

# Making life easier at the busiest time: The potential to breed for greater lamb vigour and better mothering ability

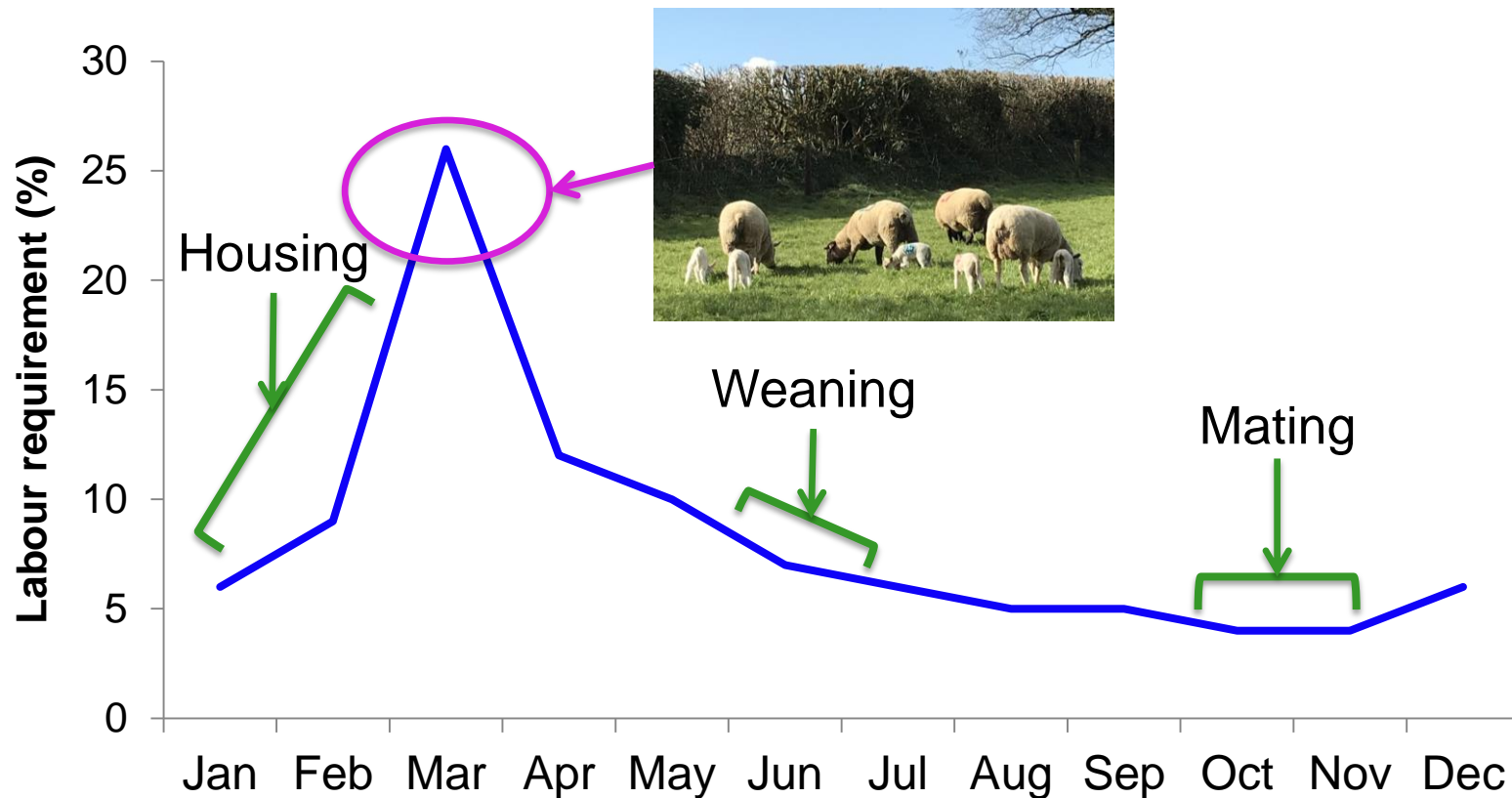


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*Sheep Ireland Conference*

*17<sup>th</sup> January 2020*

# Labour at lambing



# Lamb vigour - Trait description



1

2

3

4

5

Very poor

Poor

Average

Good

Very good



Standing  
within 60  
minutes

Standing  
within 30  
minutes

Standing  
within 10  
minutes



# Ewe mothering ability



1  
Very poor

2  
Poor

3  
Average

4  
Good

5  
Very good

No interest  
in lamb



Keeps  
well away  
from  
how to lick  
lamb(s)

