



Top 10 Tips on a Profitable Sheep Enterprise

Mark Allington





THE SHEEP'S BACK

Top 10 Tips on a Profitable Sheep Enterprise

1. Be organised, timing is important
2. Pay attention to detail
3. Know your Profit Drivers
4. Understand Animal Nutrition Basics
5. Understand Pasture Production basics



Top 10 Tips

6. Benchmark your operation
7. Design Exit strategies, recognise implications
8. Adopt new handling gear
9. Choose genetics that match your objective
10. Get good advice

1 Be Organised

- The sheep system can be planned out with a calendar.
 - Lambing 150 days, then wean 14 weeks, etc
 - When does 80% of your flystrike occur?
- No excuses for late crutching, flystrike, worms etc
- Draw up a year planner of events

How many times do you say “I jetted too early?...”

Top Producers

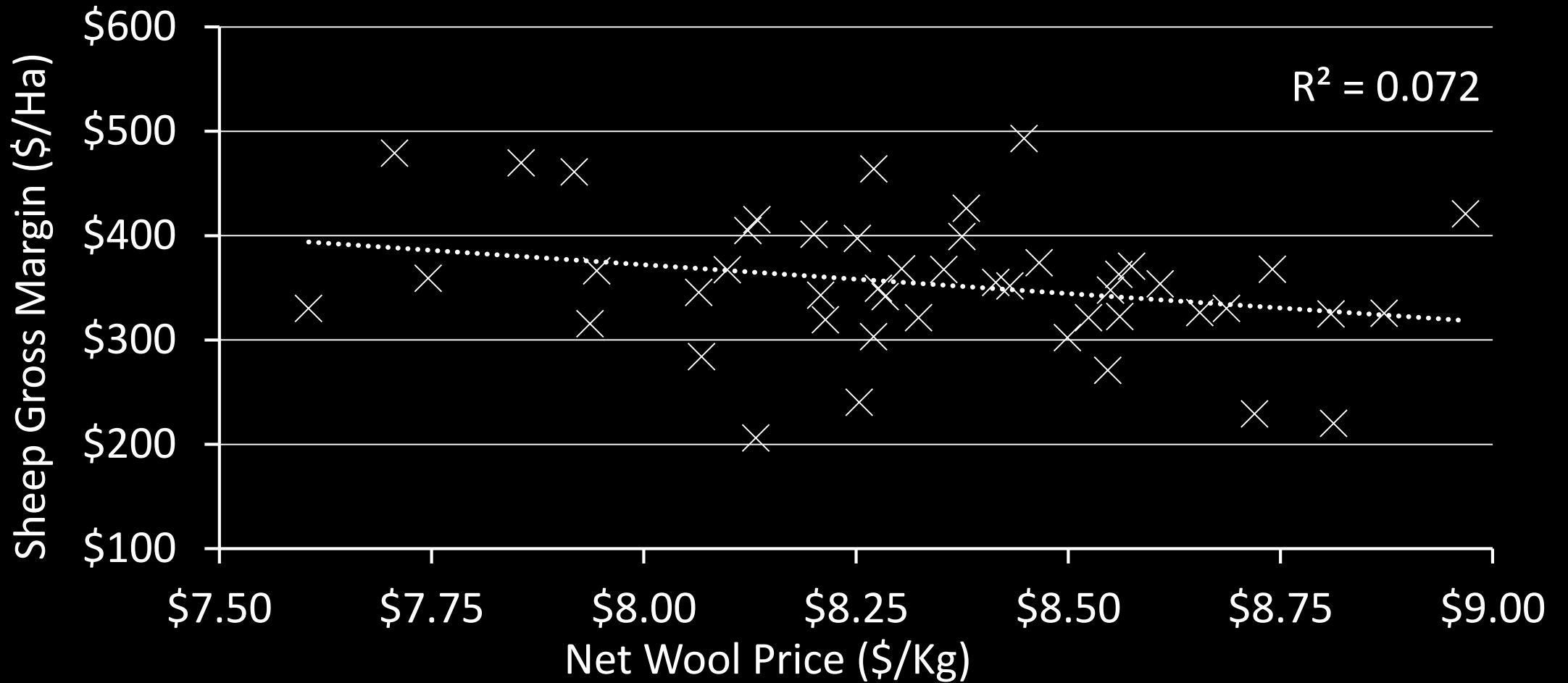
- run 7% more sheep (/wgha/100mm GSR)
- Generate 13% more lambs/ewe ha (/wgha/100mm GSR)
- Cut 11% more wool (/wgha/100mm GSR)
- Feed 10% less
- Use more fertiliser
- But spend 5% less overall

- Yield Drives Profits
 - Wool Cut per hectare
 - Lambs Born per Ewe hectare
- Not Wool price received
- Not Lambing %



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Key Profit Drivers (NOT!)

