

Early pregnancy feeding for sheep

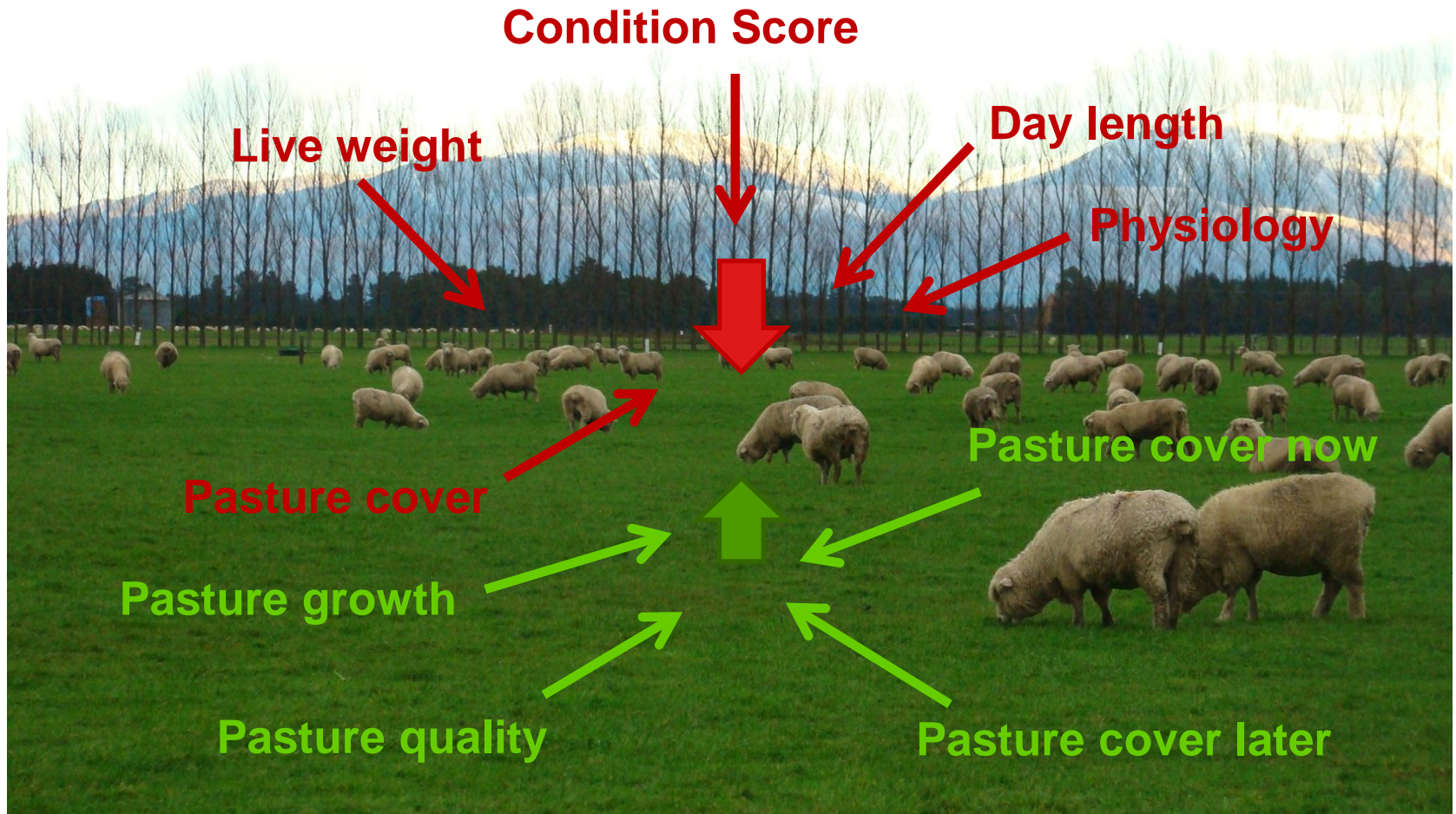
David Stevens, Randall Aspinall and John Scandrett
AgResearch Invermay, PGG Wrightson and
Scandrett Rural



Farming, Food and Health. **First**

*Te Ahuwhenua, Te Kai me te Whai Ora. **Tuatahi***





Early Pregnancy feeding

Who feed budgets?

Considerations to make?

- Who gets what?
- How much do they need?
- How much feed do I have on the farm?

- When should I start planning?
- What BCS profile should I aim for?
- What liveweight profile should I aim for?
- What outcome do I think I am going to get?

