

2004/W03



Producer Research Support

Elemental Chromium and Conception Rates in Sheep

Kojonup Sheep Group



The project

The overall aim of the project was to consistently achieve optimum potential lambing percentage - in this case, to eliminate any constraints to the best achievable conception rates in ewe flocks. Further knowledge of trace elements effects, specifically those in Maximin and particularly chromium, was the urgent aim of the project.

Objectives

1. Raise lambing percentage from 78% to 83% group average by the use of supplementation with Maximin E; and
2. Identify the element or elements responsible, together with the reason for the effect (Yr 2, with CSIRO/ Department of Agriculture).

What was done

Eight trial sites were treated, with ewes scanned and tagged. Trial ewes were treated in the week or so before joining commenced. Both Maximin and Maximin E (with chromium) were tested. On one farm, chromium alone was also tested. There were commonly between 200 and 500 ewes in each test group.

What happened?

Overall we can be fairly confident there are no significant differences due to the various treatments. A single very large difference identified is certainly intriguing, but was confined to one of the two mobs tested on that farm.

The Kojonup Sheep Group set out to consistently achieve optimal potential lambing percentage. No significant differences were identified in the different treatment regimes and the project was abandoned due to lack of results.

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Discussion

Because the first trials of chromium treatments failed to show any difference, the program coordinator deemed there was no value in completing the program. The practicability of blood testing animals in order to develop more conclusive results could also be investigated.

Producer Research Support

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Contact Gerald Martin -
Producer Research Support Coordinator.

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