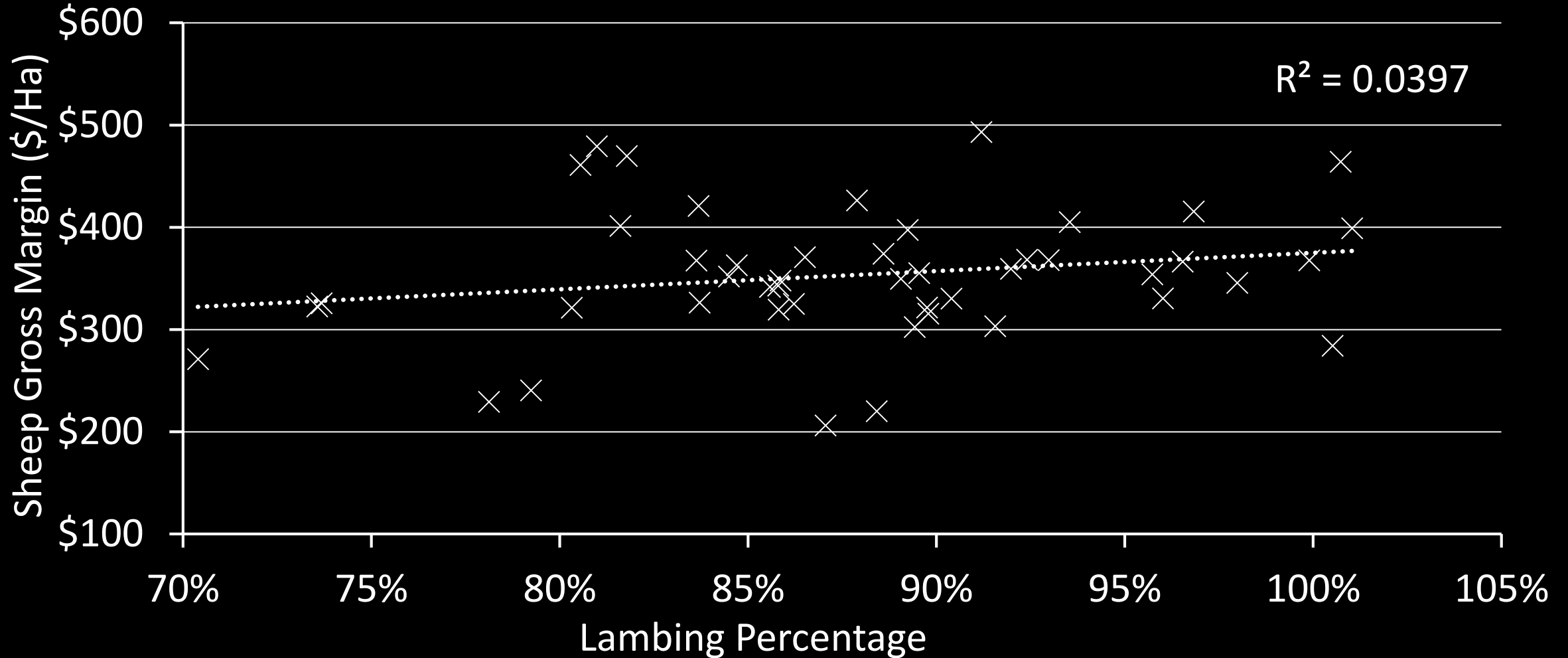


Five year averages. Source Icon Agriculture & Compass Ag Alliance



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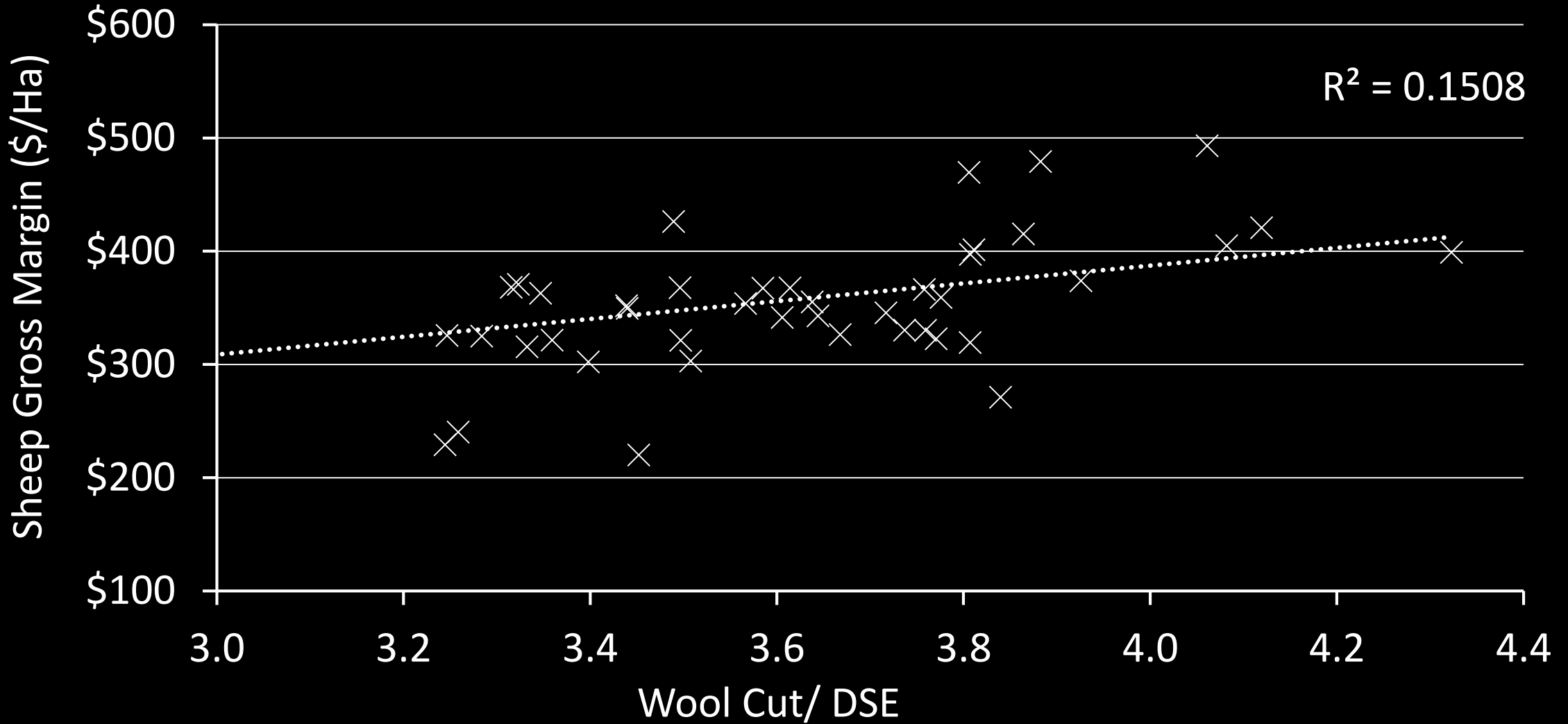
Key Profit Drivers (NOT!)





