaning (days)	109	109
Daily weight gain to weaning (lb/day)	0.81	1.02
Weight of lambs/ewe (lb)	68.7	94.3
LAMB INCOME/EWE (\$1.90/lb)	\$130.57	\$179.18
Barley consumption (ton)	0	4.26
Total cost of Barley (\$180/ton)	\$ -	\$766.26
Cost of Barley/ewe	\$ -	\$7.90
Depreciation expense/ewe*	\$ -	\$3.60
Filling cost/ewe**	\$ -	\$0.82
TOTAL FEEDING EXPENSE/EWE	\$ -	\$12.33
NET INCOME/EWE	\$130.57	\$166.85

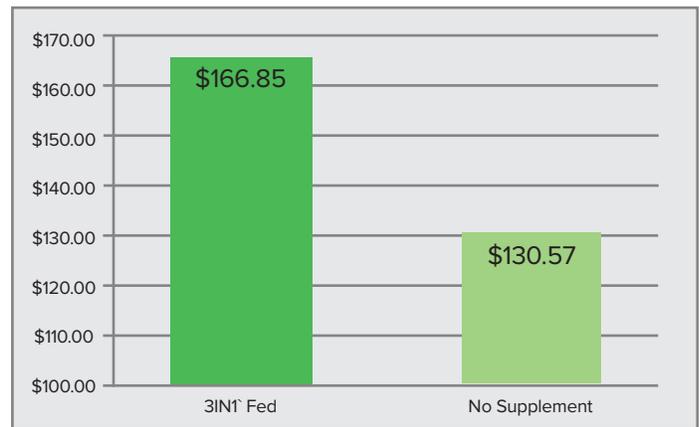
* This is calculated by multiplying the depreciation rate of 15% by the investment of a feeder (\$2,330) and dividing it by 97 ewes. This also assumes that the feeder is used only for this application throughout the year.

** The feeder was filled twice, taking one hour to fill both feeders each time at \$40/hour to fill.

Lamb daily weight gain (lbs/day)



Net income per ewe



Comments from the trial operators

It has been a trying year but the trial has shown us the great benefit in creep feeding twin lambs.

We have also used the

feeders to supplement ewes in autumn. Ewes that were on the feeders scanned at 147% while ewes without feeders scanned at 112%.