
Reproductive Rate of Your Flock

Worksheet

Merino flocks have a differing response to nutrition at joining on the reproductive rate (foetuses/100 ewes scanned), depending on their genetic makeup. Knowing your flock's response is important in making decisions about feeding ewes leading up to joining.

To do this requires condition scoring to tag number a representative flock of ewes at joining and then scanning them for twins, singles and dries.

Step 1.

At joining (no earlier than day -10) condition score no less than 100 randomly selected ewes from the flock, recording their score against their tag number.

Eg.

Tag #	CS
1523	3.5
1487	2.0
1541	1.5

Step 2.

At pregnancy scanning (day 90 from rams in), record the pregnancy status of the recorded ewes.

Eg.

Tag #	CS	Preg status
1523	3.5	1
1487	2.0	2
1541	1.5	0

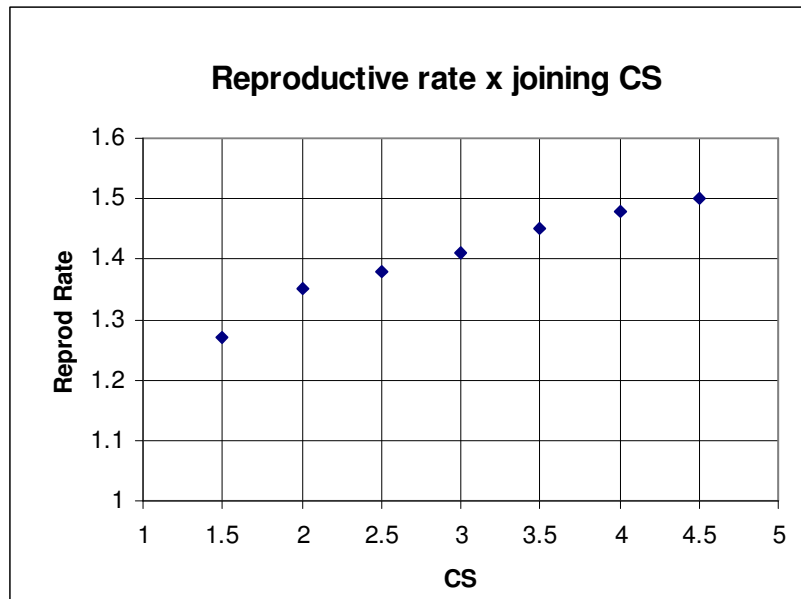
Where 1= single, 2= twin, 0= dry

Step 3.

Add all pregnancy status figures for each condition score so that a table like this is obtained.

CS	Av. foetuses
1.5	1.27
2.0	1.35
2.5	1.38
3.0	1.41
3.5	1.45
4.0	1.48
4.5	1.5

This table can then be converted into a graph, using the outline shown below.



Drawing a straight line (trend line) through the points will give you a sloped line. A steep slope indicates a very responsive flock to nutrition at joining. A shallow sloped line indicates a flock that isn't responsive to nutrition at joining.

The difference between the Reproductive Rate at CS 2 and CS 3 (eg. 0.35) means that you can expect an increase of 35 foetuses per 100 ewes scanned for every increase of 1 condition score.
