

# National Lambing Density Project



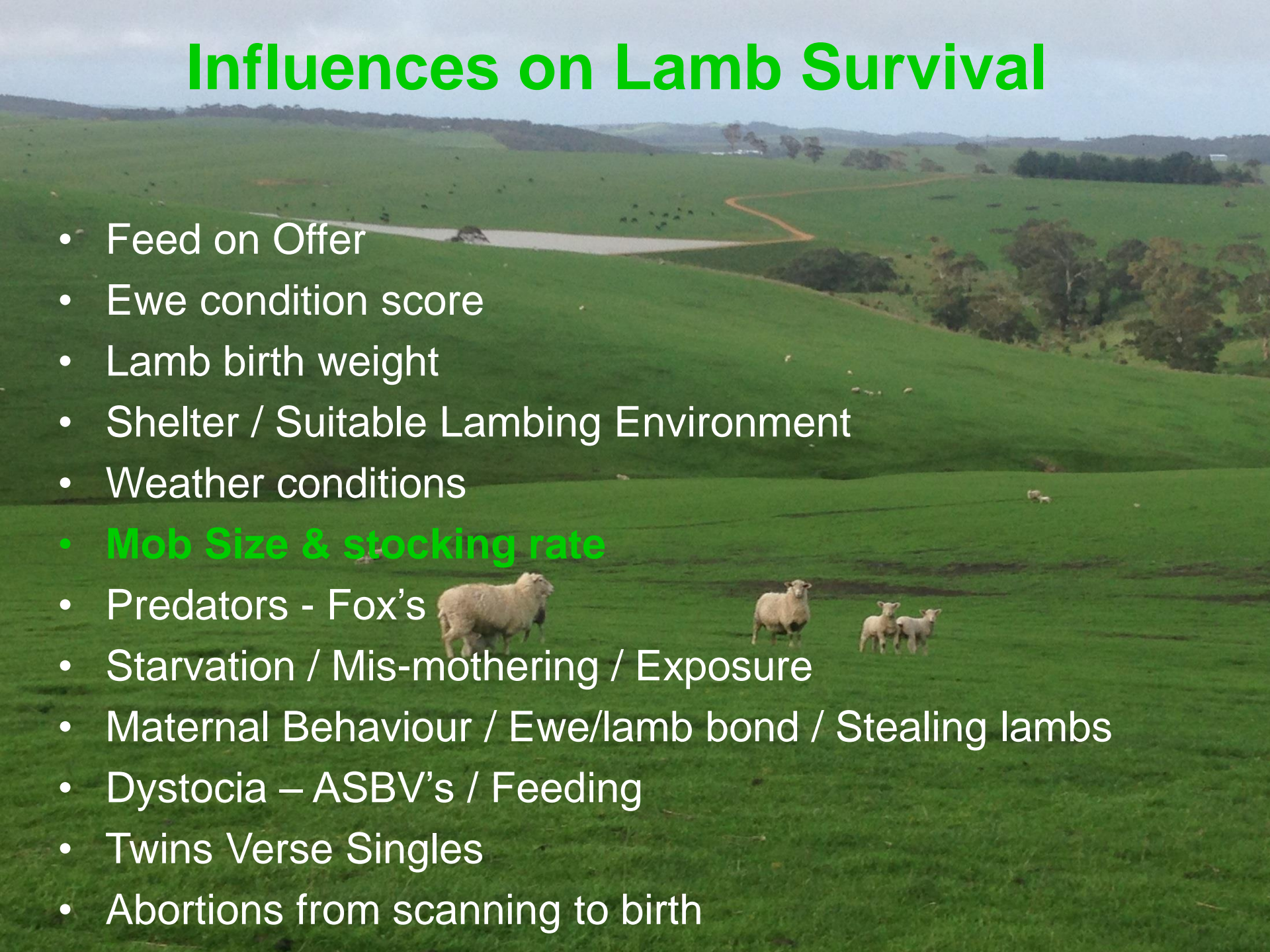
