

AN INITIATIVE OF  
*Making More From Sheep*



## The New Ewe

Andrew Kennedy

EVENT  
PARTNERS:



*Ruralco*  
HOLDINGS LIMITED



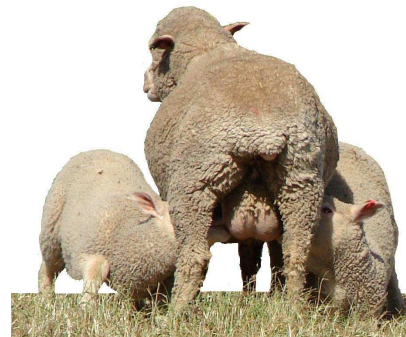
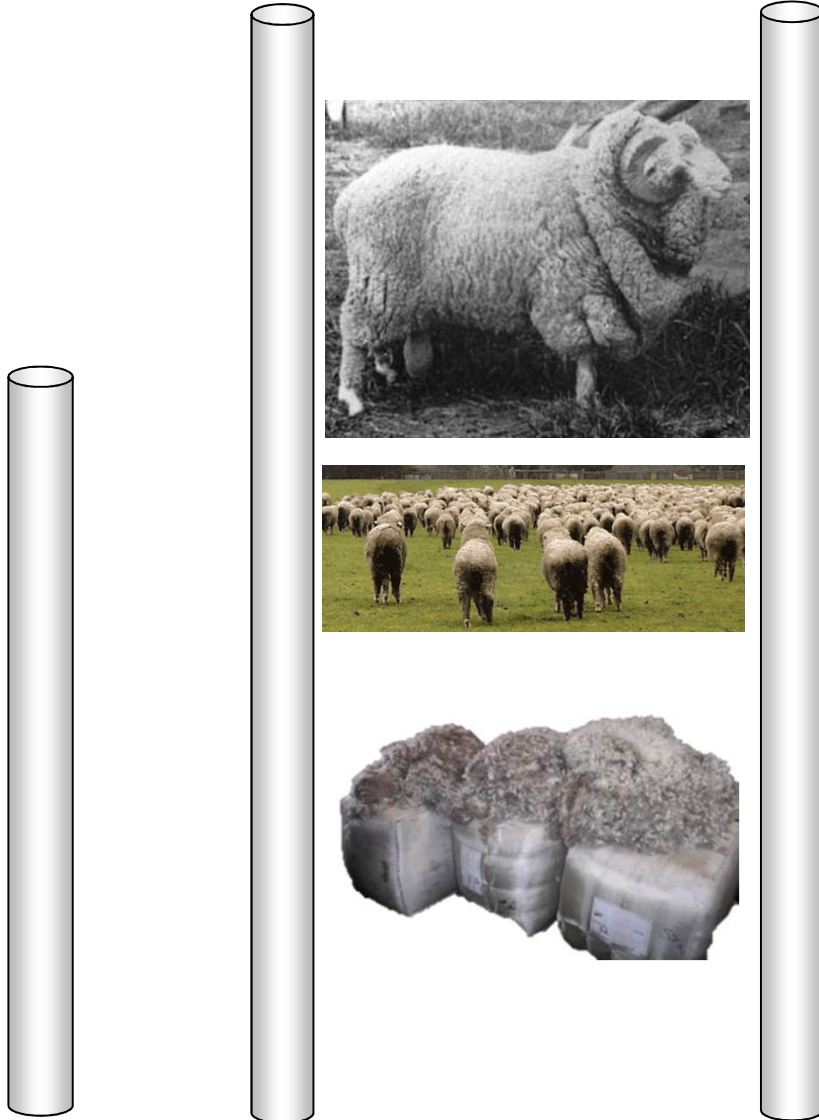
EVENT  
SUPPORTERS:



STATE  
PRIMARY  
INDUSTRY  
AGENCIES

# Goal posts have been shifted

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# A responsible New Ewe

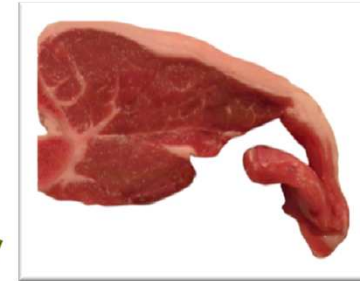
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**Terminals**



**Fast growth, good yield  
& good eating experience**



**Maternals**

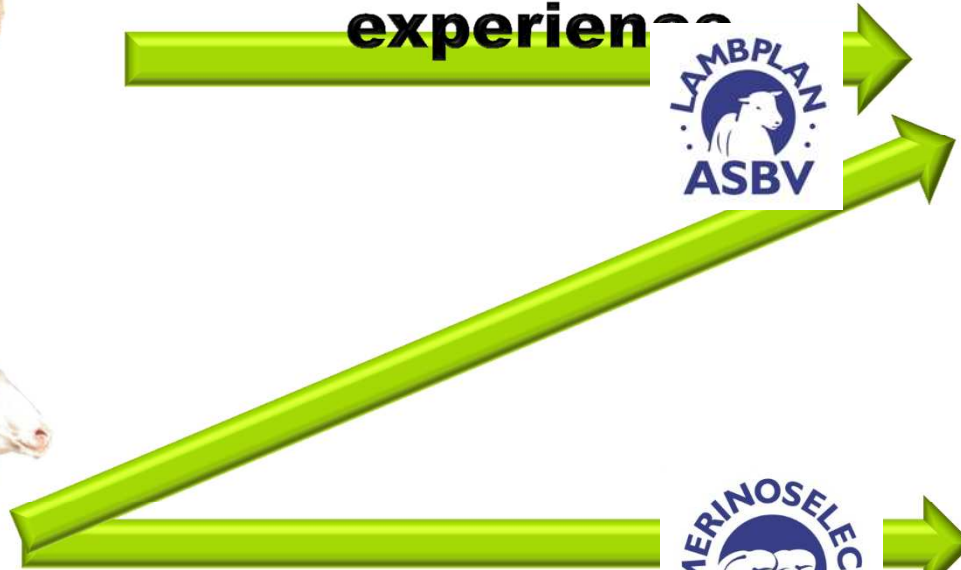


**Growth  
Wool  
Reproduction  
Nutrition**

**Parasites  
Stocking rate  
Supp feed  
Labour**



**Welfare  
Yield  
Eating quality**



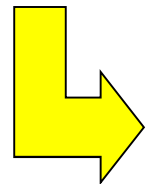
# What is the New Ewe

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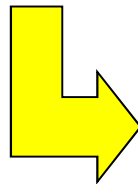


