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2010 International Year of Biodiversity



FACTORS AFFECTING LAMB SURVIVABILITY

FROM BIRTH TO WEANING



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GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- THE MAJORITY (70%) OF LAMB DEATHS OCCUR IN THE FIRST 2-3 DAYS AFTER BIRTH
- LOSE MORE THAN JUST THE LAMB

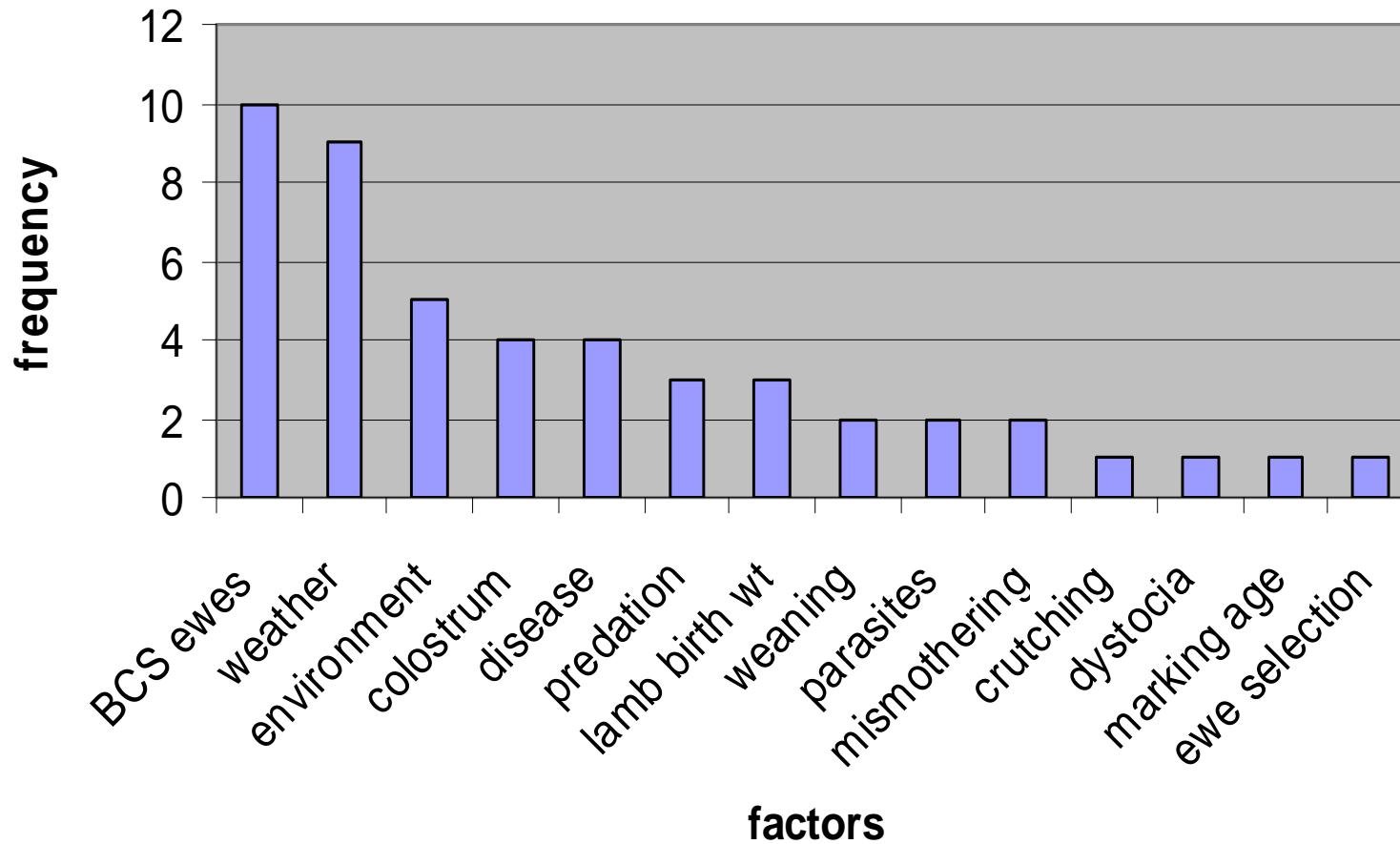


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Factors affecting lamb survival





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BODY CONDITION SCORE (BCS) OF EWES

