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Introduction

Background

This book is provided to record information about the ewe and lamb(s) at lambing, weighing, health recording, mating and pregnancy scanning, including creating parentage information and recording some performance traits on the ewe and the lamb(s). In the next few pages is summary information on recording ewes and lambs for each column in the lambing sheet. Codes for particular traits of the ewe and lamb(s) are presented.

It is important that you submit your lambing information to Sheep Ireland as soon as possible and definitely before the April 30th deadline. Please call LambPlus if you need any help with this on 023 88 20 451

Flock DQI

Each flock receives a flock Data Quality Index (DQI) score. This rates each flock on the quality, quantity and the timeliness of the data submitted to Sheep Ireland over the previous 365 days. A high DQI will be required in order to enter the Sheep Ireland Elite €uroStar Multi-breed Ram Sale. You can check your flock DQI on your Sheep Ireland account homepage.

Flock Notebook User Guide

**It is essential that all sections of this notebook are completed for each individual lambing event*

Dam ID: Record the lambing ewes' official identification. Record the tag number along with relevant check letter. Record the pedigree ID also if available. Recording both ids at lambing will eliminate the need to read ewes tags at a later date. Sheep Ireland need both ewe ID's.

Lamb ID: Breeders need to tag at birth with the permanent department tag. Ensure that the full id is recorded – including check letter. Double tagging is essential to identify lambs in the event of single tags being lost.

Date of Birth: Accurate dates of birth are crucial to the success of any breed improvement program.

Sex of Lamb: Ensure correct sex is recorded as both genders are evaluated slightly differently, due to the 'sex effect' – i.e. a male lambs ability to outperform a female counterpart. The sex of dead lambs must be recorded also.

Lamb Status: Alive/Dead. It is of critical importance that all dead lambs are recorded at lambing time. In order to make significant gain in the area of 'numbers of lambs born' and 'lamb survivability', we need to build up accurate pictures of the performance of various bloodlines in this area.

Ewe Lambing Difficulty: Please reference Ewe Lambing Difficulty Table on page 8 for information on how to record lambing difficulty.

Birth weight: Must be recorded as they enable us to very accurately measure the individual performance of each lamb. It is also important to record the birth weight of dead lambs.

Sire ID: Absolutely critical to the evaluation. In the event of uncertainty as to the identity of a particular sire, please record the sire ID as 'unknown'. Guessing Sire identity will have dramatically negative effects on our evaluations and ultimately reduce any potential genetic gain.

Lamb Rearing Code: There are many possible lamb rearing situations that can occur on sheep farms. Highlight lambs that are fostered (FO) or bottle reared/bottle assisted (BO). Once this information is recorded on our system, the evaluations will adjust to reflect the various different scenarios. **For example:** A ewe lambs down with a single lamb, and receives another foster lamb. The reduced performance of the original single lamb will not reflect negatively on its evaluation as it will be recorded as a single lamb reared as a twin lamb, the same applies for other possible situations.

Group: Extremely important to the €uro-Star evaluation. Breeders need to highlight if there are different management groups on the farm. **For example** if half the twin bearing ewes were lambed out doors and the other half lambed indoors, this is likely to have an effect on ewe lambing performance and therefore needs to be accounted for by highlighting that these animals are in different management groups. If all sheep on the farm are being managed in a similar way, then management group recording can be ignored.

Prolasped Womb: Please reference page 56 for information on how to record Prolapsed Womb.

Lamb Vigour: Measuring how active a lamb is at birth and how quick the lamb is ‘up to suck’ after lambing. All lambs should be scored individually.

Lamb Vigour	**Description**
1. Very Poor	Lamb still not standing after 60 minutes.
2. Poor	Standing within 60 minutes.
3. Average	Standing within 30 minutes.
4. Good	Standing within 10 minutes.
5. Very Good	Standing within 5 minutes.

Ewe Mothering-Ability: Measuring how interested a ewe is in her lambs and how protective she is of her lambs after lambing.

Mothering-Ability	**Description**
1. Very Poor	Ewe has no interest in her lamb.
2. Poor	Ewe stands well away and is slow to lick the lamb.
3. Average	Ewe licks the lamb and follows the lamb to the lambing pen.
4. Good	Ewe licks the lamb, is protective and follows closely to lambing pen.
5. Very Good	Ewe is very protective, licks lamb immediately, follows lamb very close and bleats for her lamb.

Ewe Milk: Measuring how milky a ewe is at **lambing time**.