- No silver bullet, magic combination or fantastic breed imported from overseas

Defining the role of the ewe in the business



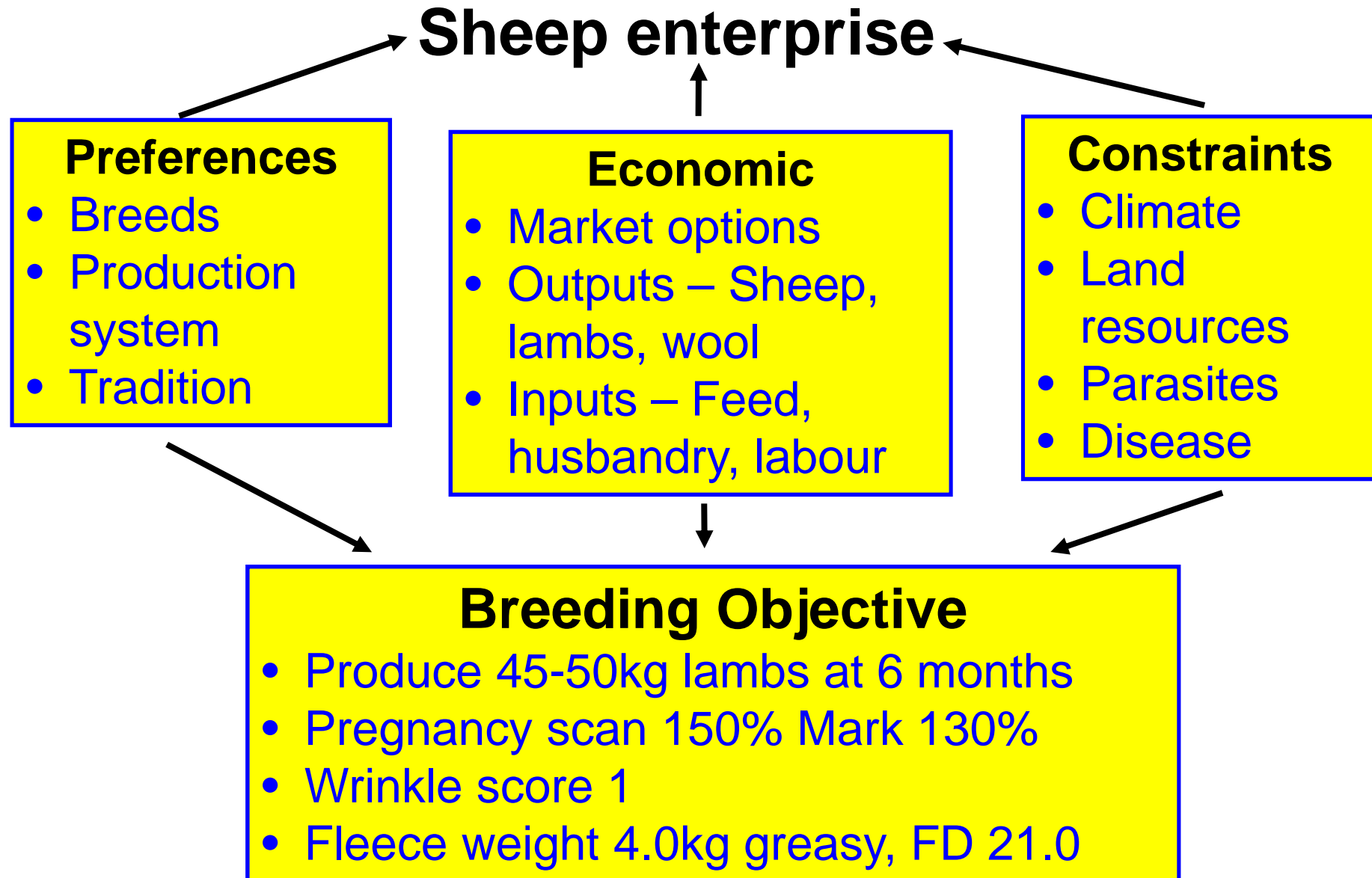
Drives the breeding objective



Determines what traits are needed to achieve the breeding objective

# What is this breeding objective?

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# Traits not breeds

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Wool



Composite



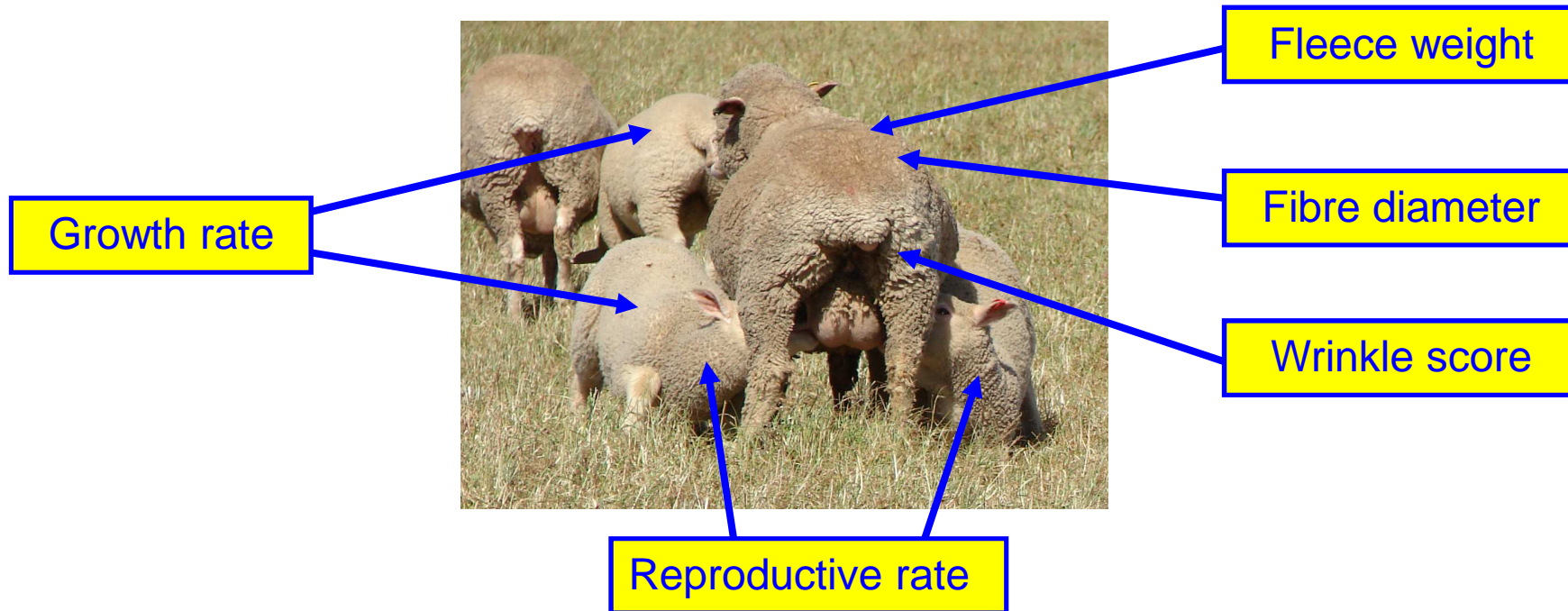
Shedding



<u>Traits</u>	Wool	Composite	Shedding
Lamb growth	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
Reproduction	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
Fleece weight	✓✓✓	✓✓	x
Fibre diameter	✓✓✓	✓	x
Parasites	✓	✓✓✓	✓?
Wrinkle	✓ x	✓✓	✓✓✓
Husbandry	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓
Labour	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓