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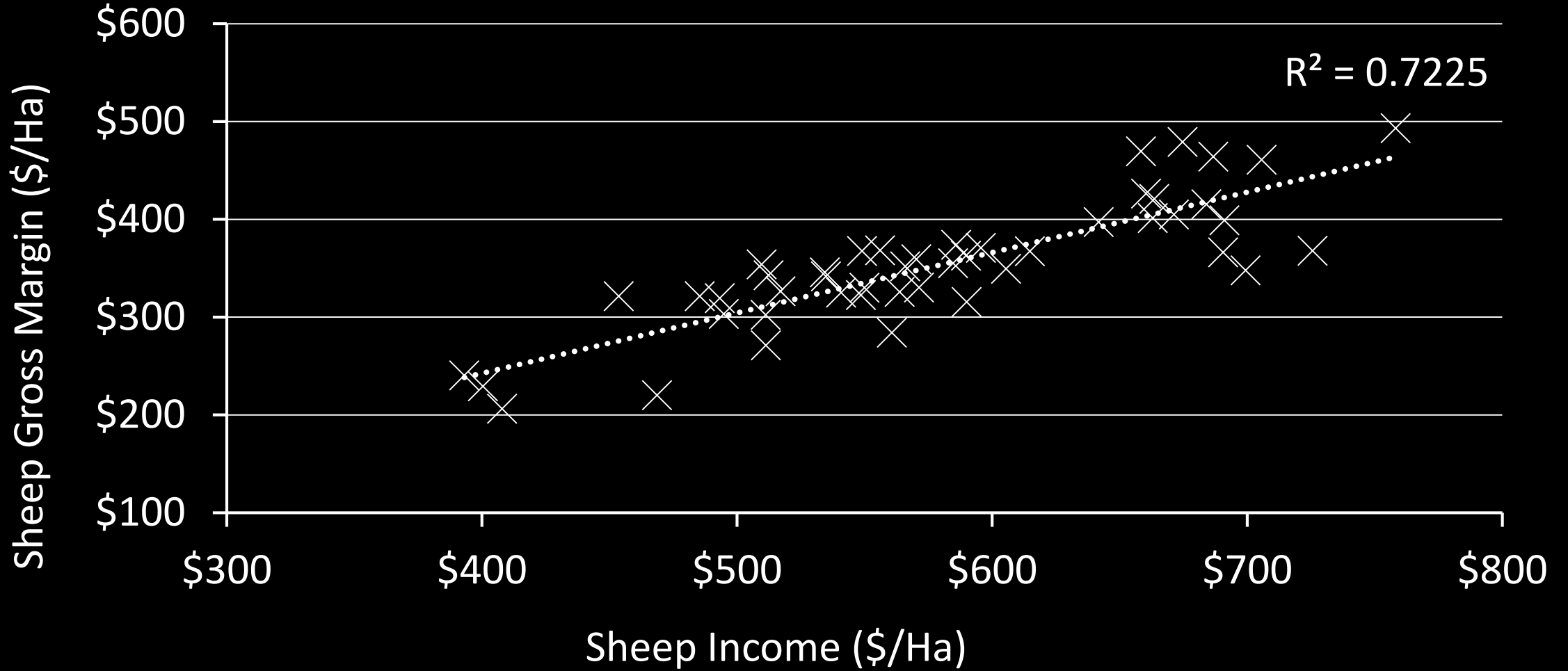
Key Profit Drivers (NOT!)