Ewe Milk	**Description**
1. Very Poor	Ewe has no milk at lambing time.
2. Poor	Ewe has very little milk and not a sufficient amount to feed her lambs adequately.
3. Average	Ewe has just enough milk to feed her lambs at lambing.
4. Good	Ewe has an adequate amount of milk to feed her lambs very well.
5. Very Good	Ewe has an abundance of milk, more than her lambs can consume.

Managing animal identification

The accurate identification of recorded animals is essential for several reasons.

- Accurate identification is critical to ensure that the correct performance information is linked to the appropriate animal.

- The identification of lambs to their sire and dam is essential in order to build a robust pedigree. Pedigree is very important, especially for traits that are poorly inherited (such as survival). Performance information from relatives helps to build up a picture of genetic merit, when the performance of individual animals is heavily clouded by random environmental events (grassland management, feeding, farm location etc).

- Knowledge of pedigree is important to manage matings to avoid problems associated with inbreeding.

When recording ID:

- Record the lamb(s) beside the dam identity.

- **RECORD LAMBS ID CAREFULLY – ensure that the full id is recorded, including the check letter!**

When Tagging Lambs:

- Wait until the lamb is fully dry, well fed and very strong, usually 12-24 hours after birth.
- Spray the ear with disinfectant after tagging.
- If tagging indoors, always have a good clean bed for lambs after tagging so it doesn't pick up an infection.

Recording lambs

A lot of important information can be recorded when a lamb is first handled. Make sure you keep full records for every lamb born:

- Each lamb is recorded against its **birth dam**. You will only have to write the sire tag in at lambing if the sire is different from that recorded at mating, but it is a good idea to record it regardless.

- Each lamb needs a **birth date**. Sheep Ireland adjusts performance measurements to remove the effect of differences in age - e.g. weaning weights are adjusted to accurately compare the growth of the first and the last lambs born.

- Each lamb needs to have sex recorded, for performance adjustment and to separate the sexes for reporting purposes. Where lambs are born dead, it is important to record sex where this can be determined. **Sex codes are presented below.** For many later measurements, adjustments need to be made for sex as part of the genetic evaluation statistical process.

- Dead lambs need to be recorded but obviously need not be given a tag number. Sheep Ireland must know about dead lambs to determine birth rank for surviving lambs and for genetic evaluation of lamb survival as an economically important trait. The "lamb status code" should be recorded to identify the lambs that die. **Lamb status codes are presented below.** In this recording book dead lambs should have "DEAD" entered in the lamb tag section and a dead status assigned. ***Lambs that die after birth should be recorded also, however you should highlight these deaths as different to deaths at lambing (ie. lambs that live for a number of days). In these instances record the date of death.**

- Each lamb should have a birth weight recorded. This provides useful information which can be linked to lamb survival and lambing difficulty.

Lamb sex codes

Lamb sex code	**Description**
M	Male
F	Female

Lamb status codes

Lamb Status Code	**Description**
A	Alive
D	Dead

During the CPT, Sheep Ireland use pen boards made from white corrie board (A4 size) to keep track of all lambing information. The labels are written in permanent marker, while the performance data is written using a whiteboard marker so that it can be easily cleaned of once permanently recorded and reused. Please reference picture below.

Ewe No : 00123A DOB: DD/MM/YY

Lambing Difficulty: 3 (Slight Pull)
Mothering Ability: 4 (Good Mohter)
Lamb Vigour: 3 (Average - Standing within 30 mins)
Ewe Milk: 1 (Very poor Milk)

Comment: Ewe has Mastitis - marked for culling

Ewe lambing difficulty

The key is to be consistent when scoring a group of sheep and for these sheep to have been run under similar conditions. The level of lambing difficulty can be defined based on the level of intervention required at lambing, and can be categorised into the following 4 discrete groups:

Lambing Difficulty	**Description**
1. Unassisted	Ewe lambed down totally unassisted
2. Voluntary Assistance	The lamb was pulled for convenience purposes, if the lambs chances of survival were increased due to human intervention then this would be a score 3 (Slight Assistance)
3. Slight Assistance	There was no adverse impact on the ewe or lamb but the lambs chances of survival was increased due to human intervention – (reverse presentation/leg back ect).
4. Significant Assistance	A prolonged intervention by farmer and/or vet, and/or noticeable subsequent impact on ewe and/or lamb performance. Without human intervention a dead ewe and/or lamb would have been the likely outcome.

Lamb rearing codes

Sheep Ireland uses codes for lambs that are reared by a means other than normal. When filling in the lamb rearing fate column the following are important points.