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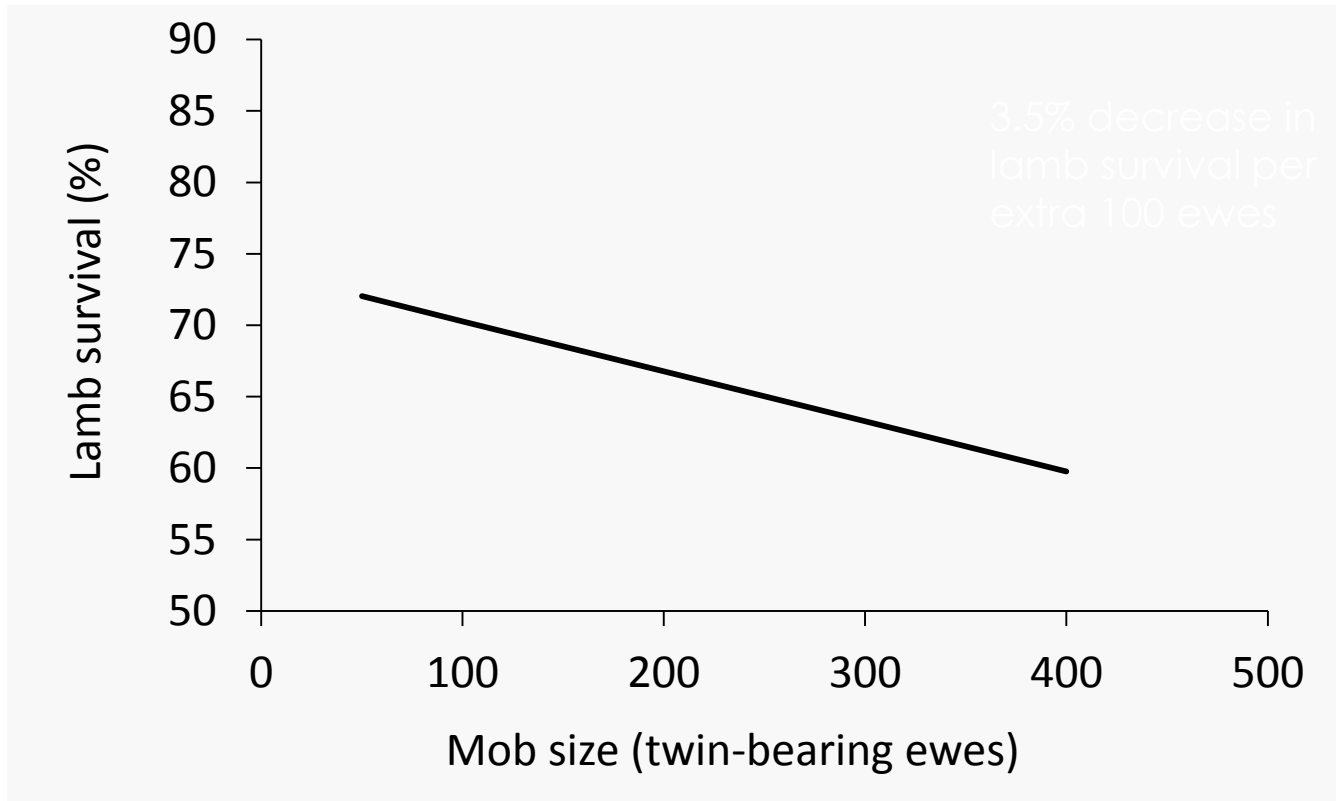
# Today's Update