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Key Profit Drivers



- Energy, Energy and Energy

- To achieve Condition Score Objectives

- Protein

- Minerals e.g. Selenium, Cobalt

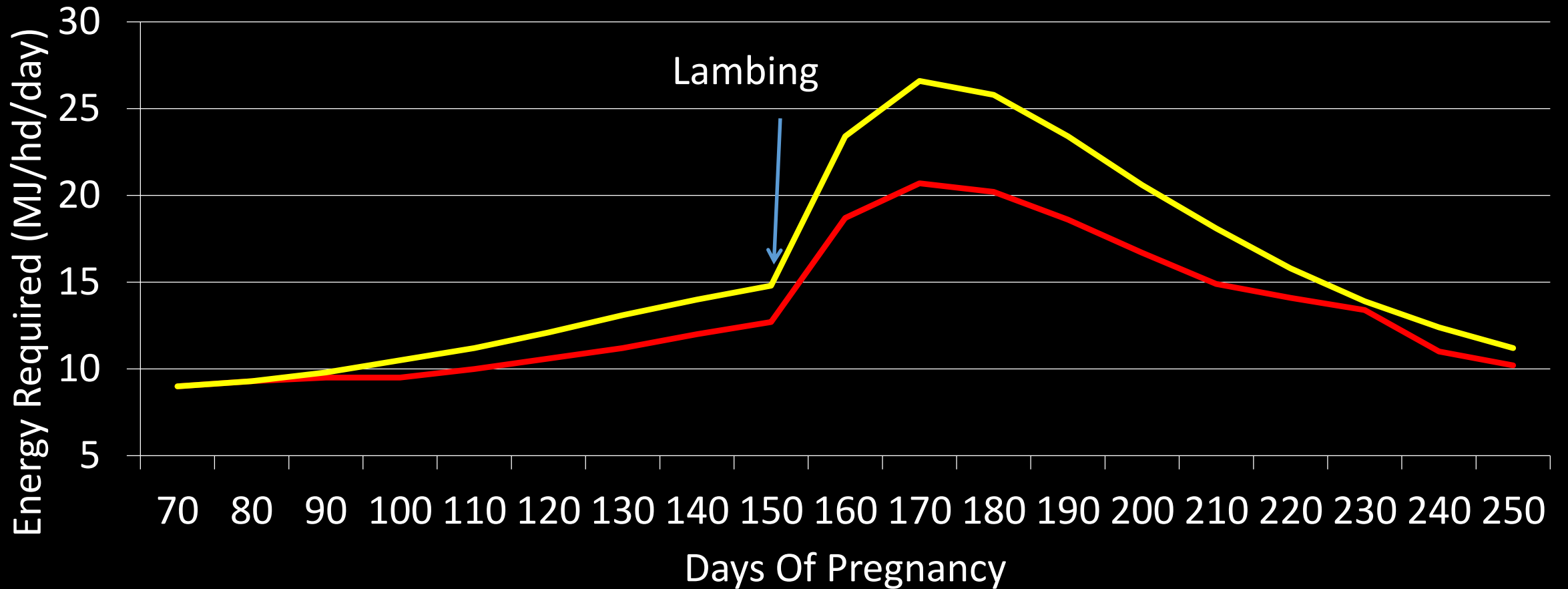


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Energy Requirements of the Ewe

