



# FACT SHEET

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## CREEP GRAZING LAMBS

Creep grazing employs a gate through which lambs, but not ewes, can pass to get first choice of fresh feed in the next-door paddock, while retaining access to their mothers for milk and company.

## CREEP GRAZING TWIN LAMBS IS A VERY SUCCESSFUL, INEXPENSIVE AND SIMPLE WAY TO INCREASE LAMB WEANING WEIGHTS

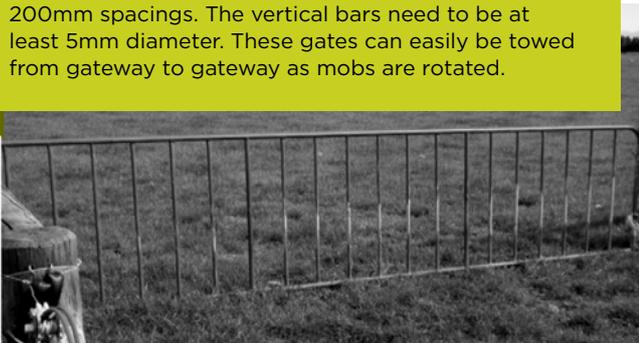
Creep grazing improved lamb weaning weights in 16 out of 18 grazing experiments run throughout New Zealand.

Creep grazed lambs were up to 5 kg heavier at weaning than lambs not creep grazed.

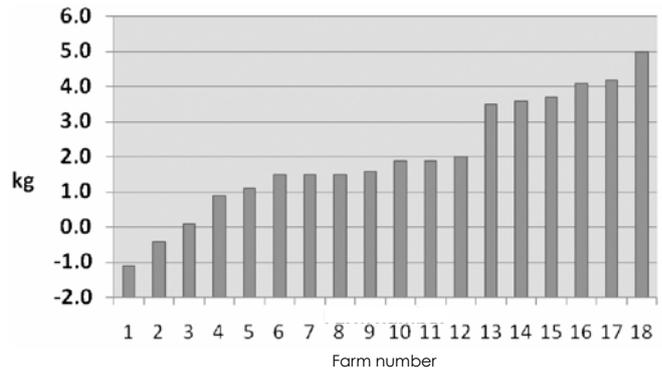
Creep grazing should operate from six weeks of age until weaning.

Using feed that is more palatable to lambs should increase lamb use of creep gate.

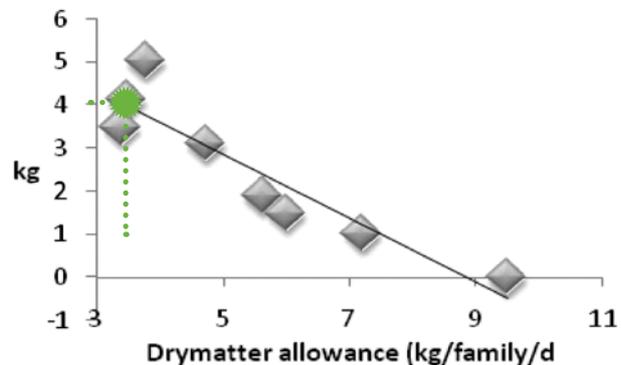
Commercially available "bar gates" make ideal creep gates with half the vertical bars removed leaving 200mm spacings. The vertical bars need to be at least 5mm diameter. These gates can easily be towed from gateway to gateway as mobs are rotated.



## THE FACTS BEHIND CREEP GRAZING

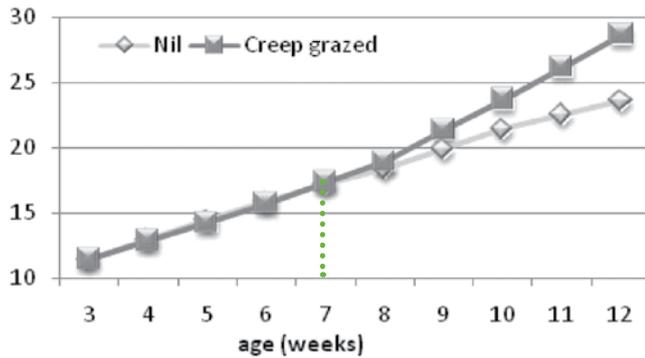


Differences in feed allowance accounted for most of the differences between the sites. Increasing the feeding rate reduced the advantage to creep grazing. It can also reduce subsequent feed quantity.



At a feeding rate of 4 kg drymatter/ewe/d, (recommended) creep grazed twin lambs are likely to be between 3.5 and 5kg heavier at weaning than those not creep grazed.

## EFFECT OF CREEP GRAZING ON LAMB LIVELWEIGHT



The response to creep grazing tended to occur from seven weeks of age, coinciding with a decline in ewe milk production and the continuing increase in lamb feed demand. Lambs should have access to creep gates for a week or two before that to become accustomed to them.

## OTHER RELEVANT ISSUES AND POTENTIALLY USEFUL STRATEGIES

- Allowing lambs to creep graze onto neighbouring cattle pastures can be used as a means of improving lamb diets.
- Painting creep gates orange, a colour lambs can readily recognise, helped lambs to locate gates, resulting in their increased use.
- Mineral licks located by gates as an attractant did not increase creep gate use.
- Creep grazing was less successful on steep rolling country, particularly where paddocks were large.
- Where ewes and lambs rotationally grazed lucerne, a significant number of lambs creep grazed and achieved an average growth rate of 376 g/d over nine weeks.
- In comparison with an old pasture and a new pasture of pasja, chicory and a red clover/chicory mix, lambs demonstrated a clear preference for pure swards of both red clover and rape. Permitting lambs to creep graze onto these preferred species, both of which are likely to be more nutritious than grass based pastures, can be expected to further enhance lamb pre-weaning growth rates in creep grazing systems.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & MORE INFORMATION

This project was supported by:



and many farmers and farm staff.

For more information phone Beef + Lamb New Zealand on 0800 BEEFLAMB (0800 233 352) or visit [www.beeflambnz.com](http://www.beeflambnz.com)

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