# Traits not breeds

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Objective and measurable TRAITS all under genetic control

# Traits not breeds

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## Breeding Objective

- Produce 45-50kg lambs at 6 months
- Pregnancy scan 150% Mark 130%
- Wrinkle score 1
- Fleece weight 4.0kg greasy, FD 21.0

**You have a range of ASBV's that describe the genetic potential of these traits at your disposal when purchasing rams**

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# Wool and reproduction

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## the valuable bi-product

Ewe fleece value = \$25

Meat Price \$/kg	Extra lambs required to break even
\$3	>50
\$4	>50
\$5	37

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## Re-cap the New Ewe

- Objectives of the sheep enterprise and business planning
  - Definition of the breeding objective
  - Traits not breeds that achieve the breeding objective
-

# Traits to breed more lambs

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- ASBV's for Number of lambs weaned (NLW)
- Huge range in sires (over 30 lambs per 100 ewes)
- Plus get other things going in your favour
- Growth, muscle and fat
- Wrinkle, face cover etc



# Yearling weight (YWT)

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## YWT



An extra 1kg here

2 more lambs here /100 ewes

**-5.1**

**2.5**

YWT (kg)

**10.3**



# Post weaning weight (PWT)

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## PWT



An extra 1kg here



Mated as  
lambs

8 more lambs here../100ewes



...& 10 less days here

-4.5

1.1

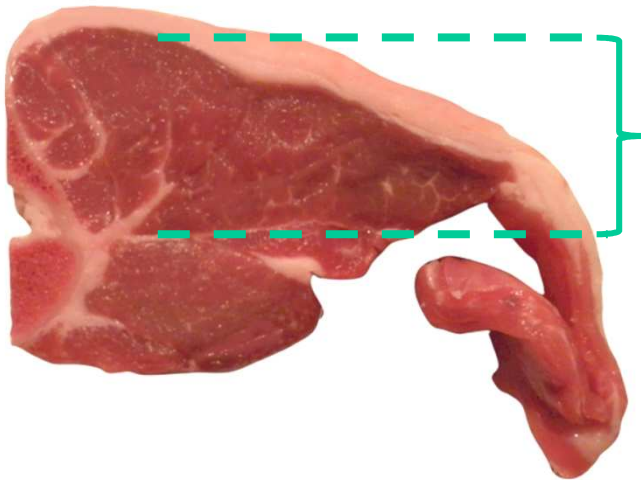
PWT  
(kg)