- LINKED TO ALMOST EVERY OTHER FACTOR!
- LAMB SURVIVAL TO WEANING WAS GREATEST FOR LAMBS BORN TO DAMS OF GREATER BCS
- OPTIMUM BCS = 3



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BCS OF EWES

- DAYS 40-80 ENERGY TOWARDS PLACENTAL DEVELOPMENT
- LATER IN PREGNANCY ENERGY TOWARDS RAPID FOETAL GROWTH
- DAY 90 WOOL FOLLICLES DEVELOPING



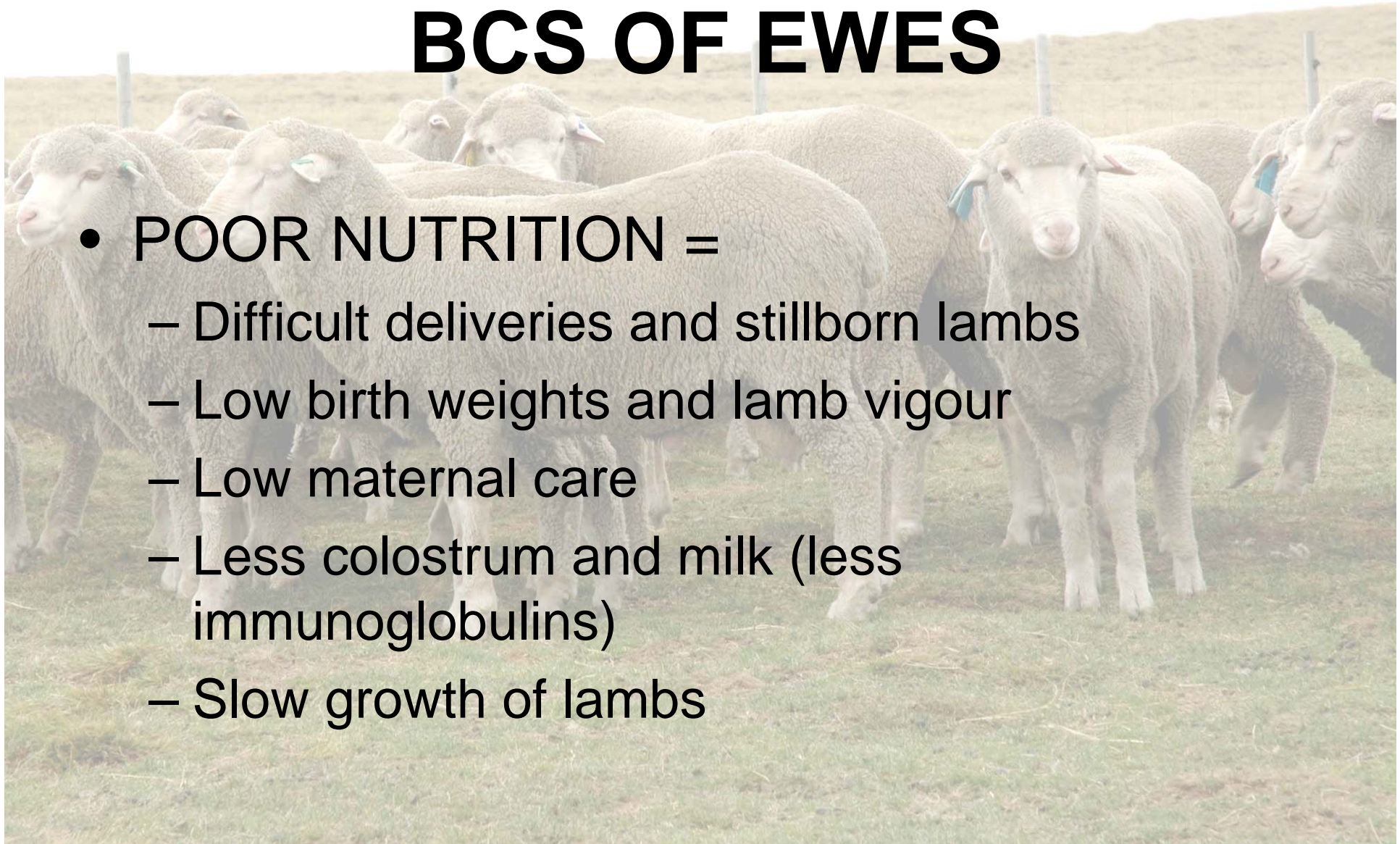
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BCS OF EWES

