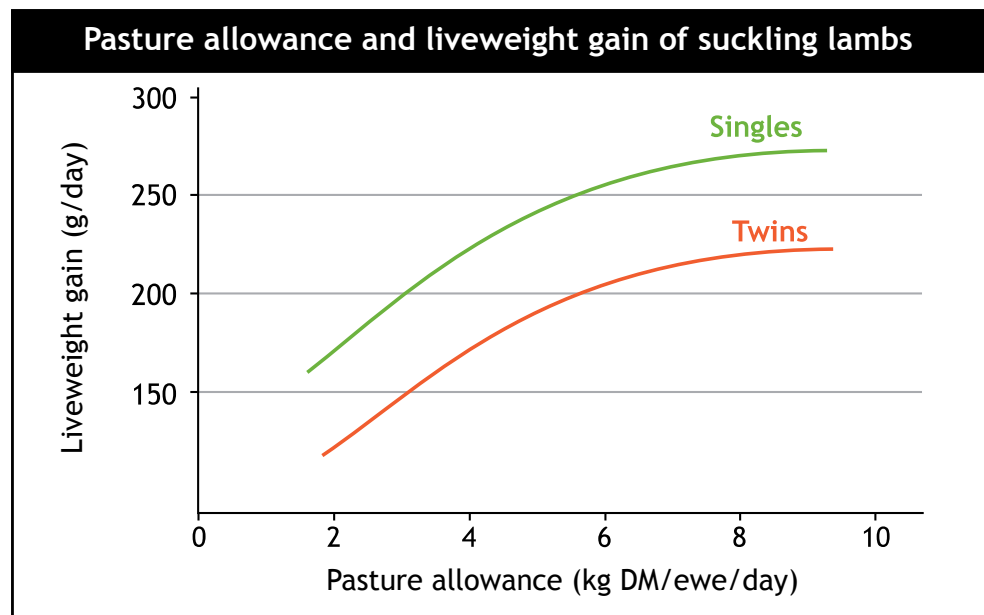


Feed quantity and lamb growth

Summary

- At lambing feed quantity directly affects lamb growth.
- When feed quality is generally good (March-October), feed quantity drives the performance of many livestock systems.

Effect on suckling lambs



Source: NZ Soc. of Animal Production. Publication No. 10, Rattray, 1987

At lambing in early spring feed quality is typically good, and feed quantity is the key driver of lamb growth. To achieve the best lamb growth, target pasture covers through lactation should be 1200 kg DM/ha+ (about 3 cm+ in height) for single lamb bearing ewes, and 1500 kg DM/ha+ (about 4 cm+) for ewes bearing multiple lambs.

Feed requirement of lambs 24-34 kg

Post weaning, feed quantity continues to be a key driver of lamb growth, as shown below.

Lamb growth rate (g/day)	100	200	300	400
Feed requirement (kg DM/day)	1.2	1.5	1.9	2.4

Source: A guide to improved lamb growth, NZ Sheep Council, 2000