6.6

# Yearling eye muscle depth (YEMD)



**YEMD**



An extra 1mm here

Means 6 more lambs here

**-1.4**

**0.4**

**YEMD  
(mm)**

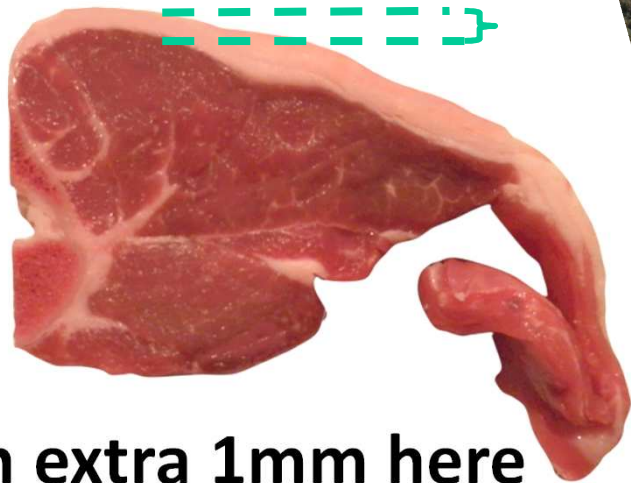
**2.2**

# Yearling fat depth (YFAT)

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## YFAT



**0 more lambs here**



**OR**

**25 more lambs here**



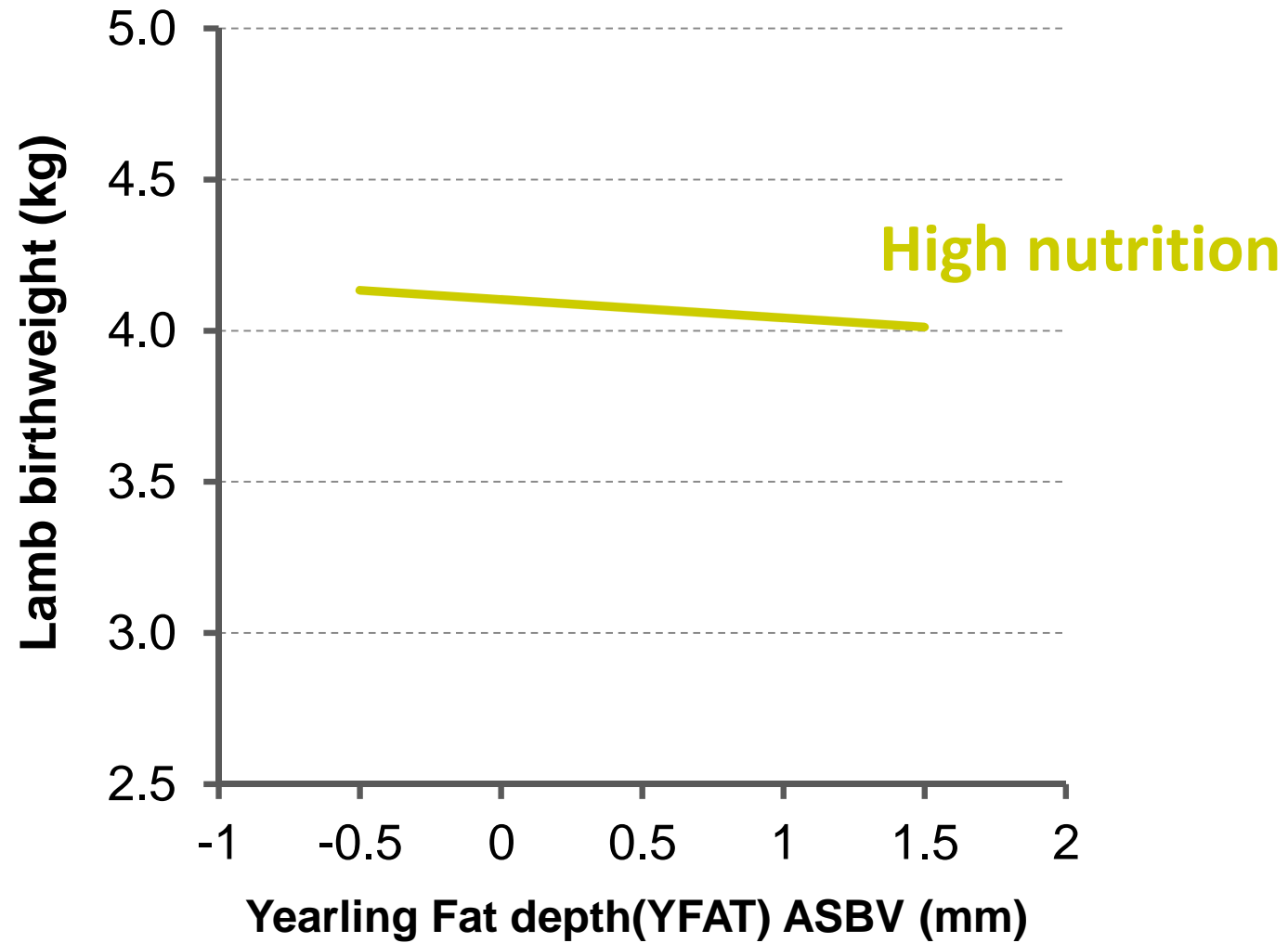
**-1.3**

**0.1 YFAT  
(mm)**

**1.3**

# Reproduction and fat

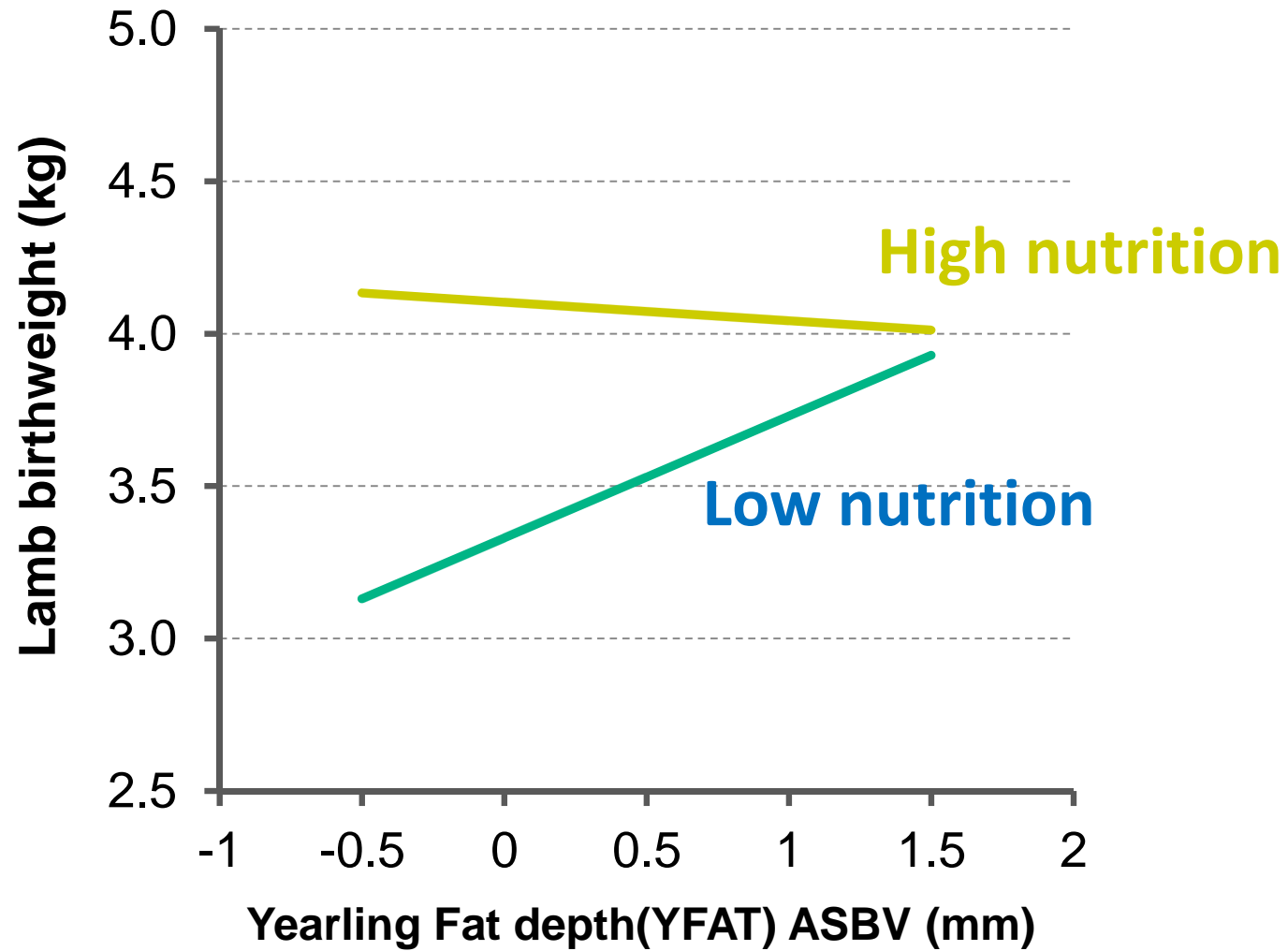
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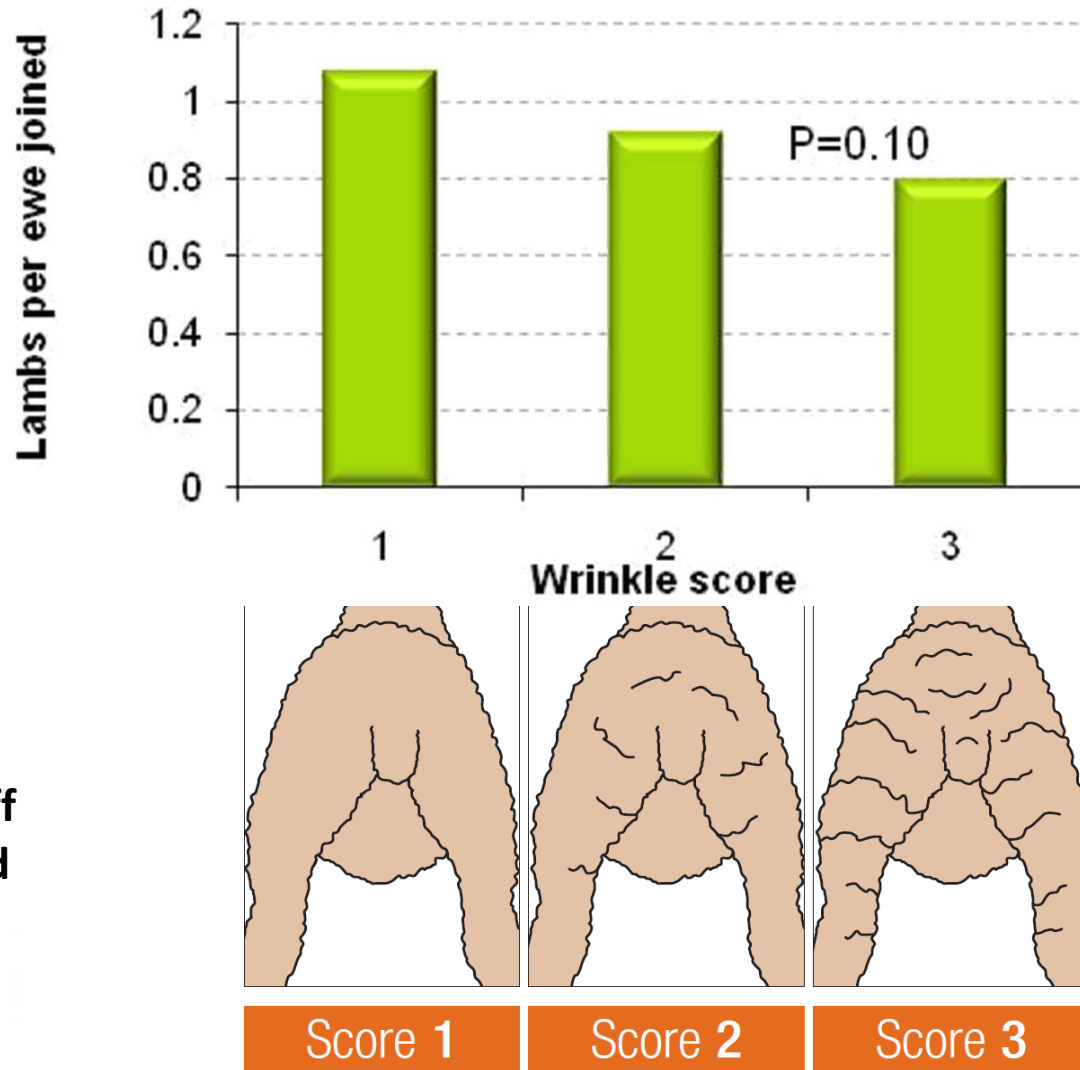


