

MONARO MUMS

# KEY PROFIT DRIVERS AND CONSTRAINTS IN FINISHING LAMBS

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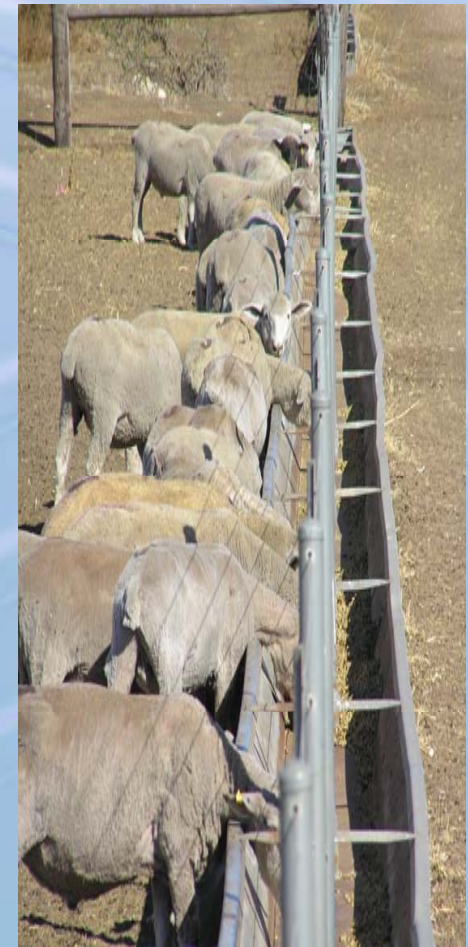
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# Questions to answer today...

1. *Prime Lamb Finishing Options*  
– what was the most profitable?
2. Profit drivers in lamb finishing  
– how can I exploit them?
3. Finishing lambs in the Monaro  
– is it the right environment?



# Prime Lamb Finishing Options

## Enterprise comparison

### 1. Traditional breeder-finisher system (pasture / fodder crop)

- a) Self replacing Merino flock with a percentage joined to terminal sires
- b) First cross ewes joined to terminal sires  
(all replacements purchased)
- c) Self replacing Merino flock