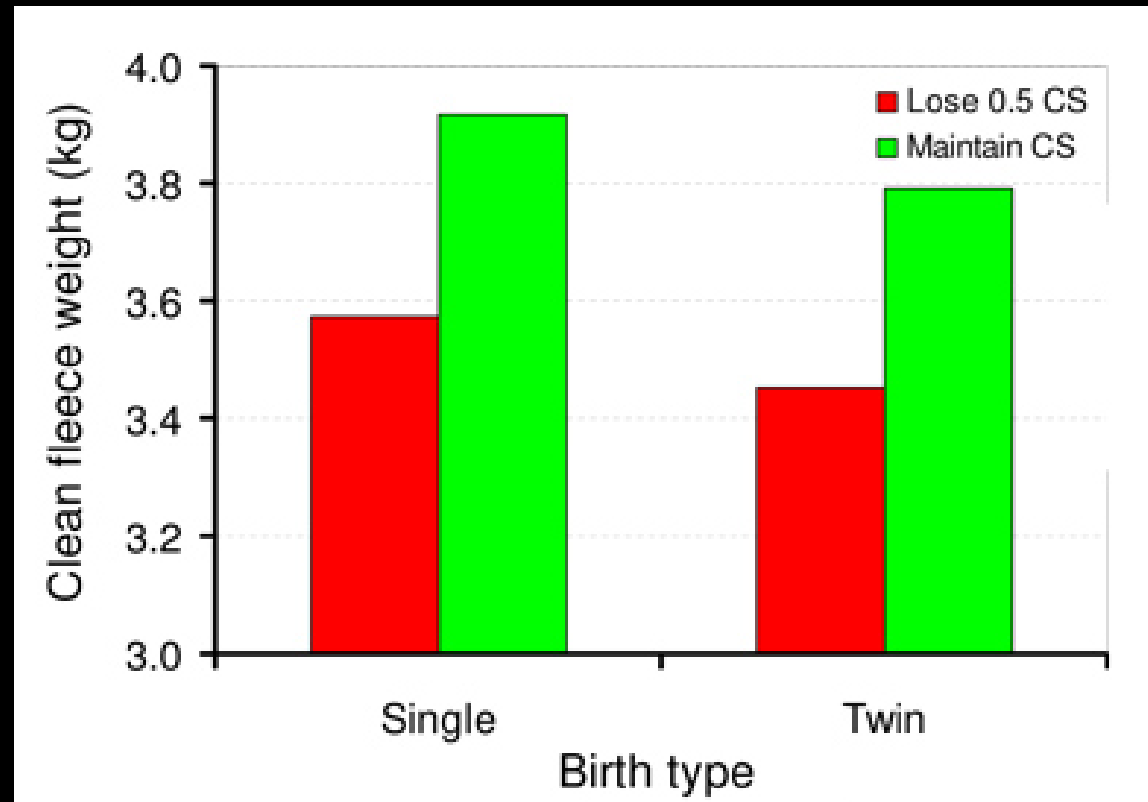
Peak demand = 3* Dry Sheep

— Singles — Twins

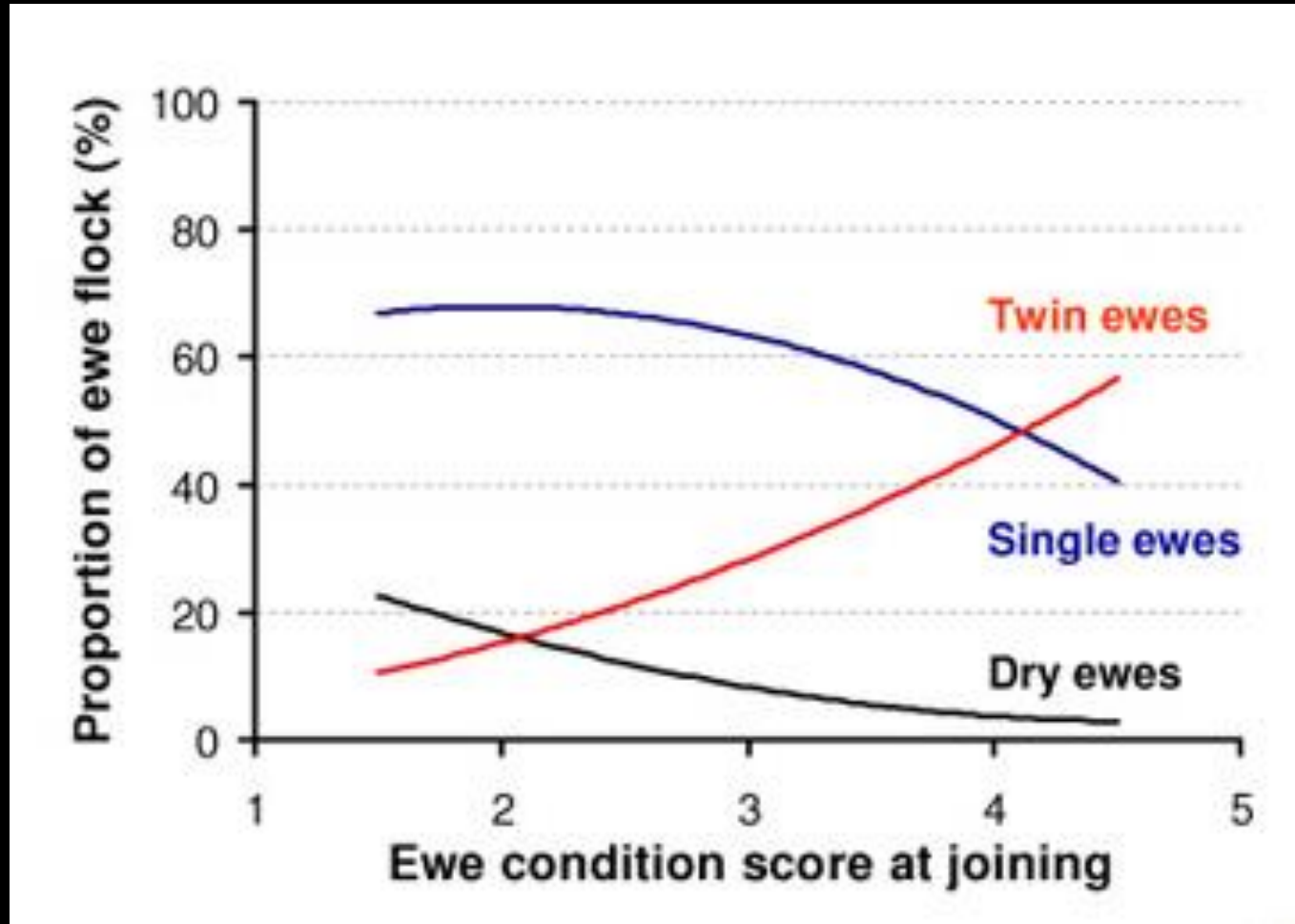


Produce More Wool

- Ewe fleece weight is affected by ewe nutrition from early to mid-pregnancy



Ewe Condition Score at Joining



- Feed on Offer (FOO) Is SUPPLY
 - Match Supply to Demand
 - $FOO * \text{Pasture Growth Rate} = \text{Stocking Rate Sustained}$
- More FOO = More Intake
- More Intake = Higher production