Licks the  
lamb(s) &  
follows the  
lamb(s)

Licks the  
lamb(s), is  
protective &  
follows closely



Very active, licks  
lamb(s) immediately,  
follows the lamb(s)  
closely & bleats  
for lamb(s)

# Score prevalence (%)

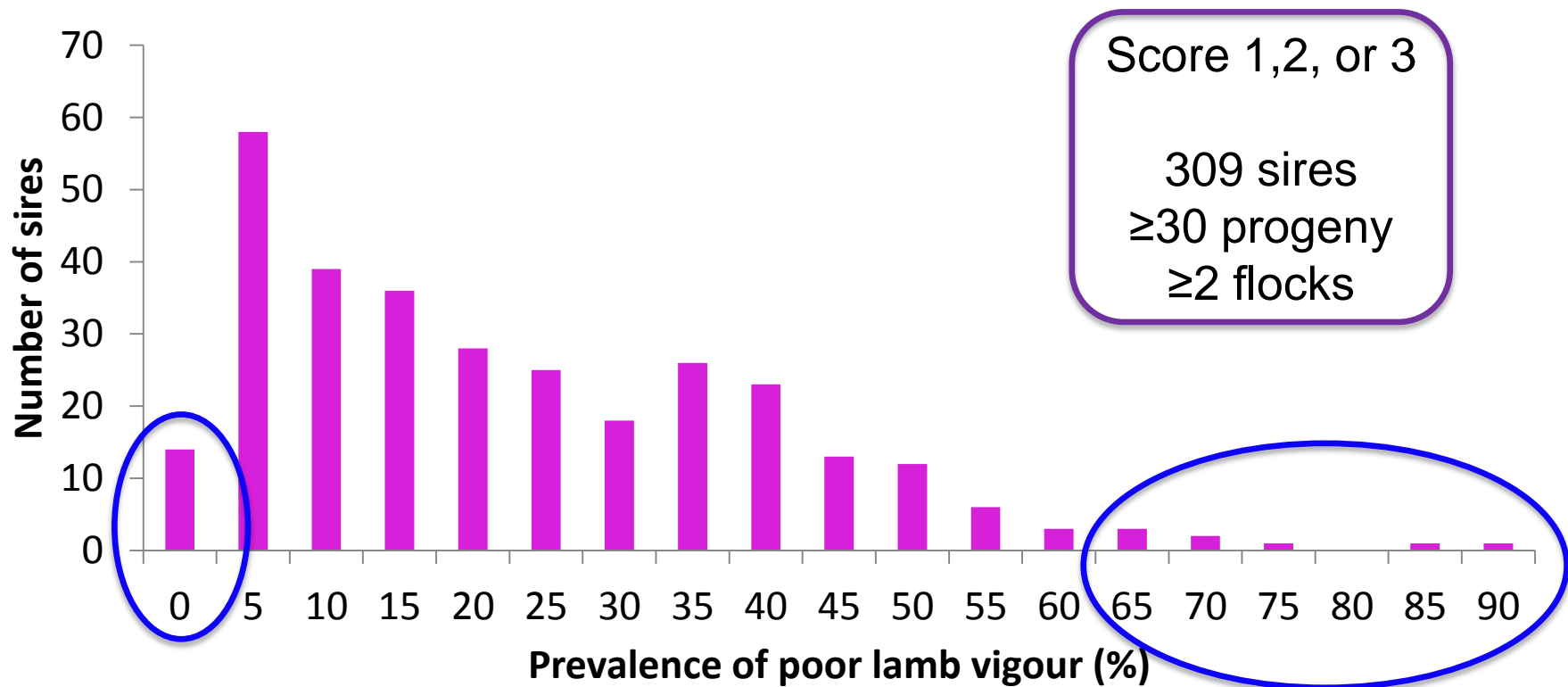


Score	Description	Lamb vigour
1	Very poor	2.2
2	Poor	2.0
3	Average	15.7
4	Good	38.2
5	Very good	41.9

