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StayDry Beta Breed™ delivers in the Riverina

With the number of lambs weaned per hectare being a key profit driver for Simon Coddington in the NSW Riverina, it's critical that he gets nutrition right during pre-joining and lambing.

Simon is livestock manager at both 'Coolabah' and 'The Vale' near Temora, running about 2200 Merino breeding ewes across the two properties. At Coolabah they run a commercial sheep breeding enterprise while The Vale is more focused on commercial research.

Either way the overarching goal is to achieve the highest possible profitability both per hectare and per head, from wool cut and the number of lambs weaned.

A dry year in 2018 highlighted the impact environmental factors can have on that performance. The important role of livestock nutrition in a farming system and the potential for nutrition products to improve profitability was reinforced for Simon through a discussion with a Grow® Livestock Agronomist during a visit to his property.

"We were approached by the Grow Livestock Agronomist who went through some products that would help us at key times of pre-joining and pre-lambing," Simon recalled.

"We first went through the Grow StayDry Beta Breed™ product for pre-joining, and the costs and benefits associated to that."



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Grow team members and Simon Coddington

StayDry Beta Breed is a waterproof lick powder nutritional supplement designed to improve fertility. It does this by alleviating deficiencies of macro minerals, trace minerals as well as key vitamins and carotenoids prior to joining.

After consulting with the Grow Livestock Agronomist, Simon set up an on-property StayDry Beta Breed trial with an aim to increase scanning percentages across his Merino ewe enterprise.

The trial involved 760 ewes split into age groups including maidens, two and three-year old's. Within age groups the ewes were then randomly split into a treatment group, which received StayDry Beta Breed in the trial and the control group, which didn't receive the product.

"StayDry Beta Breed is a load-up product so we fed 300 grams per head over the four weeks pre-joining to both the ewes and the rams" Simon says.



"I certainly think the StayDry Beta Breed product is easy to use. It has a known cost at the start so you know exactly what you're up for when you start the programme and the results and return on investment are outstanding."

"The ewes were probably in as good a condition as I'd like for joining, yet the results from the trial were certainly still outstanding. From the treatment group which had received StayDry Beta Breed, we had an increase of 13 per cent scanned lambs in those ewes compared to ewes in the control group which didn't receive the product."

"Getting those extra 13 per cent potential lambs at a cost of \$1.44 per head for the treatment led to a return on investment in StayDry Beta Breed of \$17.44 per head."

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Simon says the potential to increase lambing percentage by so much leads to both the ability to have more lambs on the ground as well as creating more selection pressure on young ewe lambs because simply put, there are more of them to choose from.

Critical to all farming operations is the need for efficiency, and Simon reports that StayDry Beta Breed delivers in this regard.

"It was simple to feed out to the stock. Basically we added a daily dose to both the ewes and rams through just a small plastic container in the paddock" Simon explains.

"I certainly think the StayDry Beta Breed product is easy to use. It has a known cost at the start so you know exactly what you're up for when you start the programme and the results and return on investment are outstanding - from a production and profitability point of view, it's great utilisation of the land."

"Given how dry the year was, and that the ewes were in as good a condition as we would want them, to get a return of that level in those circumstances is really exciting and I am looking forward to see how it could perform in a year when the condition of the stock isn't as optimal."

A critical element to the success of the StayDry Beta Breed trial Simon emphasises, is the role the Grow Livestock Agronomist staff played from first introducing him to the product and the potential role it could play in his farming system, through to on-going support throughout the process.

"The background provided and interaction between the Grow Livestock Agronomist, their nutritionists and vets, has certainly improved our farm system," Simon says.

"Importantly at an individual level, working with the Grow team has helped improve my knowledge in understanding the challenges we face and the solutions that we can achieve."



For more information call **1800 678 368** or visit **www.growsolutions.com.au**

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