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Sheep Performa Lamb Feedlot Program

Thankyou for the opportunity to present some options for feeding your lambs – we hope the following will be useful for your enterprise.

We have previous experience developing multi-stage lamb feeding programs for local prime lamb producers, lamb feedlotter and mixed farming enterprises.

We have developed a four stage feeding program to take your lambs through to 65kgs liveweight that we feel is an easy, and cost-effective program.

We feel this program will grow lambs at an overall cheaper cost (compared with traditional “least cost” lamb diets) by introducing a high-quality feed to the young lamb, while at the same time matching protein and energy density to each stage of growth, so that money is not spent on nutrients the animal cannot convert into saleable weight.

The proposed four stage program uses a:

- **Sheep Performa Lamb Creep** from around 2 weeks of age until eating 500g/head/day,
- **Sheep Performa Lamb Grower** from eating 500g/head/day of **Sheep Performa Lamb Creep** to 30kgs liveweight,
- **Sheep Performa Feedlot** from 30kgs to 50kgs liveweight,
- **Sheep Performa Lamb Grower** from 50kgs to 65kgs liveweight.

Where lambs are being fed over summer, or through periods of high humidity or heat stress, **Sheep Performa Summer Feedlot** replaces **Sheep Performa Feedlot** at Stage 3. Lambs already on a feedlot diet require no special transition between the two pellets.

For producers starting lambs on the feedlot pellet for the first time, we have also included a seven day induction program at the back of this document, covering the daily pellet step-up and the changeover from cereal hay to cereal straw.

The **Sheep Performa Lamb Creep** is a unique product, designed to promote rapid rumen development, drive dry matter intake, and allow for a better transition onto the grower diet.

Encouraging early intake of concentrates has positive effects for young lambs that include early rumen development and improved growth rates, which in turn can lead to earlier weaning and finishing.

Counterpoint Stockfeeds is a locally owned, progressive stockfeed manufacturer located in the Murray River town of Barham, NSW. We manufacture quality pellets and grain mixes for the dairy, beef, sheep, pig, and poultry industries.

Our range of products are formulated by our qualified and experienced Nutritionists to cater for your individual needs.

All our sites are accredited under FeedSafe® - the quality assurance program of the SFMCA. This ensures the products



For product support and sales enquiries
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Creep feeding is generally beneficial when:

- Available paddock feed is limiting the ewe's milk production, and therefore lamb performance;
- Ewe body condition at lambing is lower than ideal, which has compromised their milking;
- Ewes are already receiving supplementary feed, but lamb performance is still lower than ideal;
- The lambs are destined for slaughter and must meet target weights for market;
- The mob consists of scanned twin-bearing ewes, and most of the lambs are being reared as twins.

Early nutrition plays a critical role in lifetime performance. Carcass composition and growth potential are influenced in the first weeks of life, so establishing strong feed intake early is essential.

To encourage early intake of pellets by the lambs it can be beneficial to initially trail feed the ewes together with the lambs using ***Sheep Performa Ewe & Lamb***, so that the ewes introduce the lambs to supplementary feed. Trail the pellets out over sufficient distance to reduce competition and to allow the lambs better access to the pellets.

Sheep Performa Lamb Creep should be offered in an area, in conjunction with good quality hay, that prevents older stock from accessing the feed. Once average intakes exceed 500 grams/head/day, move the lambs onto ***Sheep Performa Lamb Grower***.

Our approach to young lamb nutrition, particularly the ***Sheep Performa Lamb Creep*** draws not only on our knowledge of calf feed, but also pig nutrition, which helps to maximise growth rates, while at the same time, minimise health issues:

- Digestibility of the ingredients is key to both promoting growth and minimising the risk of digestive upsets, such as scours.
- Amino acid content of the feeds is far more important than overall crude protein levels for feed digestibility and optimal lamb growth.
- Carbohydrate fractions as opposed to outright energy are important considerations.
- The inclusion of an acidifier in the ***Sheep Performa Lamb Creep*** (standard practice in baby pig feeds) to help promote optimal conditions in the intestine for enzymatic action, which leads to ideal break down and digestion of amino acids and starch, and also as proven tool to minimise scouring.
- A unique yeast metabolite is included to help control pathogens, such as Salmonella and E coli. The chosen product also has proven benefits for rumen papillae development, dry matter intake, improved growth rates and frame size
- We commonly use an osmolyte in young ruminant diets, as it has benefits for:
 - gut integrity
 - hydration
 - acts as a methyl donor
 - spares methionine (a limiting amino acid)