# Reproduction and fat

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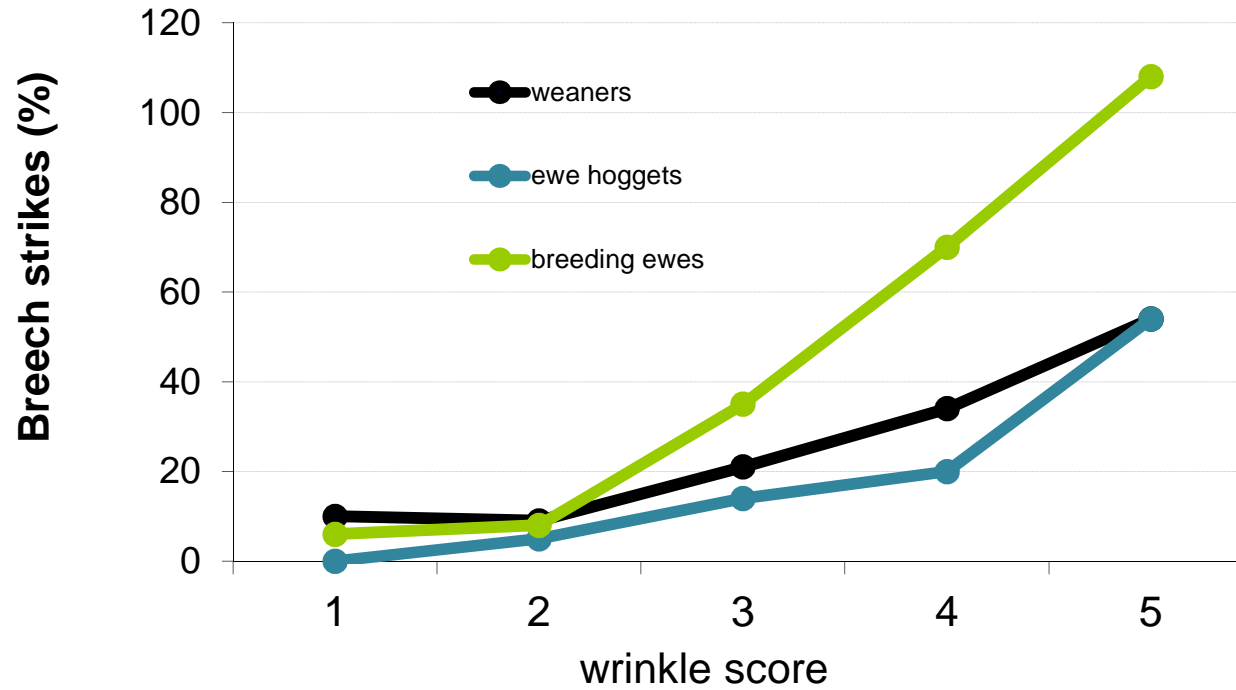