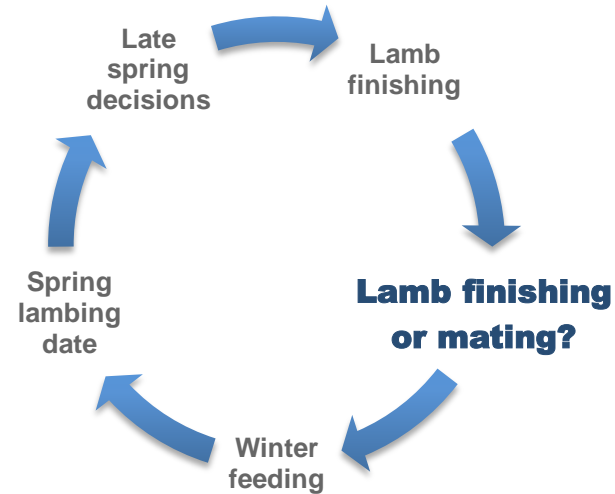
An annual cycle

Decisions to be made

When do the last of the lambs go?

Do I flush my ewes?

How much feed do I need to take into the winter?



Other Influences

Lambing percentage

Hogget mating

Ewe condition

Winter feed

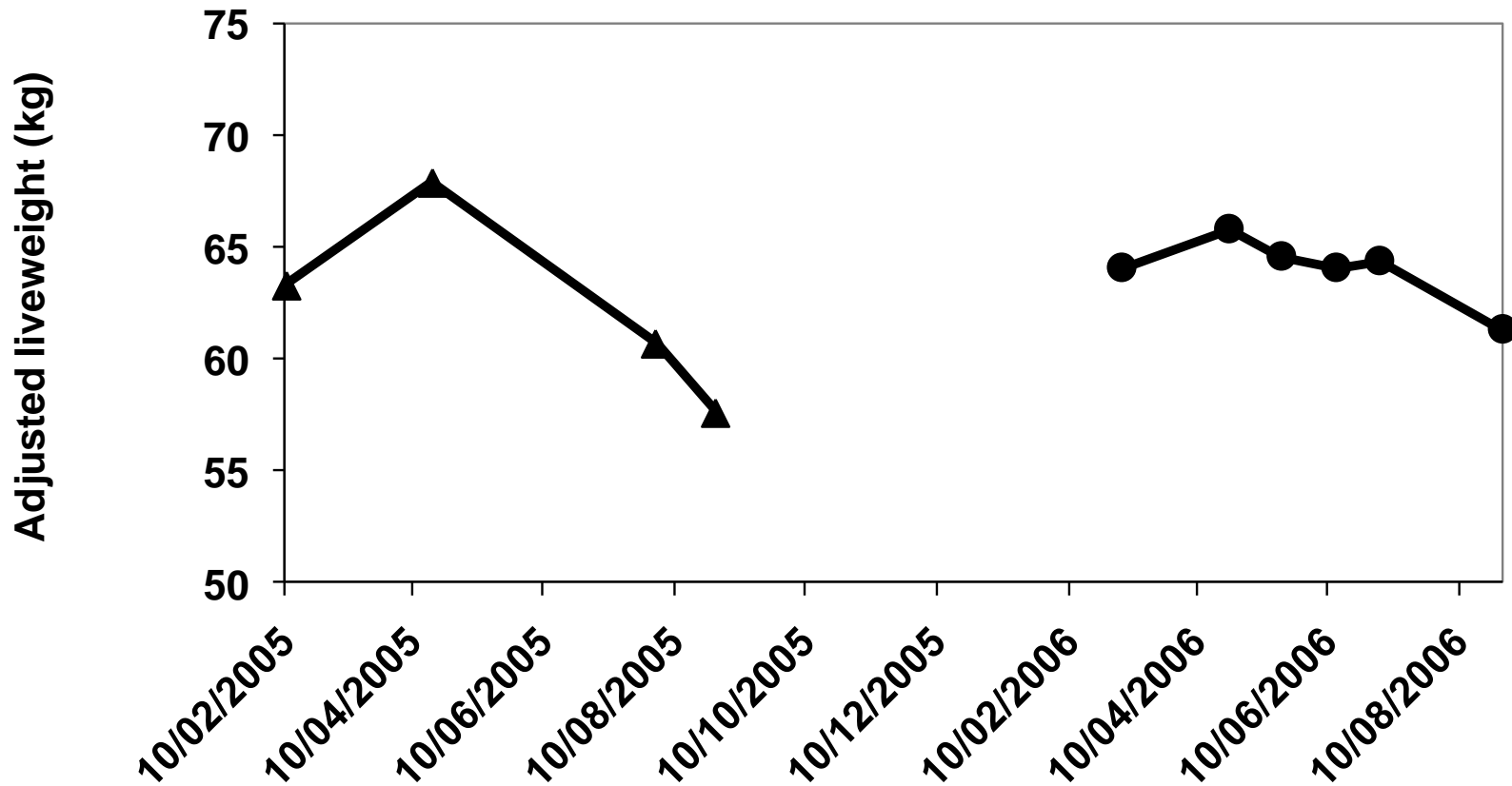
Ewe genetics



Understanding the trade-offs in winter feeding

A case study from South Otago

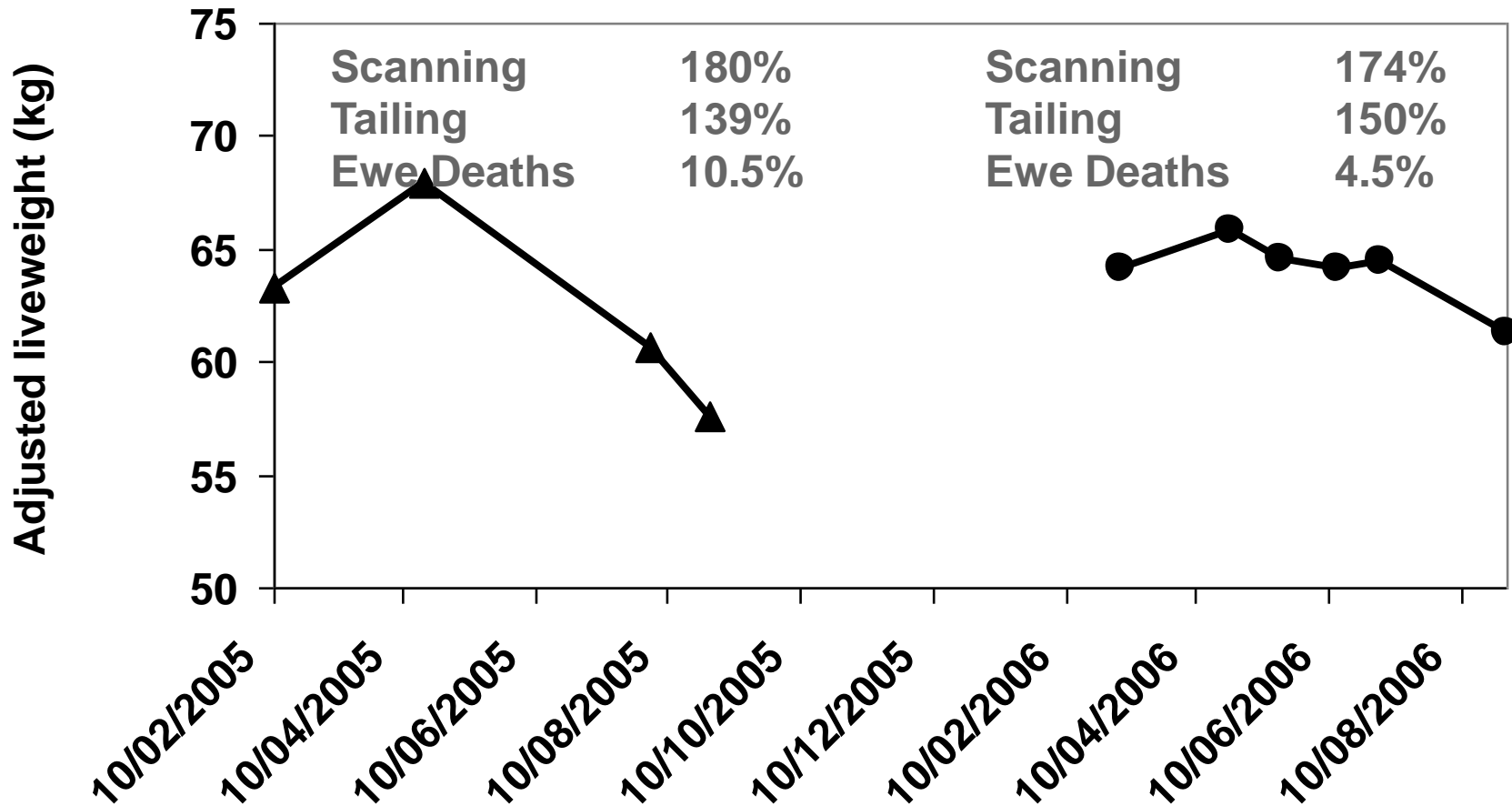
Mixed Age Twins Liveweight
(adj. Fleece & Conceptus wt)