### 2. Specialist pasture / fodder crop finishing

### 3. Specialist grain based finishing

### 4. Opportunistic grain based finishing





# Prime Lamb Finishing Options

## Lamb finishing comparisons

**Breeder-finisher**



**Finishing on pasture**

**Finishing in feedlot (55kg)**

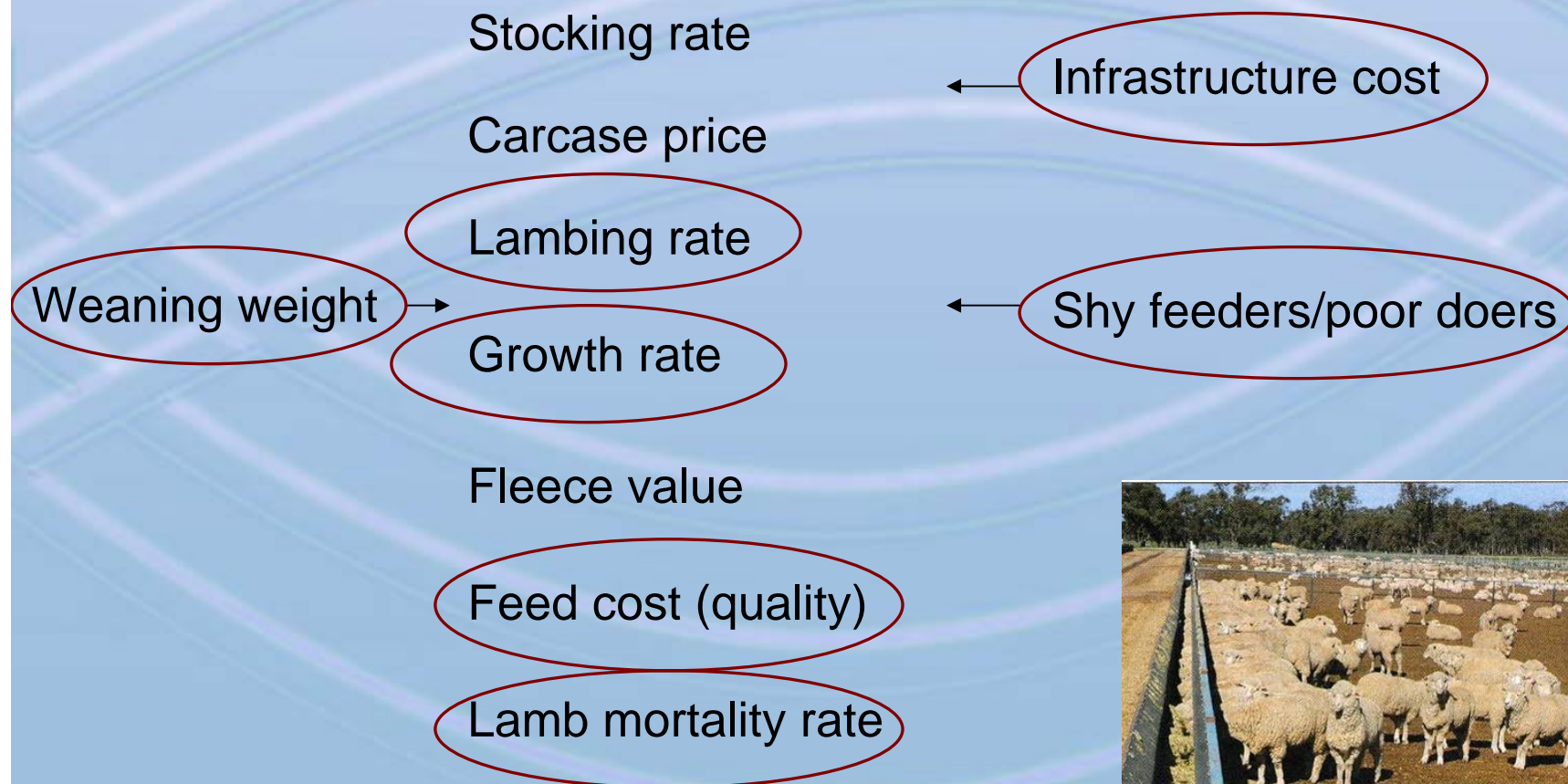
**Sell as feeders**

**Finishing in feedlot (45kg)**

**Sell as weaners**



# Profit Drivers





# Profit Drivers

Lamb mortality

## Lamb mortality

Very high effect on profitability (>10%)

Moderate effect on profitability (1-5%)

