

IMPACT OF MOB SIZE ON LAMB SURVIVAL

Amy Lockwood a PhD student at Murdoch University, in conjunction with The New Zealand Merino Company, is undertaking a lamb survival study across sheep flocks in New Zealand and Australia. Historical lamb survival data has been collected and analysed, and the initial results shows that mob size has a significant effect on lamb survival in Merinos.

The study has investigated both stocking rate and mob size, and found that stocking rate does not have a significant effect but mob size does. We note that this mob size effect was not seen in the strong-wool flocks in the study. On average, survival decreased by 1.33% per extra 100 ewes in the mob for Merinos and 0.05% (i.e. nothing) for strong-wool ewes. Survival was also poorer in lambs born to two-tooths than adult ewes, as expected.