- Some lambs need a ‘lamb rearing code” to indicate that they are something other than normal lambs reared by their birth dam e.g. fostered or bottle- reared.
- When a lamb is fostered on, record it against the dam that is the birth (genetic) mother, and write the tag of the foster mother in the Dam ID column ***(in the box marked F/S)*** alongside the lamb. Sheep Ireland needs to know about this in order to take into account how milky each ewe is for example
- If the lamb is an **ET lamb**, record it against the dam that is the genetic mother, and write the tag of the surrogate mother in the Dam ID column (in the box marked F/S) alongside the lamb.
- For lambs with no “lamb rearing code” it will be assumed that they are raised by their dam normally.

Lamb rearing codes

Lamb Rearing code	**Description**
FO	Fostered
BR	Bottle reared
ET	ET progeny

Recording ewe groups (ewe management)

The way in which an animal grows and develops is influenced by a number of factors - feeding, disease, climate and management (collectively called the environment) and its genetic merit. Only this last element - genetic potential - is passed on to the next generation.

An example of where management groups might be used is where all the ewes in lamb to one sire were lambed outdoors and all the ewes in lamb to the second sire were lambed indoors, this would be recorded as different groups as the performance of the two groups of ewes is likely to be affected by their environments and this must be adjusted for before comparing sires.

If there are no separate groups then you may leave this section blank, and we will assume all ewes were treated the same.

Traits to record this year

Mating/Serve Information
Lambing data - As outlined in the previous pages
Barren/Empty ewes
40 Day weights (weigh all lambs between 20 – 65 days of age)
100 Day/wean weights (weigh all lambs between 65-120 days of age)
150 Day/scan weights (weigh all lambs between 121-180 days of age)
Lamb Vigour Score
Ewe Mother Ability Score
Ewe Milk Score
Muscle and Fat Depth
Ewe Mature Weights
Health Recording
Pregnancy Scanning Records

In order to get a good flock data quality index all the above should be submitted as accurately and as quickly as possible to Sheep Ireland

Dam ID (F)Foster Dam ID (S)Surrogate Dam ID	Sire ID	Date of Birth	Lambing Difficulty	Lamb Status	Lamb NSIS ID (Tag No.)	Lamb Ped ID/ Management No.	Sex of Lamb	Birth Weight (kg)	Lamb Rearing Code	Group	Lamb Vigour	Mothering-Ability	Ewe Milk
NSIS (Dept Tag) 01234A	*NSIS (Dept Tag)* 0124A	2/1	2	A	0457B	001	M	4.7	N	1	4	4	3
Ped ID ABC12001	*Ped ID* Rossi			D		002	F	5.5	N	1			
F/S													
NSIS (Dept Tag) 09876C	*NSIS (Dept Tag)* 02315B	2/1	3	A	0458D	003	F	5.0	F	2	2	3	1
Ped ID XYZ13012	*Ped ID* Topper			A	0459F	004	F	5.5	B		4		
F/S ABC11014													
NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													

NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													
NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													
NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													

Notes:

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Lamb Sex Codes: M = Male, F = Female

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Lambing Difficulty: 1= Unassisted, 2= Voluntary Assistance, 3= Slight Assistance, 4= Significant Assitance

Dam ID (F)Foster Dam ID (S)Surrogate Dam ID	Sire ID	Date of Birth	Lambing Difficulty	Lamb Status	Lamb NSIS ID (Tag No.)	Lamb Ped ID/ Management No.	Sex of Lamb	Birth Weight (kg)	Lamb Rearing Code	Group	Lamb Vigour	Mothering-Ability	Ewe Milk
NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													
NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													
NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													

NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													
NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													
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Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
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Dam ID (F)Foster Dam ID (S)Surrogate Dam ID	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*	*Ped ID*	*F/S*	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*	*Ped ID*	*F/S*	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*	*Ped ID*	*F/S*
Sire ID	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*	*Ped ID*		*NSIS (Dept Tag)*	*Ped ID*		*NSIS (Dept Tag)*	*Ped ID*	
Date of Birth									
Lambing Difficulty									
Lamb Status									
Lamb NSIS ID (Tag No.)									
Lamb Ped ID/ Management No.									
Sex of Lamb									
Birth Weight (kg)									
Lamb Rearing Code									
Group									
Lamb Vigour									
Mothering-Ability									
Ewe Milk									

NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													
NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													
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Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
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Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													

NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													
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F/S													

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Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
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F/S													
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Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													

NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
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F/S													
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NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
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F/S													

NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
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Ped ID	Ped ID												
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Ped ID	Ped ID												
F/S													
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F/S													

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Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
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Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
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Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													