Weaning weight

Growth rate

Feed cost

Lambing rate

Shy feeders

Infrastructure



# Profit Drivers

Lamb mortality

Weaning weight

Growth rate

Feed cost

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Shy feeders

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## Weaning weight

Moderate effect on profitability





# Profit Drivers

Lamb mortality

Weaning weight

Growth rate

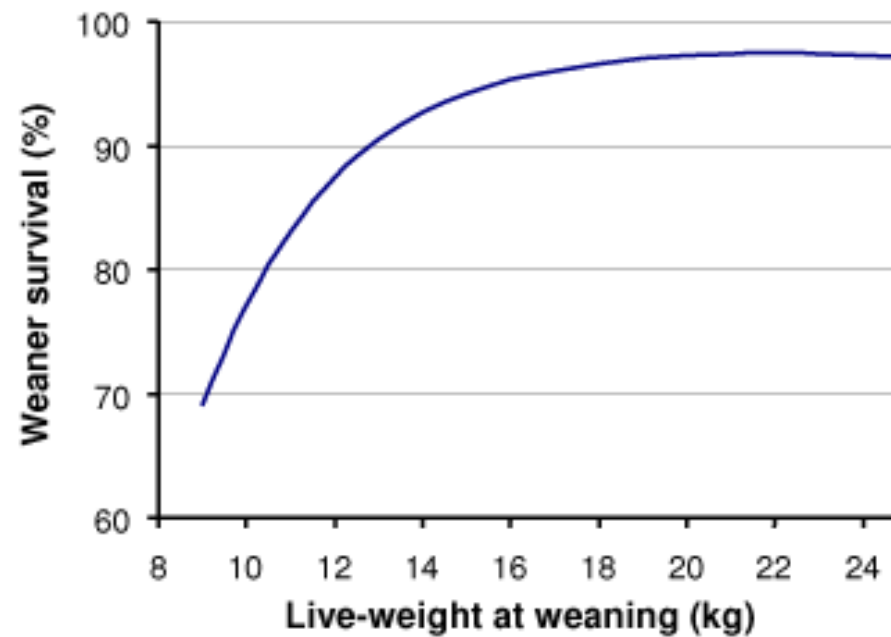
Feed cost

Lambing rate

Shy feeders

Infrastructure

## Live-weight at weaning and survival of Merino weaners to 12 months





# Profit Drivers

Lamb mortality

Weaning weight

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## Target Weaning Weights (kg)

Adult weight	Birth weight	Weaning weight (Merino)	Weaning weight (Crossbred)
50	4.0	22.5	27.5
55	4.4	24.8	30.3
60	4.8	27.0	33.0
65	5.2	29.3	35.8
70	5.6	31.5	38.5
75	6.0	33.8	41.3
% of adult	8%	45%	55%