# Breeding goal

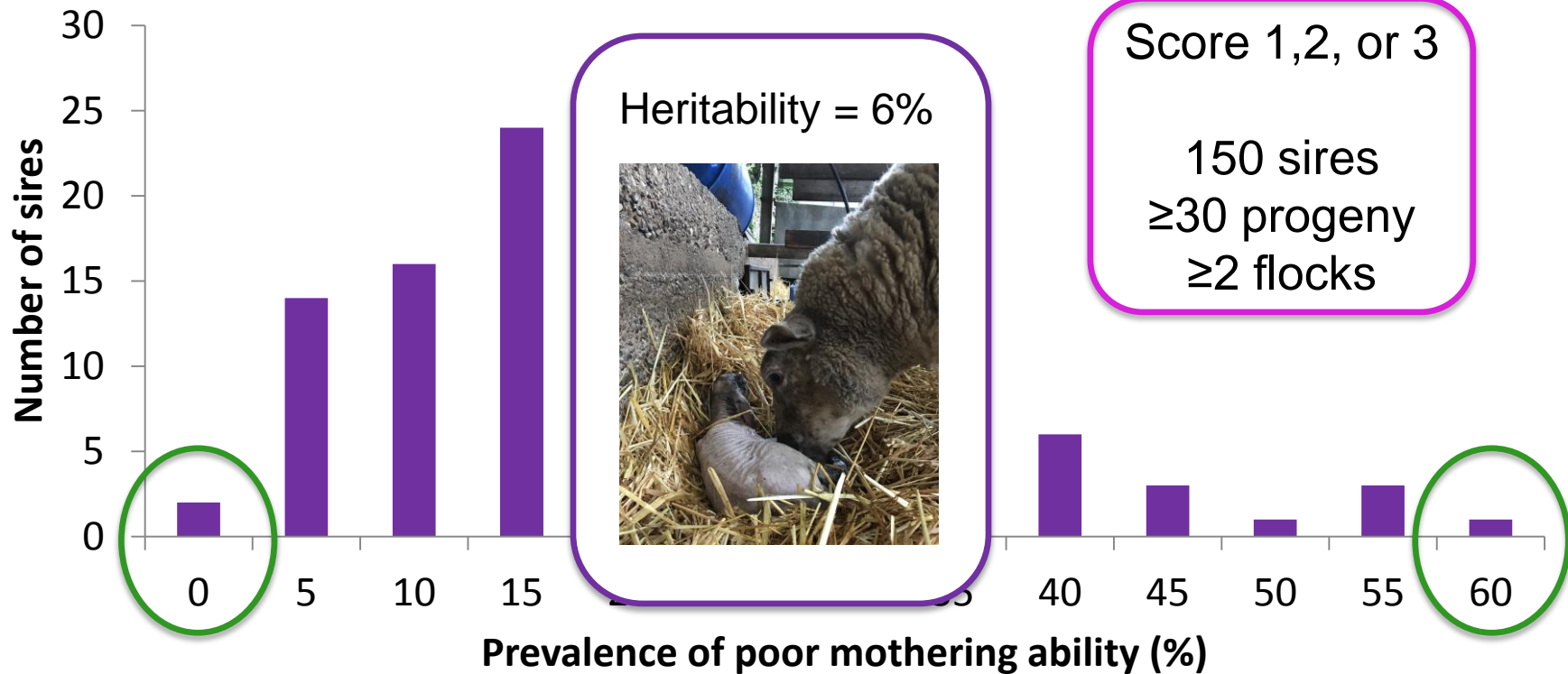
- For any trait to be included in a breeding goal – 3 criteria
  1. Socially or economically important
  2. Exhibit genetic variation
  3. Measurable on a large scale
    - Or correlated with a trait that is