# Less wrinkle, more lambs, less flies

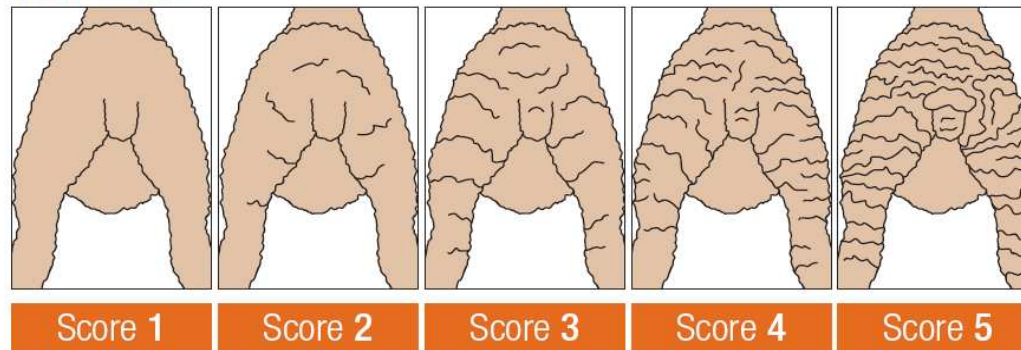


Johan Greeff  
unpublished

# Less wrinkle, more lambs, less flies



Breech Wrinkle

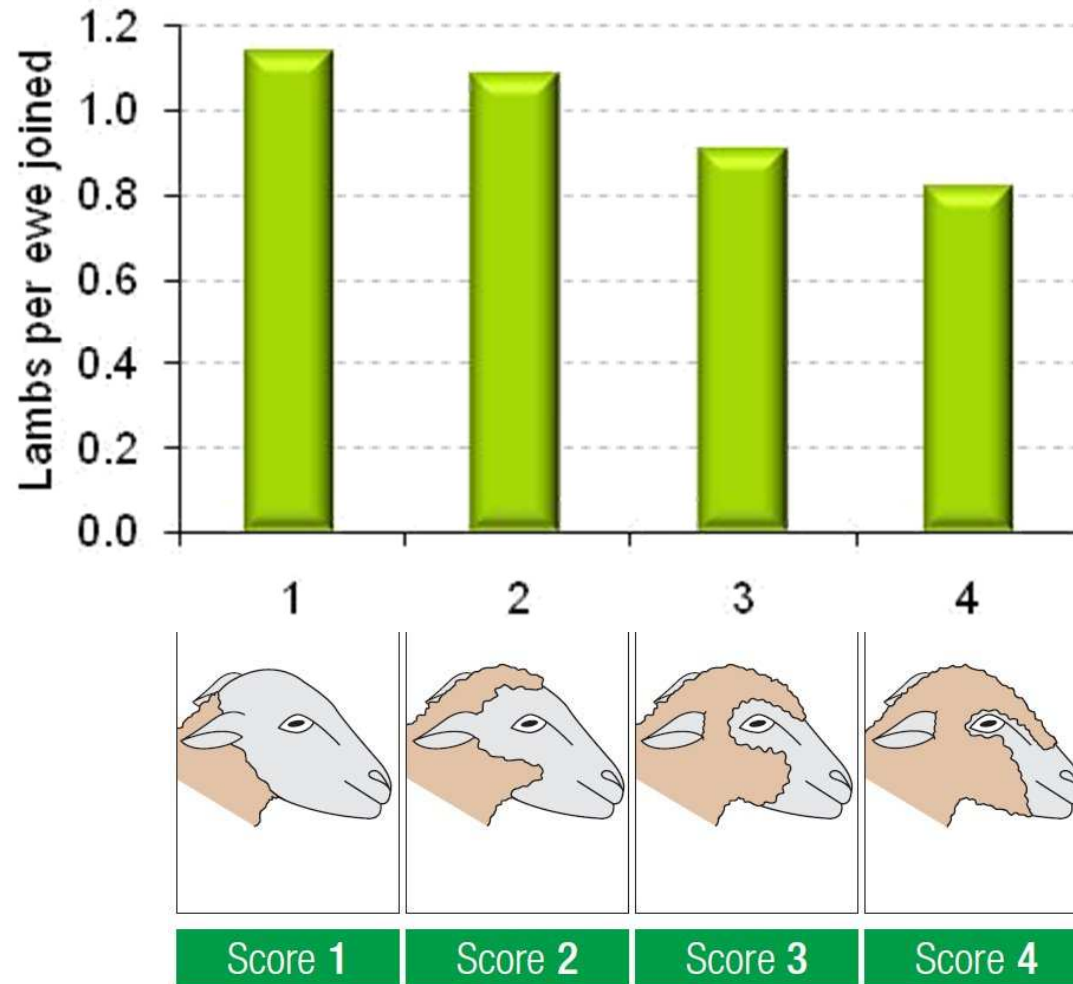


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# Clean points – more lambs

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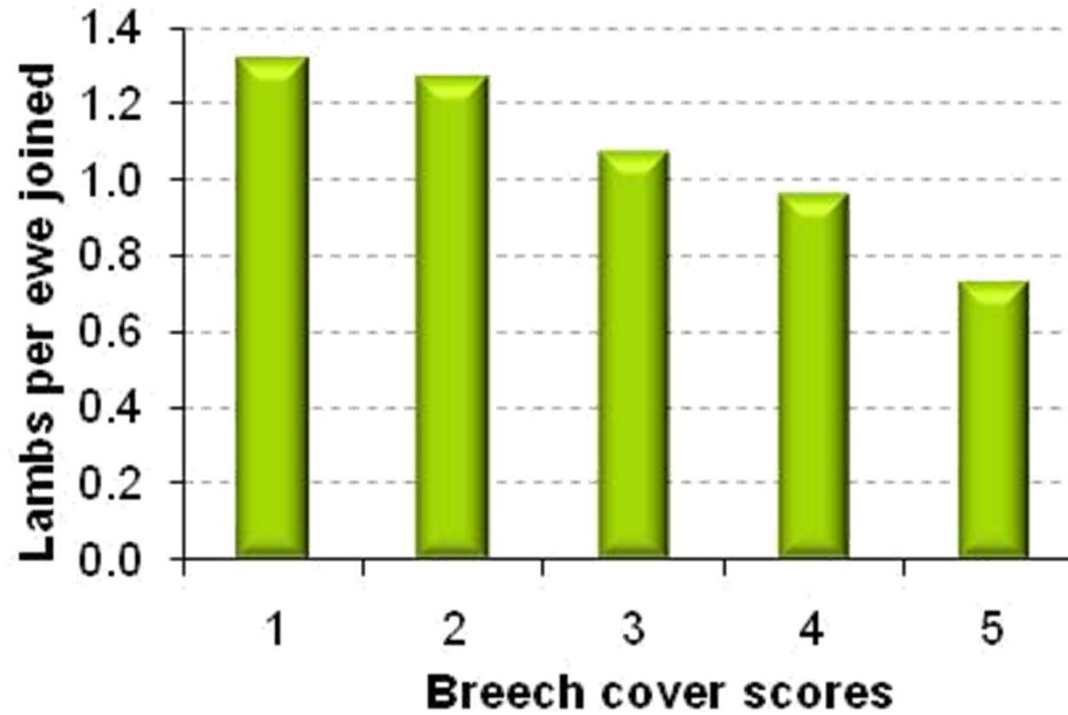


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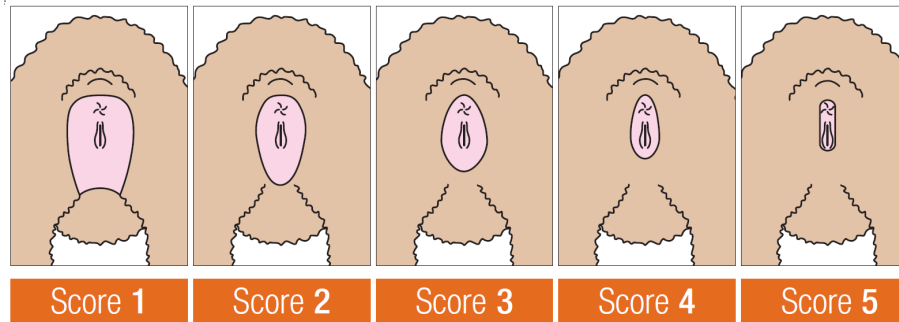