# Profit Drivers

Lamb mortality

Weaning weight

Growth rate

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**Growth rate**

High effect on profitability





# Profit Drivers

Lamb mortality

**Feed cost**

High effect on profitability

Weaning weight

Growth rate

**Feed cost**

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# Profit Drivers

**Lamb mortality**

**Lambing rate**

Very high effect on profitability

Weaning weight

15% change resulted in up to 35% change in profitability

Growth rate

Greatest effect on crossbred compared to Merino lambs

Feed cost

The effect reduced as lamb growth rate increased

**Lambing rate**

Shy feeders

Infrastructure





# Profit Drivers

## Nutrient demand in late pregnancy

Lamb mortality

Weaning weight

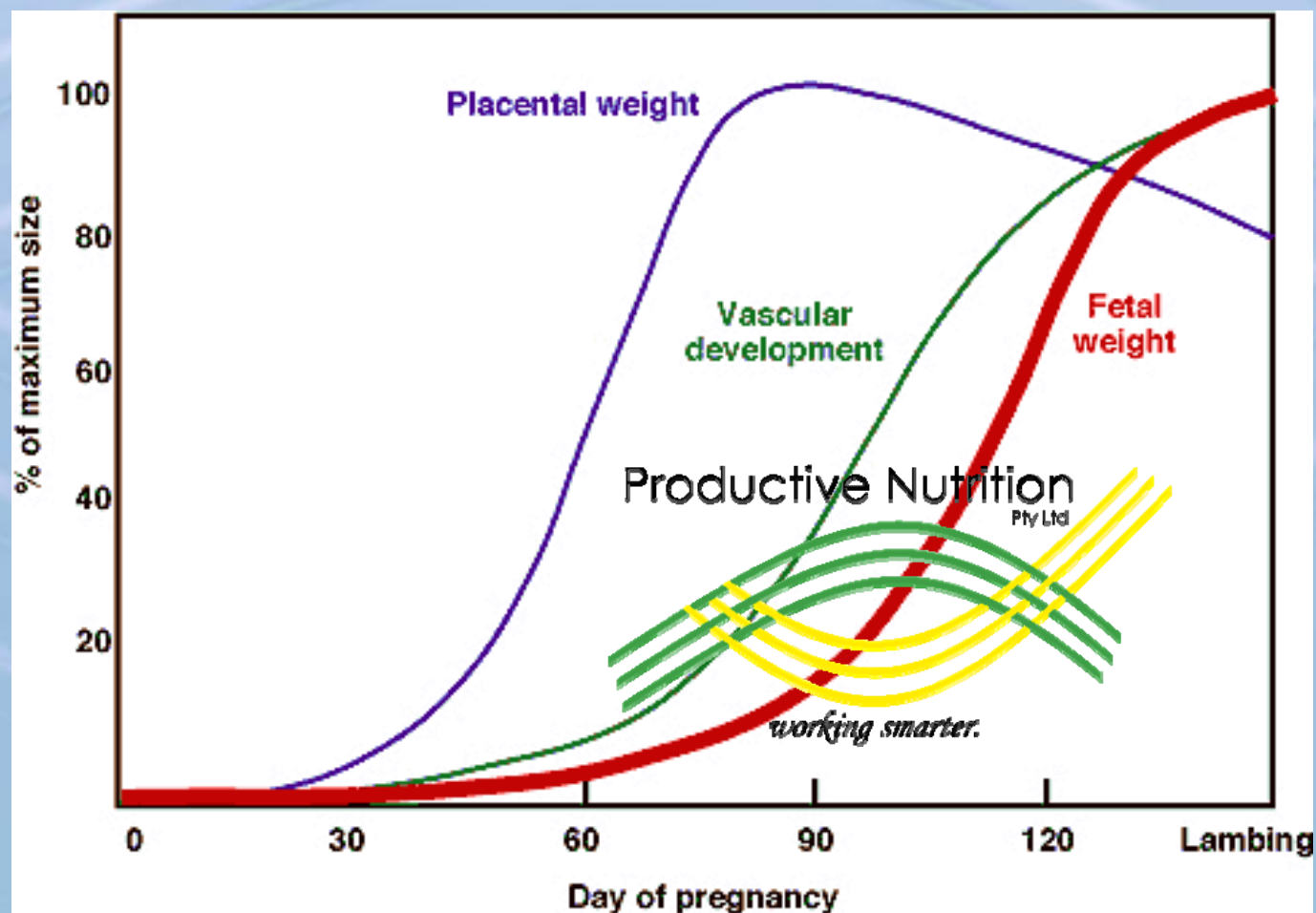
Growth rate

Feed cost

Lambing rate

Shy feeders

Infrastructure





# Profit Drivers

Lamb mortality

**Shy feeders / poor doers**

Moderate effect on profitability

Weaning weight

## **Trial - Merino Lambs**

Growth rate

- 10 day introduction period
- Bare shorn
- Straw removed Day 29
- Large tail evident
- Poor doers and shy feeders still eating

Feed cost

Lambing rate

**Shy feeders**

Infrastructure





# Profit Drivers

Lamb mortality

## Infrastructure

High effect on profitability

Weaning weight

Growth rate

Infrastructure establishment costs per lamb for a 2000 head feedlot operated to capacity at various levels of infrastructure replacement and total number of feedlot cycles.



Feed cost

Lambing rate

Shy feeders

Infrastructure

Number of cycles through feedlot	Proportion of infrastructure requiring establishment or replacement					
	100%	80%	60%	40%	20%	0%
1	\$36.56	\$29.24	\$21.93	\$14.62	\$7.31	\$0.00
5	\$7.31	\$5.85	\$4.39	\$2.92	\$1.46	\$0.00
10	\$3.66	\$2.92	\$2.19	\$1.46	\$0.73	\$0.00
15	\$2.44	\$1.95	\$1.46	\$0.97	\$0.49	\$0.00
20	\$1.83	\$1.46	\$1.10	\$0.73	\$0.37	\$0.00

# How do I get lambs like these?



**Gravity**  
Just a theory.