- About the project
- Preliminary Results
- SA Preliminary Results
- How can you get involved

# Influences on Lamb Survival

- Feed on Offer
  - Ewe condition score
  - Lamb birth weight
  - Shelter / Suitable Lambing Environment
  - Weather conditions
  - **Mob Size & stocking rate**
  - Predators - Fox's
  - Starvation / Mis-mothering / Exposure
  - Maternal Behaviour / Ewe/lamb bond / Stealing lambs
  - Dystocia – ASBV's / Feeding
  - Twins Verse Singles
  - Abortions from scanning to birth
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# BestWool BestLamb survey



- Current guidelines to lamb twin-bearing ewes at a mob size of 100 to 250 could represent a range in marking rate of 10%

# National lambing density project

- Investigating the effects of mob size and stocking rate on twin lamb survival
- Merinos or Maternals
- **Demonstration sites**
  - 70 sites to be completed during 2016 and 2017 across WA, SA, Vic and NSW
- **Producer network**
  - Engage 300+ producers who pregnancy scan for multiples to contribute data from their own farms



# Project design

- Adult, twin-bearing ewes
- Low mob size  $\geq 75$  ewes
- High mob size  $\geq 200$  ewes
- Require  $\geq 2$  ewe/ha difference between stocking rates

<b><i>Paddock 1</i></b> High Mob Size High Stocking Rate	<b><i>Paddock 2</i></b> Low Mob Size High Stocking Rate
<b><i>Paddock 3</i></b> Low Mob Size Low Stocking Rate	<b><i>Paddock 4</i></b> High Mob Size Low Stocking Rate

# Data collection

- Pre-lambing (day 140 pregnancy)
  - Allocate ewes into a treatment
  - Tag and condition score 50 ewes/treatment
  - Assess FOO, pasture composition, shelter, water points, topography
  - Move ewes to selected paddocks for lambing