# Clean points – more lambs

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Breech Cover

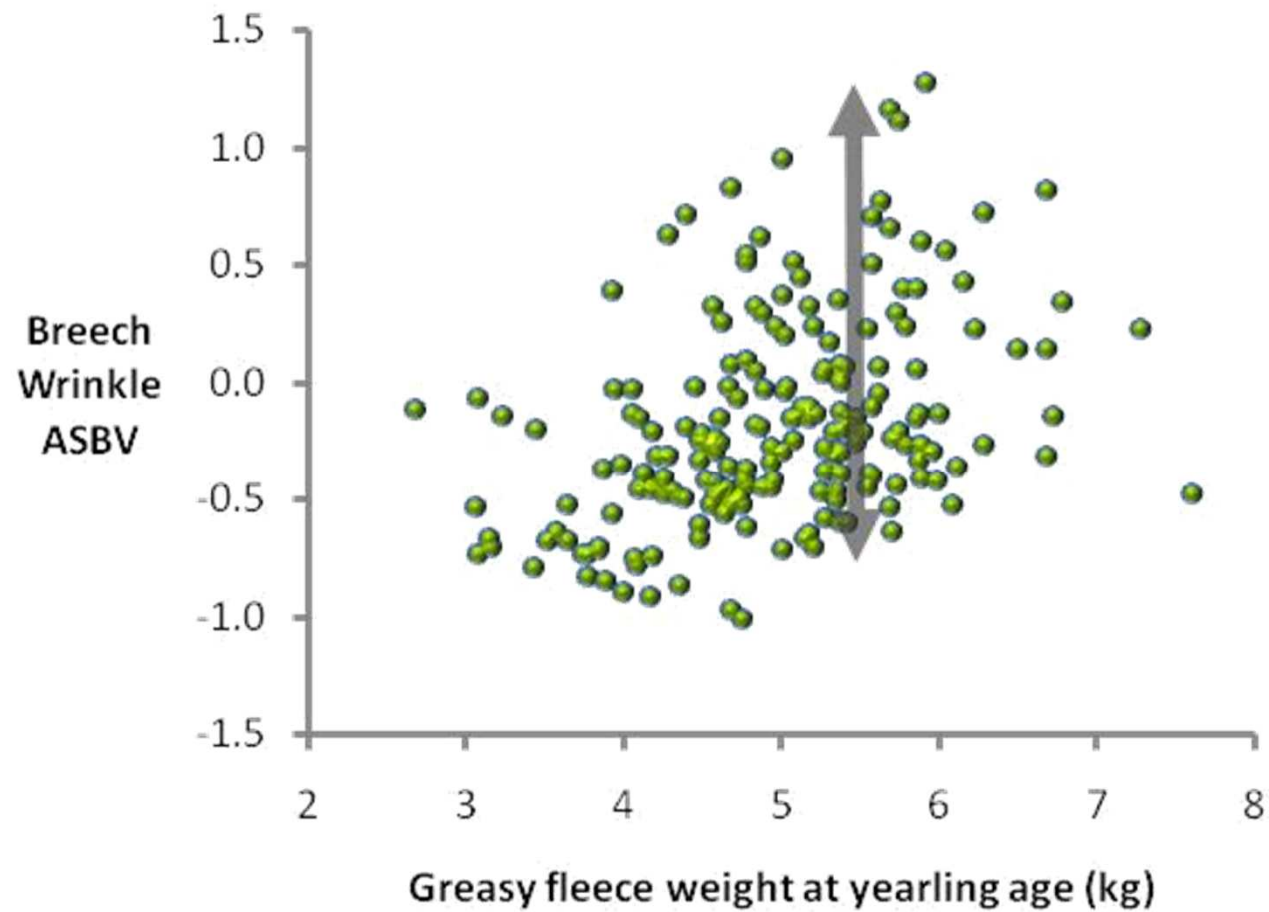


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# You don't have to lose wool

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# Healthy sheep, less work

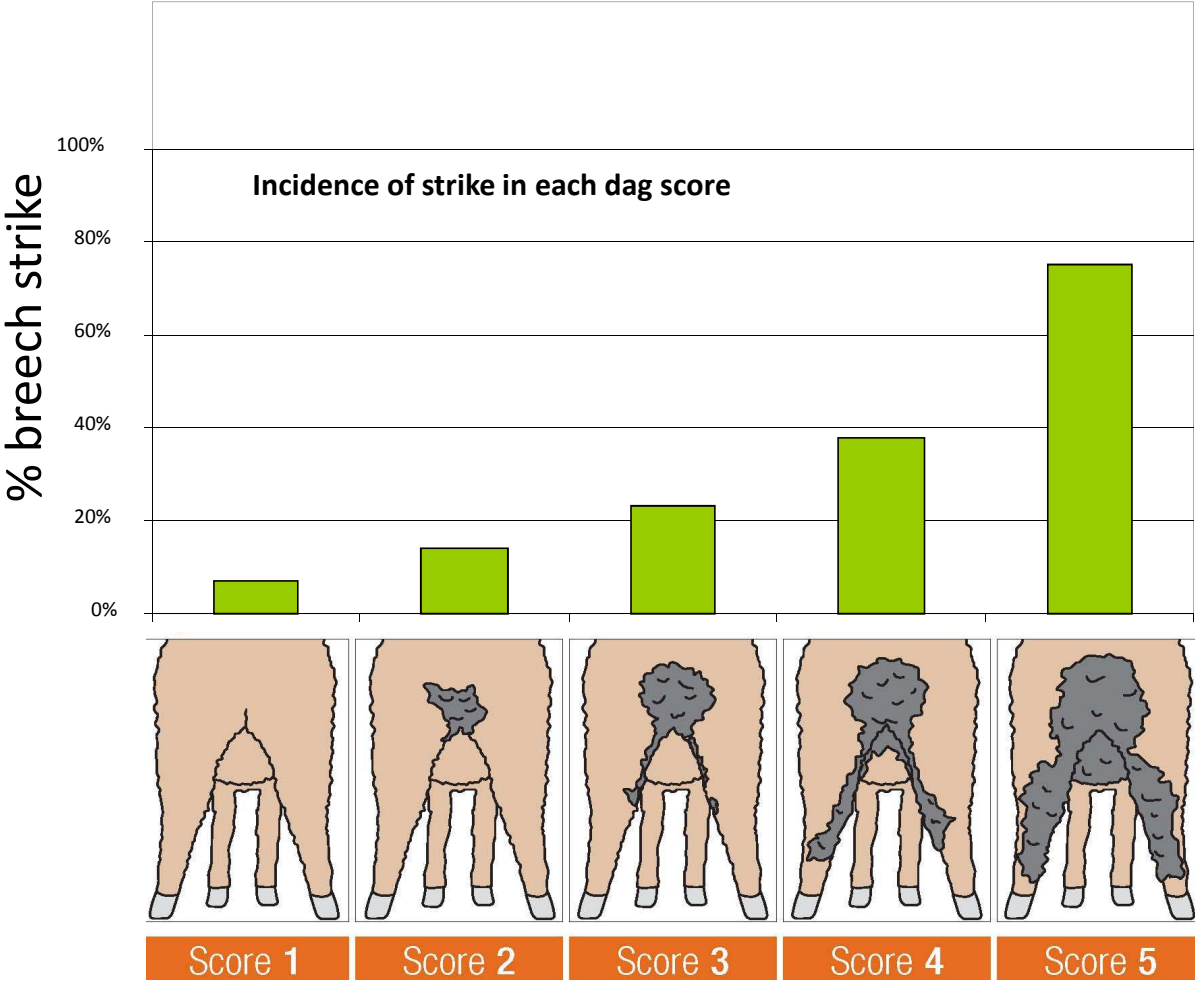
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- Large genetic variation in sheep resistance to internal parasites
- Use WEC ASBV's as much as possible to breed more resistant sheep
- Reduce but not remove reliance on chemicals