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- Macro and trace mineral nutrition is included as per the accepted literature. The trace mineral premix used in this diet also includes organic trace minerals for better mineral availability
- A product containing a unique combination of essential oils, is included in the **Sheep Performa Lamb Creep** as it has demonstrated efficacy against salmonella and E coli. in pigs, poultry and ruminants (as well as palatability benefits).
- Molasses products are included to improve intakes and palatability.
- Starch levels may be moderated by including Maize or Peas in the diets because of its slow ruminal fermentation characteristics and higher post-ruminal starch digestion, which promotes greater glucose yield per kilogram of starch, which increases growth potential, while at the same time taking pressure of the developing rumen.
- Rumen buffering in the Lamb Grower, Feedlot and Summer Feedlot pellets is achieved using Acid Buf®, a natural product that buffers the rumen against pH change for longer than traditional buffers such as sodium bicarbonate or sodium bentonite.
- The combination of canola meal, soyabean meal, lupins, peas and beans are our preferred protein.
 - We can achieve cost-effective lysine delivery with this combination, with the canola supplying additional methionine and other important amino acids such as cysteine, threonine and tryptophan.
 - Canola meal is also a more cost-effective protein meal in the current market.
 - Synthetic amino acids included to ensure target amino acid levels are met and the diet is balanced in **Sheep Performa Lamb Creep**.
- Protection against urinary calculi in the Lamb Grower, Feedlot and Summer Feedlot pellets is provided by the inclusion of a urinary acidifier and balanced calcium and phosphorus levels.
 - Please note that **Sheep Performa Lamb Creep** does not contain a urinary acidifier or a rumen buffer, as it is designed to be fed to young lambs still running with the ewe.
- All four pellets in this program are free of Lasalocid sodium (Bovatec®) to meet the requirements of antibiotic-free feeding programs.

As per pig and poultry diets used in similar scenarios, we are not adverse to spending money in the **Sheep Performa Lamb Creep** to achieve some health benefits, understanding that by doing this, the weighted cost will be lower over the entire program through improved growth and reduced health associated losses and costs (eg vet and drug costs).

While we have mentioned this earlier, we cannot stress this enough, formulating feed for health and formulating feed for growth are intrinsically linked.

When digestive upsets occur, the compromised gut function leads to reduced nutrient uptake, and growth is reduced, from both the reduced nutrient uptake, and the immune response associated with the challenge.



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Fibre and diet management

Every pellet in this program is a concentrate and must be fed with a source of effective fibre – none is a complete feed. The fibre on offer will impact rumen function, gut fill and VFA yield:

- In the creep and grower stages, a good quality legume hay such as vetch or lucerne is an excellent fibre source – highly palatable, encouraging early intake, and adding protein at the point where the young lamb is laying down frame. Pasture can also supply part of the Stage 2 requirement.
- Maximum growth rates in the feedlot phase will be achieved feeding barley or wheaten straw as the fibre source. Straw is preferred over legume hay here – the objective is to maximise pellet intake, and a highly palatable hay will simply substitute for pellets.
- At Stage 4, good quality high protein hay can replace or supplement straw to support intake at heavy weights.

The proposed feeding program for your scenario is:

The program growth rates are for 1st Cross Lambs. The program is the same for Merinos and 2nd Cross Lambs where you may find different growth rates. Merinos may benefit from additional protein in the diet.

	STAGE 1 CREEP	STAGE 2 GROWER
LAMBS AGE / WEIGHT	Birth to weaning, 20 - 22kgs LWT.	Introduce when lambs eat 500g/ head/day of Sheep Performa Lamb Creep to 30kgs LWT
TARGETED GROWTH RATE	200 grams/lamb/day	230 grams/lamb/day
RATION	Sheep Performa Lamb Creep Ad-lib in a creep feeder, alongside ewe's milk and available pasture Good quality hay – vetch or lucerne – or cereal straw	Sheep Performa Lamb Grower Ad-lib following Sheep Performa Lamb Creep , or following the 7 day induction program if not previously fed Good quality hay – vetch or lucerne – pasture, or cereal hay or straw
PRESENTATION	Pellets	Pellets
ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS	Ration drives rumen papillae development, dry matter intake and gut health, and supports earlier weaning Contains no urinary acidifier or rumen buffer Move to Sheep Performa Lamb Grower once intakes exceed 500g/head/day	18% CP and 11.0MJ ME support frame and muscle growth with minimal fat deposition
HOT WEATHER OPTION	N/A	Manage shade, water and feeding times – speak with our Nutritionists



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	STAGE 3 FEEDLOT	STAGE 4 FINISHER
LAMB AGE / WEIGHT	30kgs to 50kgs LWT (approx. 60 days)	50kgs to 65kgs LWT (approx. 50 days)
TARGETED GROWTH RATE	330 grams/lamb/day	300 grams/lamb/day
RATION	<i>Sheep Performa Feedlot</i> Ad-lib from self-feeders (following the 7 day induction if not currently fed) Approx. 1.4kgs/head/day Cereal straw – ad-lib	<i>Sheep Performa Lamb Grower</i> Ad-lib from self-feeders (following the 7 day induction if not currently fed) Lucerne or vetch hay, or good quality pasture – ad-lib
PRESENTATION	Grain Blend or Pellets	Pellets
ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS	Energy lifts to 12.0MJ ME and protein eases to 16% CP to drive efficient, cost-effective gain Urinary acidifier and Acid Buf® included	Protein returns to 18% CP to maintain lean muscle deposition and limit excess fat cover at heavy weights Urinary acidifier and Acid Buf® included
HOT WEATHER OPTION	<i>Sheep Performa Summer Feedlot</i>	Manage shade, water and feeding times – speak with our Nutritionists