Understanding the trade-offs in winter feeding

Changes in productivity

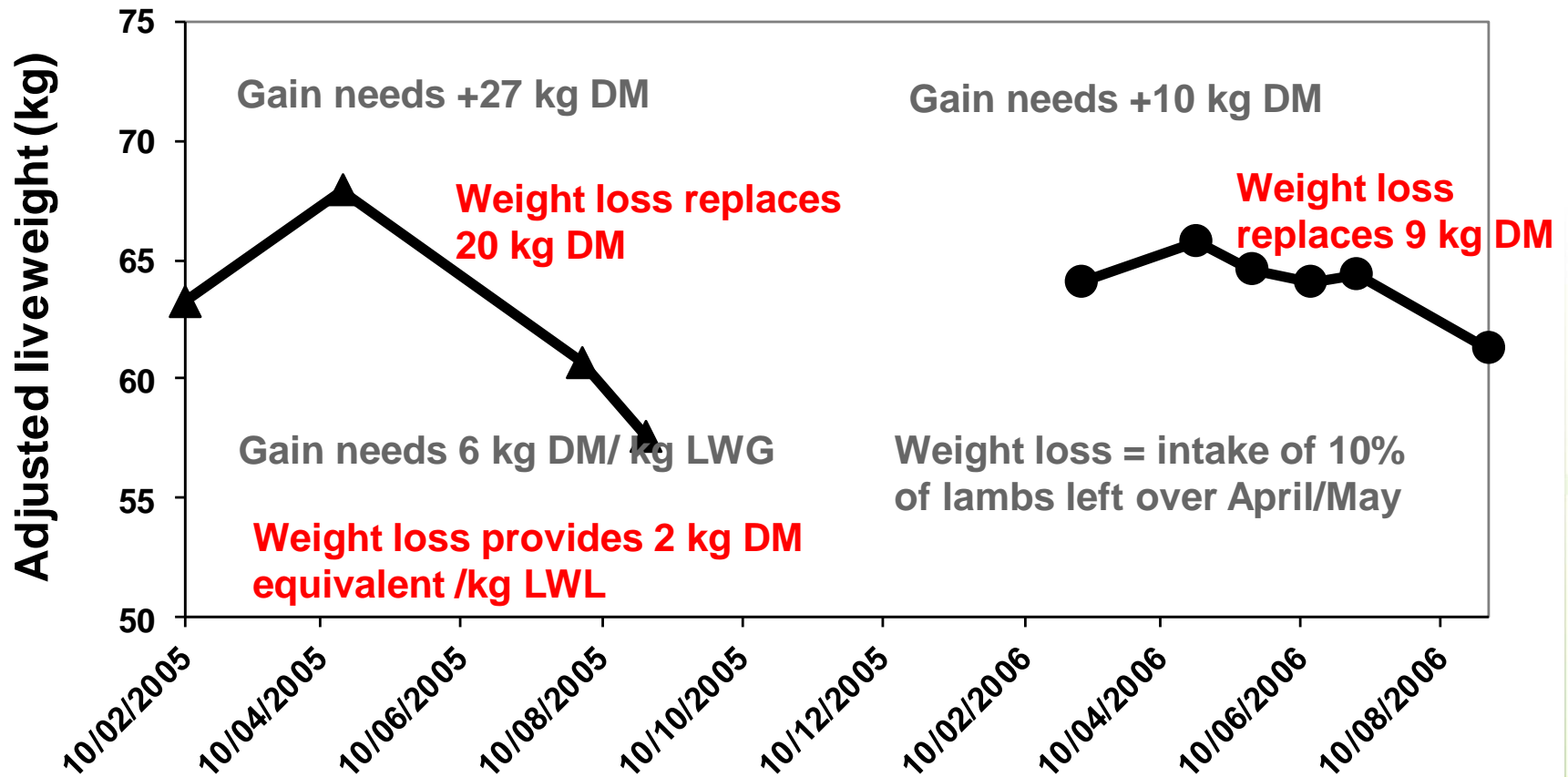
Mixed Age Twins Liveweight
(adj. Fleece & Conceptus wt)