# Less dags, less flies, less work





# Horns – that make no sound

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- No doubt they look good
- BUT, Horns = pain
- For the animal and their carer
- Transport issues
- De-horning not a good look
- Time to move on



# What is the New Ewe

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- No silver bullet, magic combination or fantastic breed imported from overseas
  - Defining the role of the ewe in the business, what drives the breeding objective and what traits are needed to achieve the breeding objective
  - Applied genetics and nutritional management of ewe efficiency and profitability
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# What is the New Ewe

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- Use ASBV's for growth (PWT, YWT) increase lambs and growth rate
  - Positive fat ASBV's (in maternals) maintain reproduction in tough times
  - Selecting for less wrinkle and cleaner points improves reproduction and can be achieved without compromising fleece weight
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# EWE THE BLUE PRINT

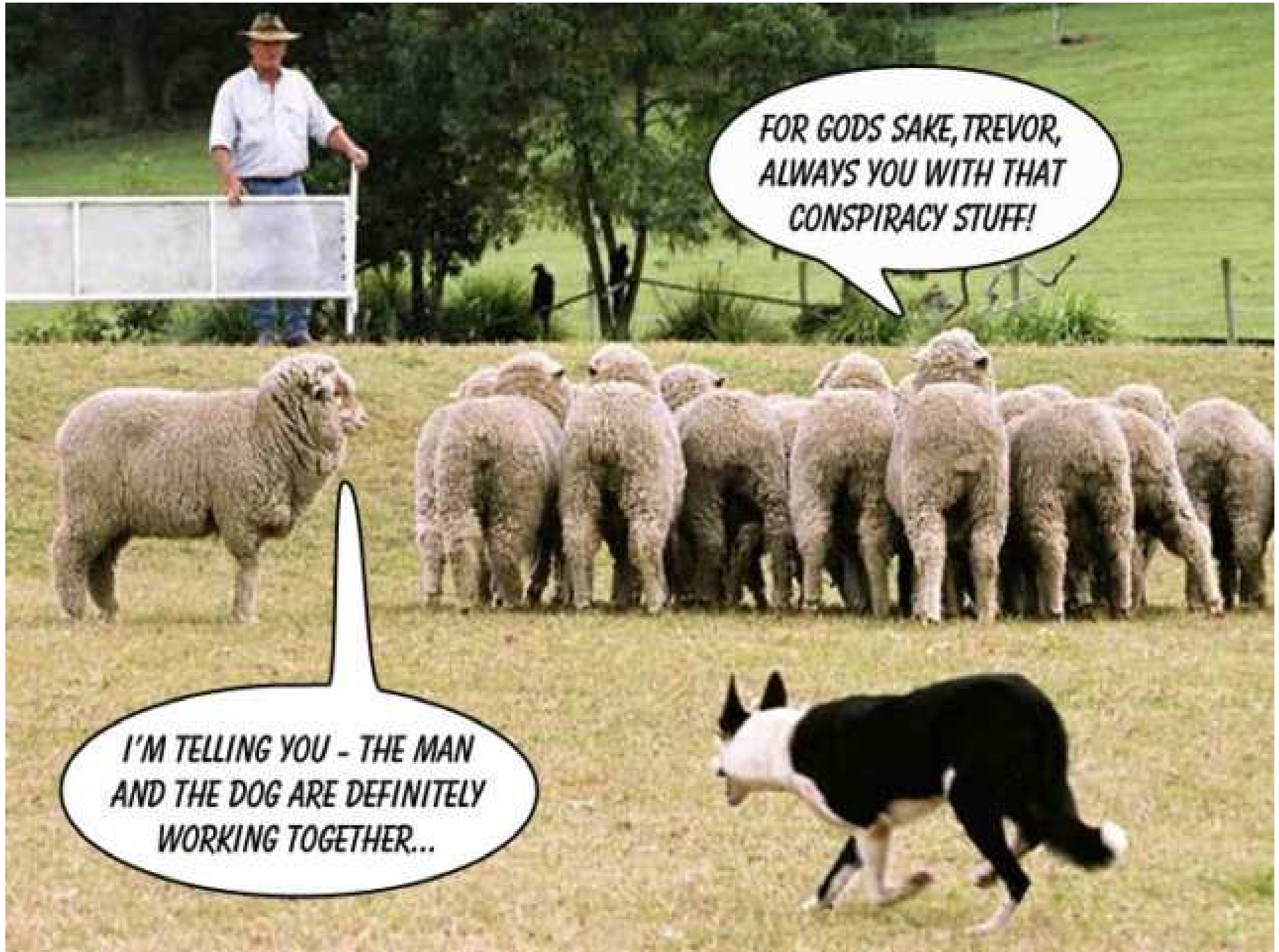
- \* Fertile at 7-8 months
- \* Weaning heavy twins
- \* Well muscled
- \* Resilient to tough times
- \* Wrinkle and dag free
- \* Worm free
- \* Polled
- \* Bare head and legs
- \* Quality wool



A photograph of two sheep in a field. The sheep in the foreground is a dark-colored Merino, looking towards the right. Behind it, another sheep is visible, also looking right. The background consists of tall grass and some rocks.

The future is bright: **Future Park 099337**  
Poll Merino, 30kg at weaning, 70kg at 10  
months and was 50 days pregnant with  
twins!

**MERINOSELECT**  
WWT: +6.5 kg  
PWT: +7.1kg  
**ASBV**  
PEMD: +1.6mm  
PFAT: +0.5mm



**FOR GODS SAKE, TREVOR,  
ALWAYS YOU WITH THAT  
CONSPIRACY STUFF!**

**I'M TELLING YOU - THE MAN  
AND THE DOG ARE DEFINITELY  
WORKING TOGETHER...**