# Data collection

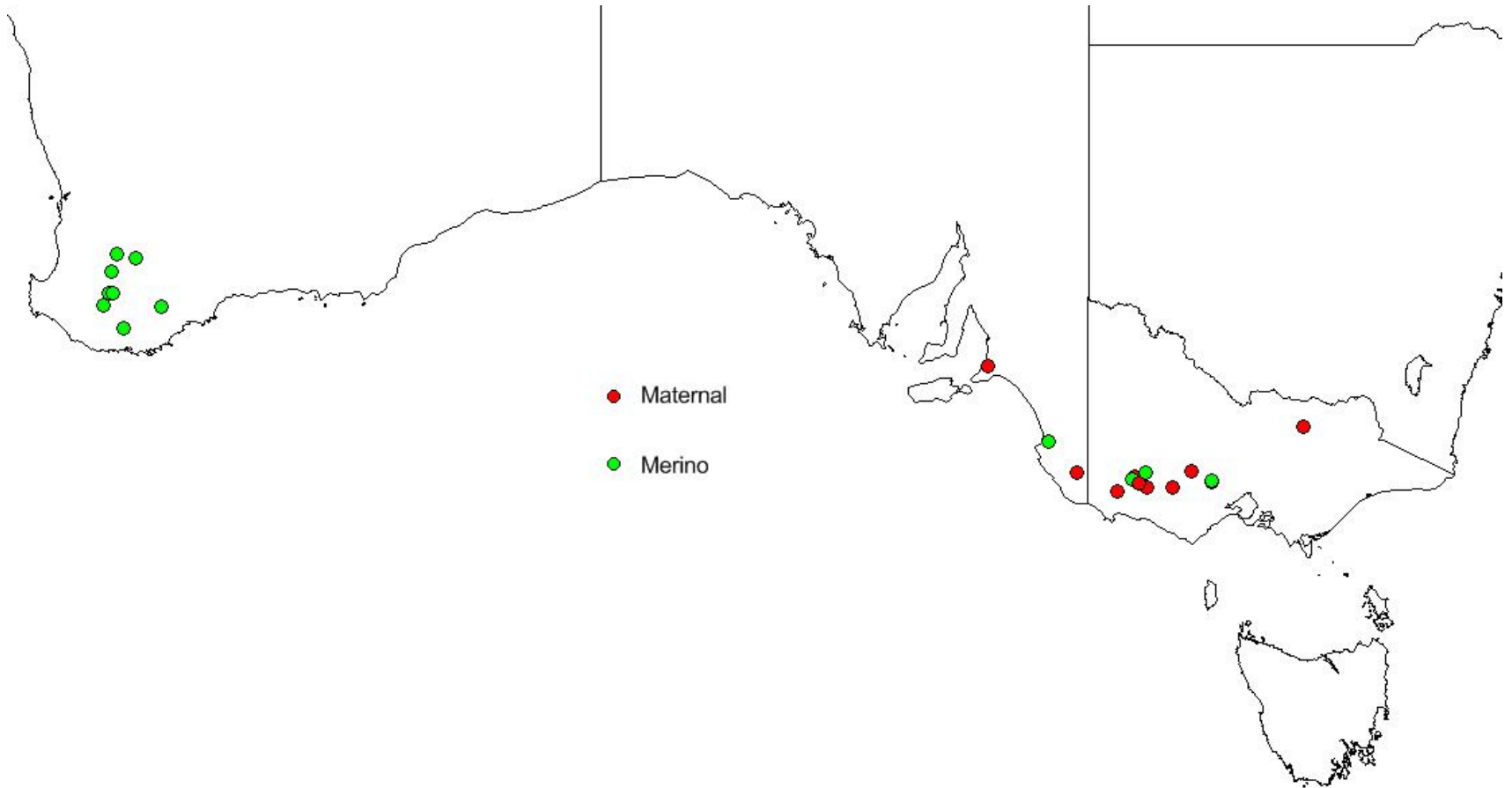
## Lamb marking

- Condition score and wet-dry tagged ewes
- Assess FOO
- Count lambs and ewes in each treatment





# Demonstration sites 2016



# Demonstration sites 2016

	High	Low
<b>Mob size</b>	<b>231</b> (188 – 316)	<b>92</b> (70 – 142)
<b>Stocking rate</b>	<b>7.8</b> (5.1 – 11.1)	<b>5.4</b> (2.8 – 9.3)

# Preliminary results 2016 – Lamb survival

		Mob size	
		High	Low
Stocking rate	High	<b>71.5</b>	74.5
	Low	73.4	<b>76.2</b>

4.7 % Difference or 9.4 lambs per 100 twin ewes

# Preliminary results

- Survival of Merinos (68%) was poorer than that of Maternals (82%)
- Ewes at all sites were in excellent condition prior to lambing with an average condition score of 3.1
- FOO averaged 1700 kg DM/ha at lambing

# SA Preliminary results – Sellicks Hill

	Mob Size		Stocking Rate (ewes/ha)	
Breed	High	Low	High	Low
Composite	290	105	7.6	4.2

	Treatment Group – Lamb Survival			
	HMS/HSR	HMS/LSR	LMS/HSR	LMS/LSR
	70.5% (141%)	72.4% (144.8%)	79% (158%)	72% (144%)
Paddock Size Ha	38	69	13.8	25.4

# SA Preliminary results - Penola

	Mob Size		Stocking Rate (ewes/ha)	
Breed	High	Low	High	Low
Composite	200	75	8.9	6.9

	Treatment Group – Lamb Survival			
	HMS/HSR	HMS/LSR	LMS/HSR	LMS/LSR
	75% (150%)	79.3% (158.6%)	82% (164%)	84.7% (169.4)
Paddock Size (ha)	29	22.5	8.4	11

# SA Preliminary results - Kingston

	Mob Size		Stocking Rate (ewes/ha)	
Breed	High	Low	High	Low
Merino	270	100	6.6	4

	Treatment Group – Lamb Survival			
	HMS/HSR	HMS/LSR	LMS/HSR	LMS/LSR
	70.4 (140.8%)	70.9 (141.8%)	70% (140%)	72% (144%)
Paddock Size (ha)	40.8	67.5	15	25

# SA Preliminary results

- 113 Autopsies completed at Sellicks Hill to determine cause of death
  - 62% (SME) Starvation Mismothering Exposure
  - 26% Dystocia
  - 4 % Stillborn
  - 8% Predation
- Didn't differ between treatments



## But ...Is there more to it?

- Does other factors have an influence
  - Paddock size?
  - Feed on offer?
  - Time of the year lambing?

**Provide the greatest chance of ewe / lamb bond on your farm as possible to maximise lamb survival**

# Producer network

- Producers who scan for multiples asked to contribute data from their own farms
- Data collected for individual mobs includes;
  - Mob size and ewe pregnancy status
  - Paddock size and shelter
  - Ewe condition score at lambing
  - FOO at lambing
  - Number of lambs marked

# Outcomes for producers

- Contribute to the development of guidelines on mob sizes and stocking rates at lambing to optimise lamb survival
- Upon completion, participants will be provided with a report which summarises the project findings
- Opportunity to attend workshops and/or field days

# What's New

*Making More From Sheep*

A joint initiative of



## Lambs Alive

A hands-on approach to optimising lamb survival