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FOO

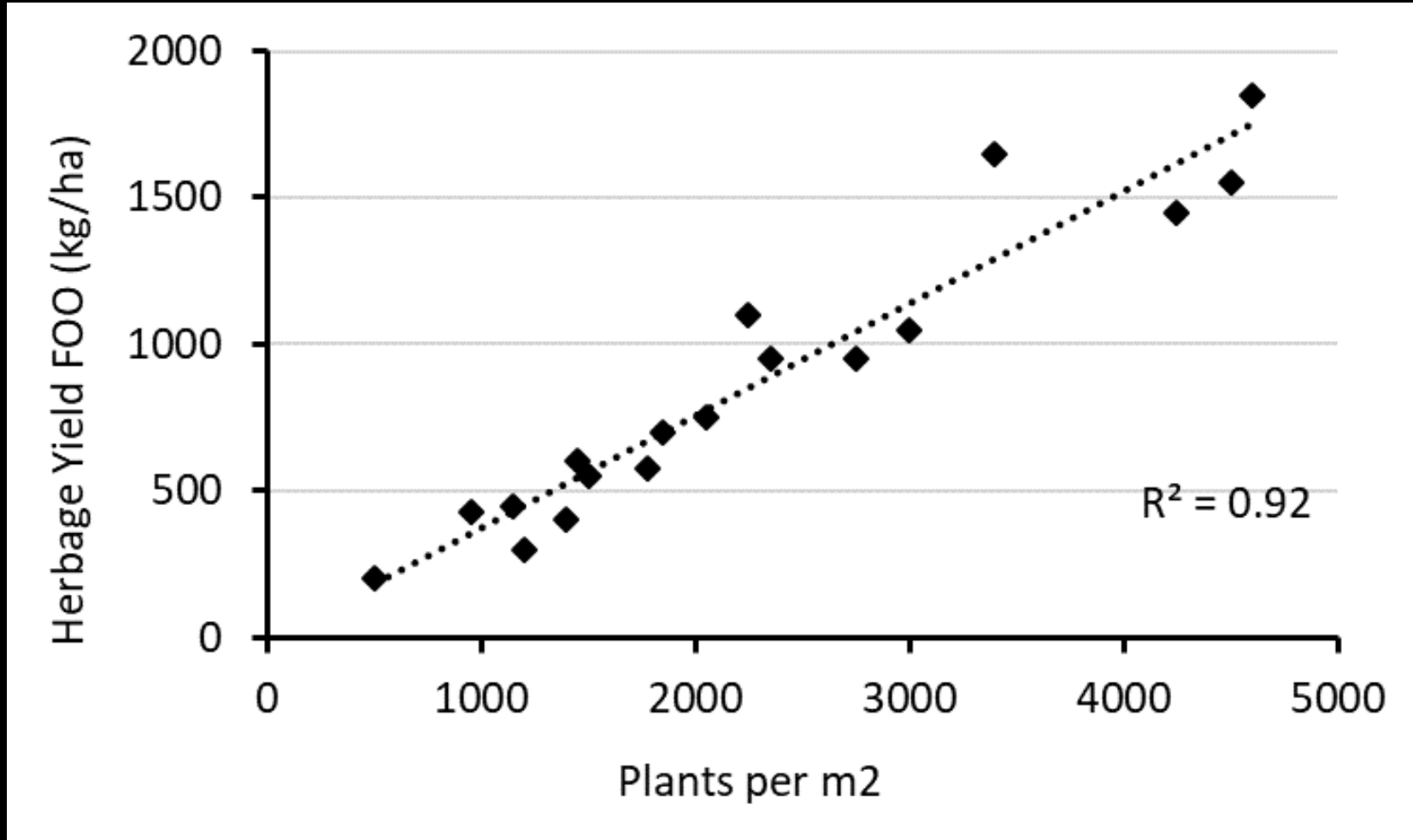


What affects pasture intake?

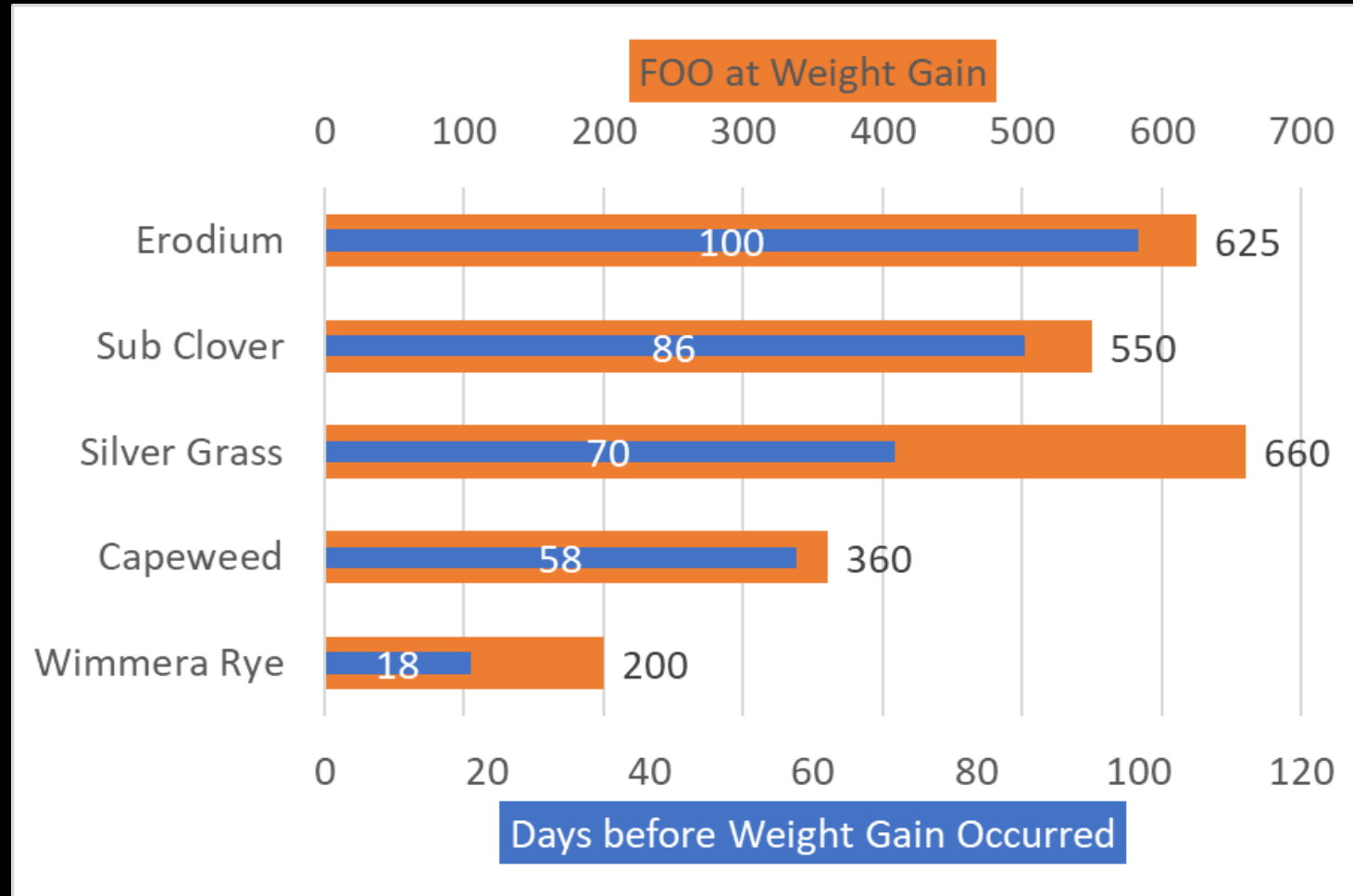
- Feed on Offer
 - Height by density
 - Impacts on bite size/amount of intake per bite
- Pasture Growth Rate
 - ↑ growth rate = a bite size sooner
- Diet Selection
 - Time by selection



Pasture Density (bad news)

