

Novel feed strategies to improve twin-lamb survival

High twin-lamb mortality rates in Merinos remains a persistent economic and animal welfare issue for the sheep meat and wool industry.

Would you like to be involved?

Our recent intensive and extensive research farm trials have shown promising results feeding rumen-protected arginine (RP-ARG) to pregnant ewes to increase twin-lamb survival rates to weaning. We are seeking commercial Merino producers to be involved in an on-farm validation trial who can meet the following criteria:

- Joined ewes in the period summer 2023 to early autumn 2024
- Can allocate 400, multiparous twin-bearing ewes to be separated into four feed groups/paddocks (Control versus RP-ARG; 200 ewes / treatment)
- Have similar FOO between trial paddocks
- Have provisions to provide supplemented pellets via lick feeders – topped up weekly
- Manage ewes within four separate lambing paddocks based on the two feed treatment groups
- Keep groups separated through to marking/tailing (mix mobs between marking and weaning)

Project measures

- Ewe liveweight (where possible) and body condition score
- Lambs present at marking
- Lamb weaning weight and survival at weaning
- Wet/dry ewes (milk in udder) at weaning

Benefits of being involved

- Project will cover cost of feed (bulka-bags) and use of lick feeder if required
- Subsidised pregnancy scanning
- Provision of electronic ID tags for all ewes (tags can remain in ewes after trial completion), and individual ear tags for lambs (easy identification after marking)
- Collaboration with South Australian researchers from SARDI and University of Adelaide
- Assistance on-farm at key times during program by SARDI and University of Adelaide staff



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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