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Induction onto Sheep Performa Feedlot

Getting lambs safely onto full feed is the most important part of a feedlot program. The schedule below steps lambs up to ad-lib over seven days. The same schedule can be used to introduce Sheep Performa Lamb Grower at Stage 2.

Lambs start on 250 grams/head/day and step up by 50 grams each day to 500 grams. The day after they reach 500 grams, feed the 500 gram ration again and open the self-feeders at the same time – the familiar trough feed keeps lambs settled while they find the feeders.

Cereal hay is offered ad-lib from day one and stays in front of the lambs until two days after the feeders are opened. From there, as the bale runs low, begin the changeover to cereal straw – this typically happens progressively over a few days, which suits the lambs.

DAY	<i>Sheep Performa Feedlot</i> (per head/day)	EFFECTIVE FIBRE ON OFFER
Day 1	250 grams	Cereal hay – ad-lib
Day 2	300 grams	Cereal hay – ad-lib
Day 3	350 grams	Cereal hay – ad-lib
Day 4	400 grams	Cereal hay – ad-lib
Day 5	450 grams	Cereal hay – ad-lib
Day 6	500 grams	Cereal hay – ad-lib
Day 7	500 grams + Open the feeders	Cereal hay – ad-lib
Day 8	Ad-lib from the feeders	Cereal hay – ad-lib
Day 9	Ad-lib from the feeders	Begin the changeover – start cereal straw as the hay bale runs low
Day 10 onwards	Ad-lib from the feeders	Cereal straw – ad-lib. Barley or wheaten straw

- **Do not step up until every lamb in the pen is eating pellets.**
- **At each stage of the induction, satisfy yourself that the whole mob is on feed – not just that the trough is empty.**
- **A pen average can look right while shy feeders eat nothing for several days and then gorge once they do start, which is where acidosis can start.**
- **If some lambs are not eating, hold at the current step until they are.**
- **Ensure the fibre source is accessible by the lambs.**



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Managing the induction

- Check that all lambs are eating at every step. Count the lambs on the trough at feeding, and look for lambs that are empty in the flank, standing off on their own, or still on the hay only.
- Provide enough trough space for every lamb in the pen to eat at once. Restricted trough access is the most common cause of trouble during induction – timid lambs miss out early, then gorge later.
- Feed at the same time each day. Where facilities allow, split the daily allocation across a morning and an afternoon feed for the first few days.
- Do not allow troughs to run empty and then over-fill them. Consistency matters more than the exact quantity.
- The cereal hay is doing two jobs during induction – maintaining rumen function, and giving lambs something familiar to eat while they learn the pellet. It must be genuinely ad-lib.
- Ensure unrestricted access to clean, fresh water at all times. Clean troughs daily, or more frequently under dusty conditions.
- Walk the pen every day and draft off any lambs hanging back, scouring, or standing away from the feed. If scouring appears across the mob, hold at the current step for two days rather than stepping up.
- Do not open the feeders on Day 7 unless the whole mob is eating its 500 gram ration. Hold the step-up until they are – opening ad-lib access to lambs that have not learnt the pellet is the highest risk point in the program.
- Lambs with prior grain or pellet experience will move through this schedule easily. Naive lambs, or lambs coming off a green pick, warrant an extra day at Day 3 and again at Day 6.
- Lambs already on ***Sheep Performa Lamb Grower*** need no induction – move them straight onto ***Sheep Performa Feedlot***. No special transition is required between Feedlot and Summer Feedlot either.
- The Acid Buf® rumen buffer and urinary acidifier in the pellet support the lamb through this period, but do not replace sound feeding management.

Thank you for taking the time to read this program.

If you have any questions regarding the products and services offered by Counterpoint Stockfeeds, please don't hesitate to give our Nutrition Team a call on 03 5453 2107.

Counterpoint Stockfeeds (CPS) believes the information contained in this document to be true and correct for the applications as described. Updates may be made to product specifications, usage guidelines, and/or ingredients used in these products.

Customers must seek advice from CPS if there is any doubt regarding the usage of products described. Subject to those terms implied by statute which cannot be excluded restricted or modified, no warranty of accuracy or reliability is given and no responsibility to the customer or any other person is accepted for errors or omissions howsoever arising, including matters arising through negligence by CPS, its Directors, employees or agents.

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