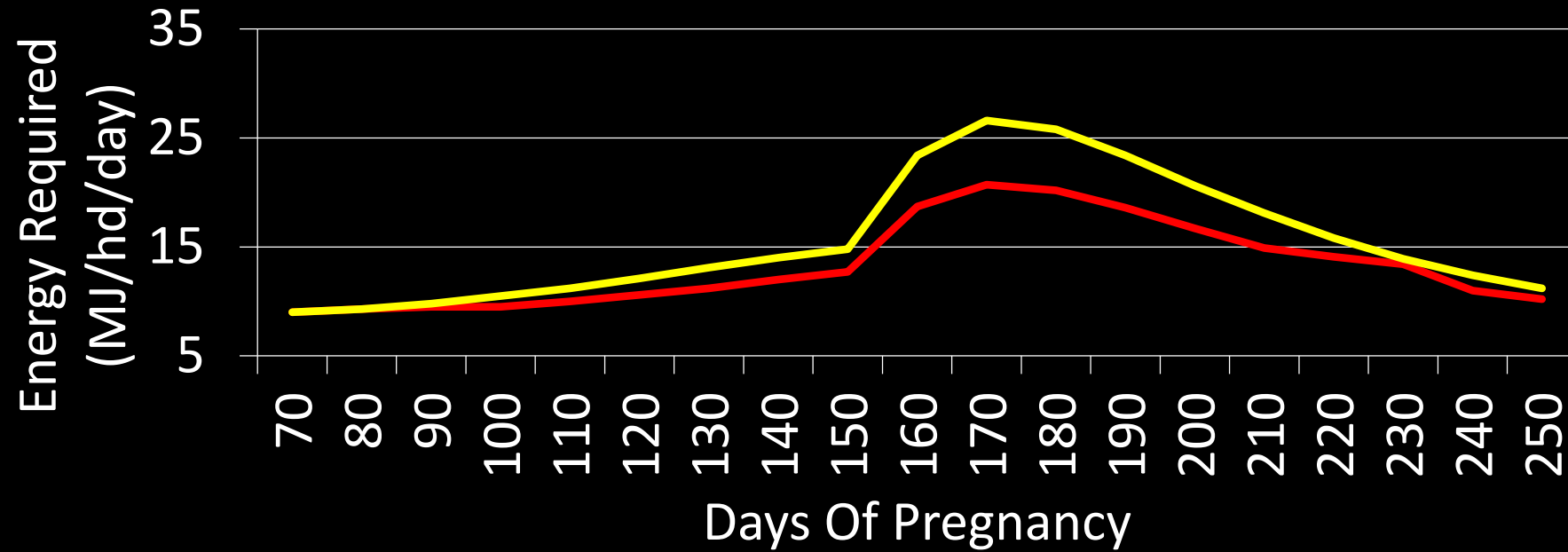


Pasture Species (more bad news)



Remember this?

— Singles — Twins



- 1st of May vs 1st July exerts a 35% higher grazing pressure for the same SR.
- By the 21st May it is 100% Higher
- Solution? Lower potential yield.....