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Sire ID	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*	*Ped ID*		*NSIS (Dept Tag)*	*Ped ID*		*NSIS (Dept Tag)*	*Ped ID*	
Date of Birth									
Lambing Difficulty									
Lamb Status									
Lamb NSIS ID (Tag No.)									
Lamb Ped ID/ Management No.									
Sex of Lamb									
Birth Weight (kg)									
Lamb Rearing Code									
Group									
Lamb Vigour									
Mothering-Ability									
Ewe Milk									

NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
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NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
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Dam ID (F)Foster Dam ID (S)Surrogate Dam ID	Sire ID	Date of Birth	Lambing Difficulty	Lamb Status	Lamb NSIS ID (Tag No.)	Lamb Ped ID/ Management No.	Sex of Lamb	Birth Weight (kg)	Lamb Rearing Code	Group	Lamb Vigour	Mothering-Ability	Ewe Milk
NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													
NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													
NSIS (Dept Tag)	*NSIS (Dept Tag)*												
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Ped ID	*Ped ID*												
F/S													

Notes:

Refer to the front of notebook for Rearing codes and Group information

Lamb Sex Codes: M = Male, F = Female Lamb Status codes: A = Alive, D = Dead,

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LambPlus Weight Sheet

*Enter Date of Weighing Here				
Animal ID	40 Day Weight (20-65 Days)	Weaning Weight (66-120 Days)	Scanning Weight (121 - 180 Days)	*Group (1,2,3,etc)

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*Note on Group: Ensure that lambs managed under different conditions are identified under different groups. E.g Lambs being fed concentrates (Group 1) and lambs on grass only (Group2). This is the only way in which Sheep Ireland can fairly evaluate growth performance.

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Animal Remedies Record

Date of Administration	Animal Number	Animal Remedy Administered	Date of expiry of withdrawal period (if any)	Treatment code

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Health Recording

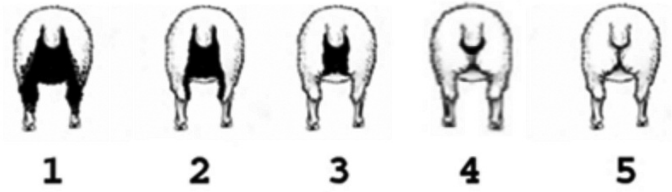
The best time to do a health check on ewes is at mating time, a health check can be done on lambs at anytime.

When recording incidences of **Lameness, Mastitis** and **Prolapsed Womb** it is sufficient to record **Yes** or **No**. Even if the animal only has a very mild case of lameness or mastitis it should be recorded as a yes.

When recording **Dag Scores** and **Body Condition Scores** there is a **scale of 1-5** implemented to distinguish between the different extremes of each trait. See tables and image below.

Condition Score	Description
1. Very Poor	Spinous processes are sharp, no fat cover and no muscle cover.
2. Poor	Little fat cover with spinous processes less sharp and light muscle cover.
3. Average	Spinous processes are smooth, moderate fat cover and muscle cover.
4. Good	Spinous processes are hard to detect, good fat cover, good muscle cover.
5. Very Good	Fat cover is dense, muscle very full and spinous processes are not detectable.

Dag Score	Description
1	Very Dirty
2	Dirty
3	Small Dags
4	Clean
5	Very Clean



Health Records Sheet

Enter Date of Health Check Here:

Animal ID	**Lameness**	**Mastitis**	**Prolapsed Womb**	**Dag**	**Condition**
CBA17002	*Y*	*N*	*N*	*5*	*4*
ZYX1609876	*N*	*Y*	*N*	*2*	*3*

Health Records Sheet

Enter Date of Health Check Here:

Animal ID	Lameness	Mastitis	Prolapsed Womb	Dag	Condition

Health Records Sheet

Enter Date of Health Check Here:

Animal ID	Lameness	Mastitis	Prolapsed Womb	Dag	Condition

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Health Records Sheet

Enter Date of Health Check Here:

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Mating Records

Ewe ID	**Service Sire**	**1st Serve**	**1st Repeat**	**2nd Repeat**
XYZ1500238	*ABC1702130*	*DD/MM/YYYY*		

Mating Records

Ewe ID	Service Sire	1st Serve	1st Repeat	2nd Repeat

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Mating Records

Ewe ID	Service Sire	1st Serve	1st Repeat	2nd Repeat

Pregnancy Scanning Records Sheet

Enter Date of Scanning Here:

Ewe ID	No. of Embryos	Days in Lamb
ABC17002	*2*	*75*
ZYX1601928	*3*	*82*

Pregnancy Scanning Records Sheet

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Notes