# Sire prevalence – poor lamb vigour



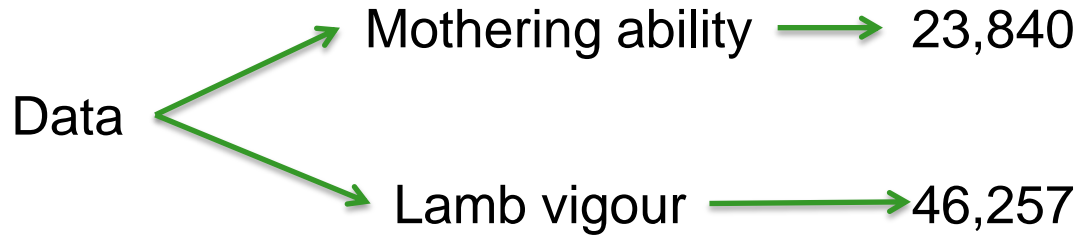
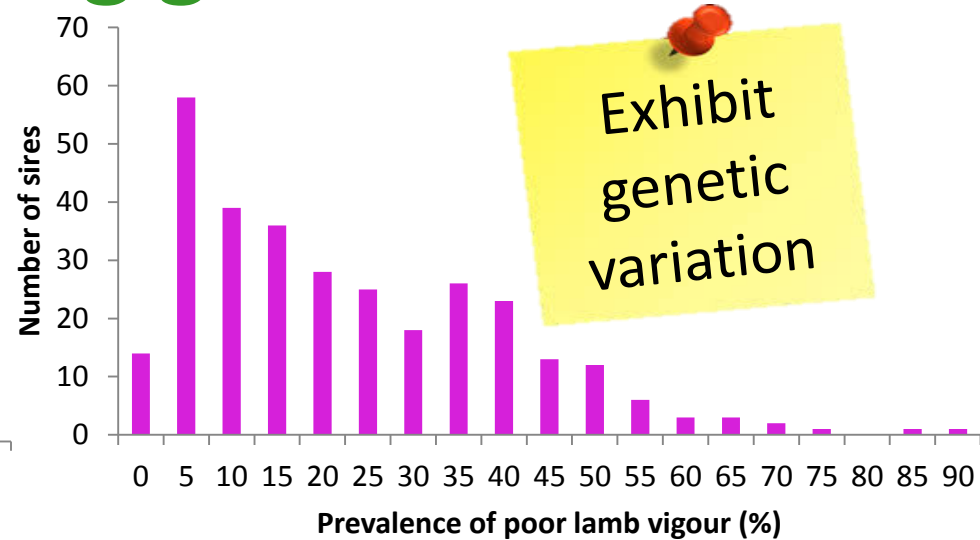


# Sire prevalence – poor mothering ability





# Breeding goal



Measurable  
on a large  
scale

# Recording the traits



PEN No. 1      DOB: 01/03  
TIME: 1:30 PM  
LD: 3      MD: 2  
LV: 1      MILK: 4  
Comments: 1 dead lamb, Lamb 123  
Fostered onto ewe 15615A in  
pen 12.  
PENNER BY: AM





# Conclusion



Trait	Terminal	Replacement
Days to slaughter	34.10%	10.75%
Carcase conformation	6.60%	2.08%
Carcase fat	12.68%	4.00%
Single lambing difficulty	2.11%	0.76%
Multiple lambing difficulty	1.14%	0.41%
Lamb survival	42.12%	15.21%
Health – Dagginess	1.15%	0.17%
Health - Lameness lamb	0.11%	0.02%
Health - Lameness ewe		0.04%
Maternal days to slaughter		10.96%
Maternal carcase conformation		2.53%
Maternal carcase fat		4.87%
Ewe mature weight		14.13%
Maternal lamb survival		20.49%
Maternal single lambing diff		0.21%
Maternal multiple lambing diff		0.11%
Number of lambs born		13.26%



Relationship between traits

Breeding values for individual animals