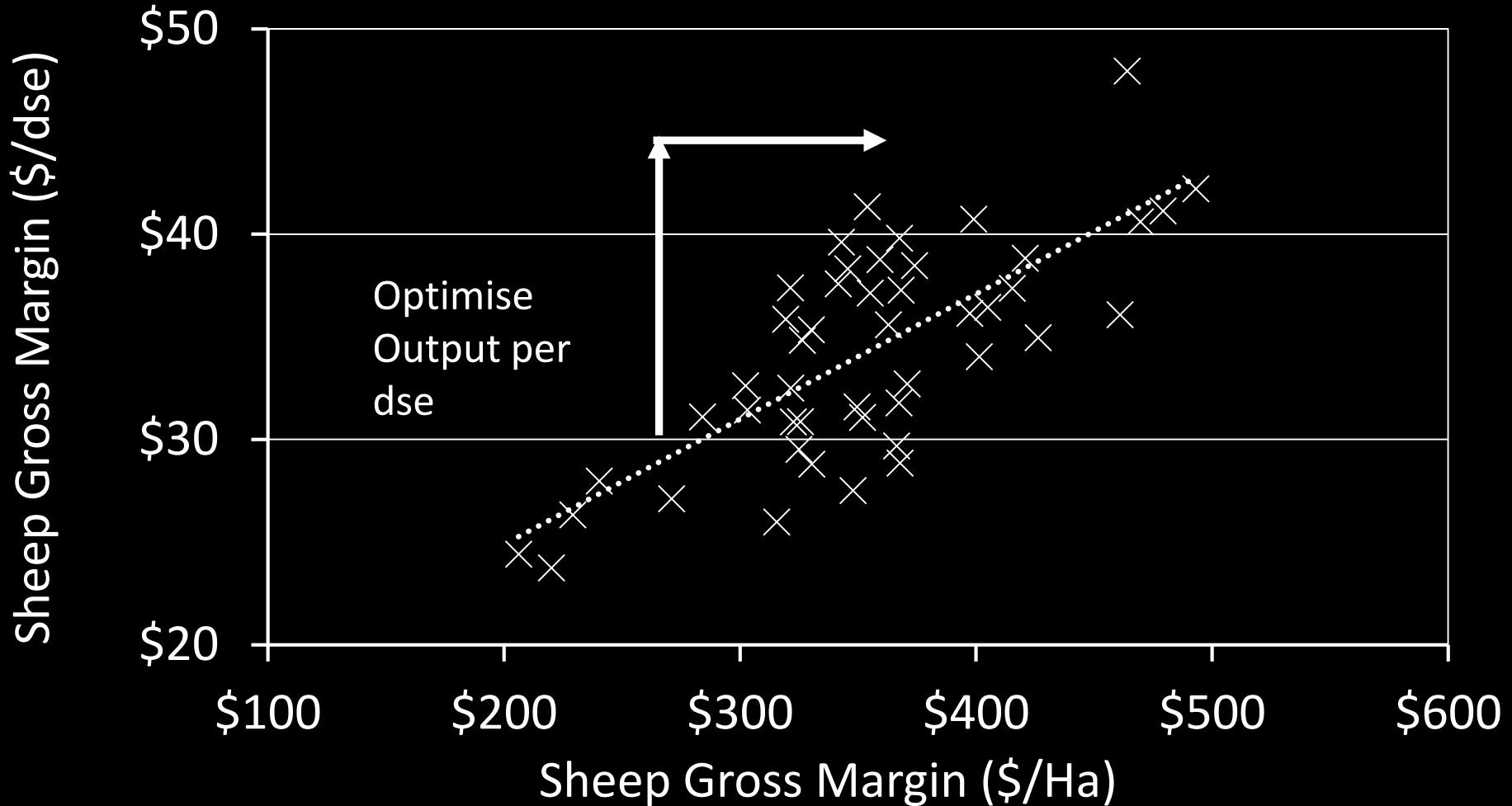


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On the bright side...

- You know how to grow crops
 - Use the same technology and application
 - Ferts, insects, pH

6 Benchmark your Operation

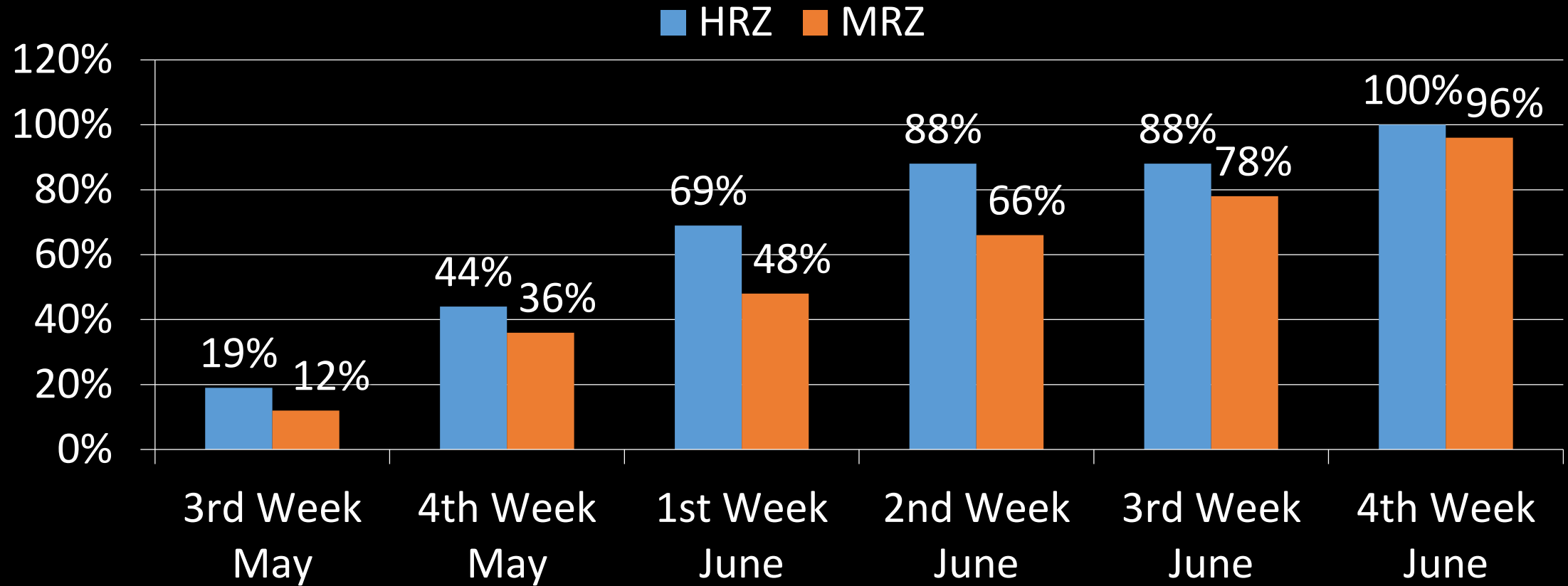


But: "Your property, Your resources Your experience

- An exit strategy reduces grazing pressure in the event of a late break
 - Eg
 - Sell Dry ewes
 - Sell Ewes with Twins
 - Fee More hay
 - Confinement feed
- But you need the ability to implement these

Reaction Speed

“By what date will you take action?”





8 New Handling Gear (Labour Use Efficiency)





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Ease



ProWay
Livestock Equipment



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Old Handling Gear and Innovation





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Feeding Sheep



9 Choose Genetics that Match your Breeding Objective

- 80% of the Output is related to management
- But you have:
 - The opportunity to use ASBVs (the genetic language)
 - Genetic worth of an animal compared to its peers
 - Estimate an animals true breeding value based on pedigree & performance recorded info
 - Doesn't cost anything to use them

	All Merinos (AM)	AM+4.5 Weths	70:30 Mer/XB
Wool Income	\$281,656	\$299,439	\$262,946
Sheep Income	\$158,467	\$95,463	\$187,813
Total Income	\$440,123	\$394,902	\$450,759
Total Expenses	\$164,733	\$134,456	\$145,247
Gross Margin	\$275,390	\$260,446	\$305,512
Gross Margin/DSE	\$55	\$52	\$61



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10

Get Good Advice and Turn Inches into Miles

Gross Margin/DSE

Average

Top

% Diff.

5 Year

\$39.64

\$47.58

20%

Gross Margin/Ha/100mm GSR

5 Year

\$118.51

\$155.85

32%



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