Understanding the trade-offs in winter feeding

The relative values of feed and body condition

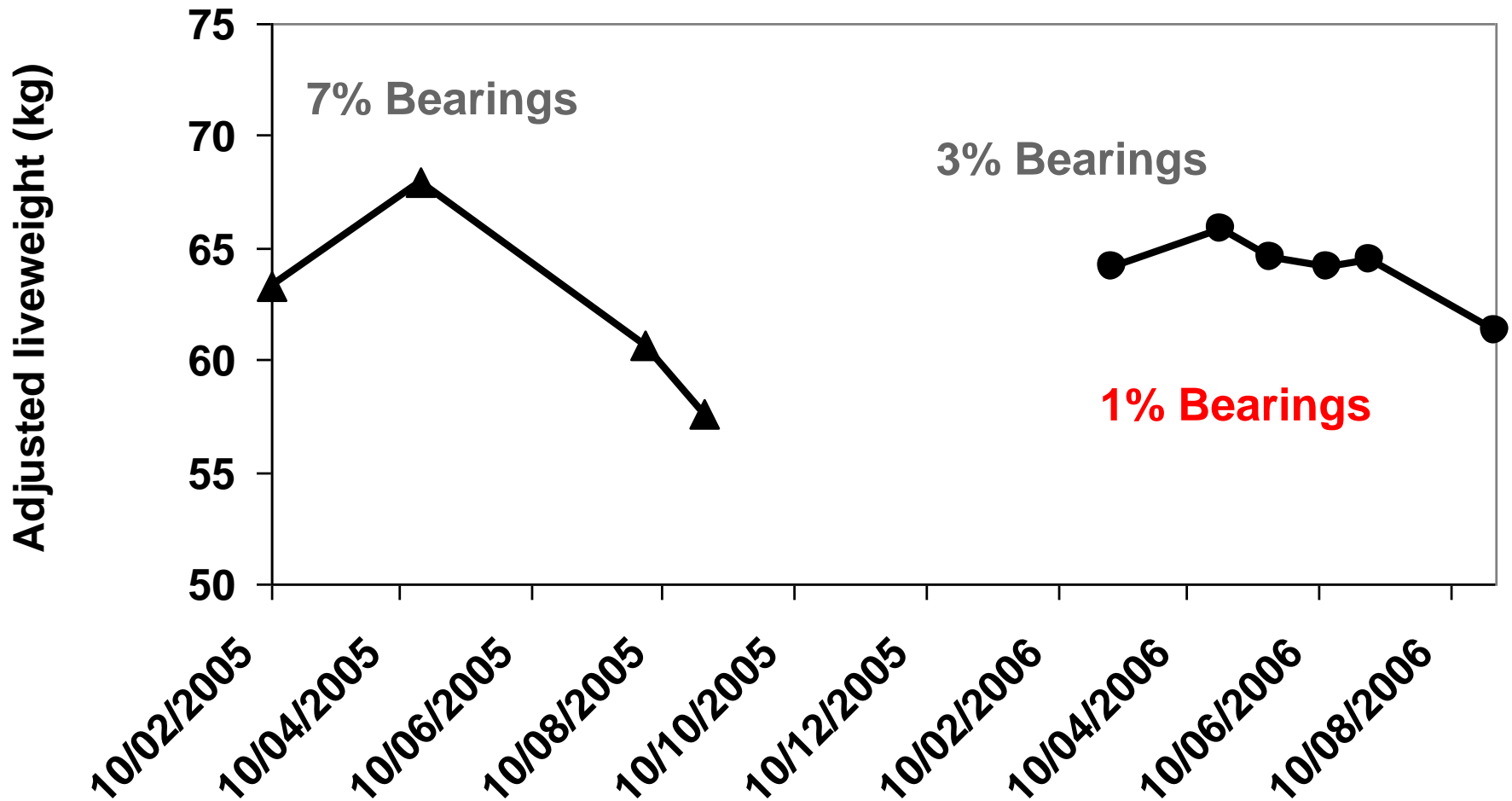
Mixed Age Twins Liveweight (adj. Fleece & Conceptus wt)



Understanding the trade-offs in winter feeding

Other benefits?

Mixed Age Twins Liveweight
(adj. Fleece & Conceptus wt)



Early pregnancy feeding

- Start planning early
- Consider the need for maintaining BCS
- Know the value of the feed compared to the need to use BCS as a buffer
- Early pregnancy feeding sets the scene for this seasons performance and lifetime performance
- Changing the pattern of feeding may help prevent metabolic problems