- POOR NUTRITION =
 - Difficult deliveries and stillborn lambs
 - Low birth weights and lamb vigour
 - Low maternal care
 - Less colostrum and milk (less immunoglobulins)
 - Slow growth of lambs





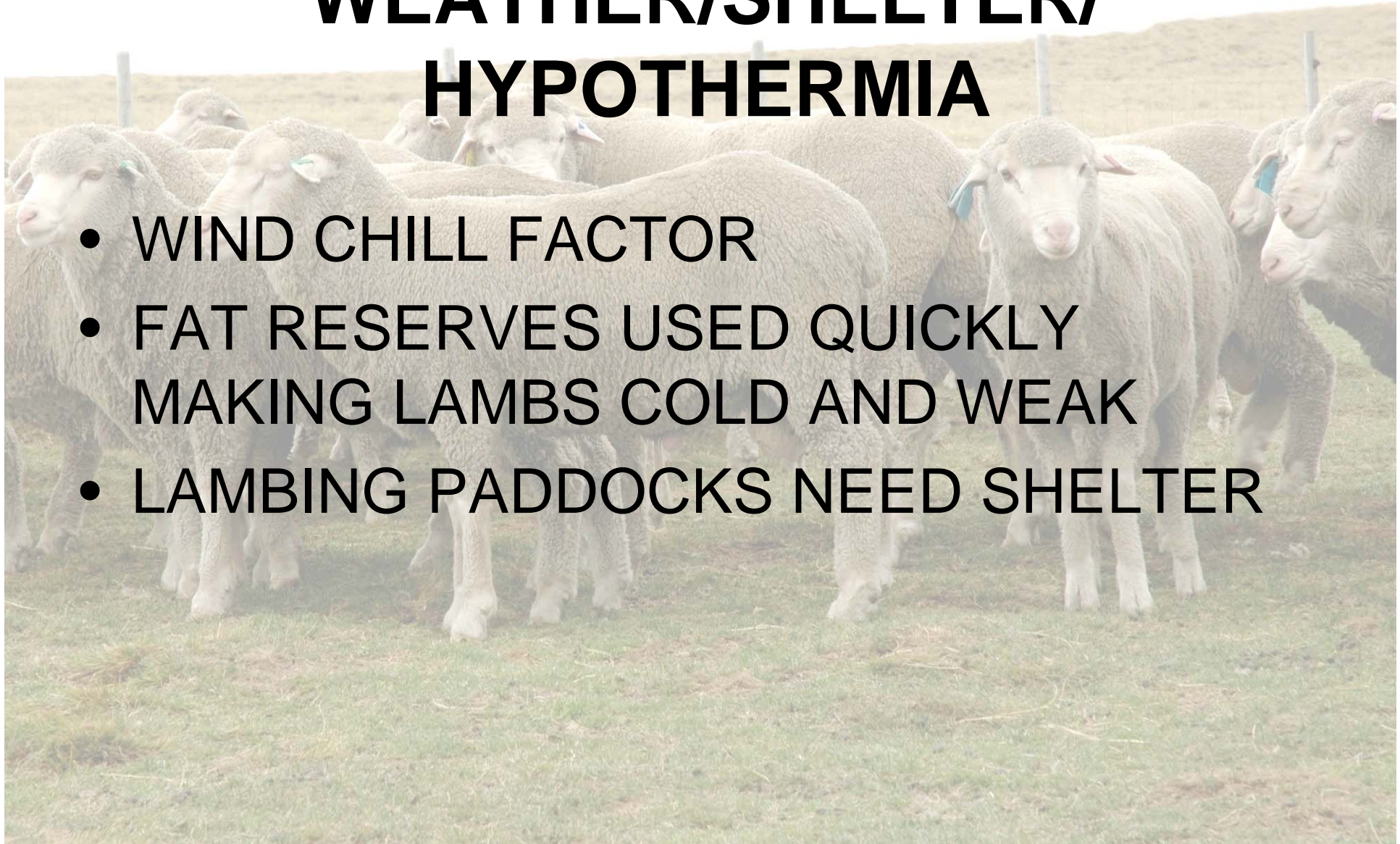
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WEATHER/SHELTER/ HYPOTHERMIA

- WIND CHILL FACTOR
- FAT RESERVES USED QUICKLY
MAKING LAMBS COLD AND WEAK
- LAMBING PADDOCKS NEED SHELTER





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ENVIRONMENTAL STRESSORS

- DITCHES
- ROADS
- MISMOTHERING





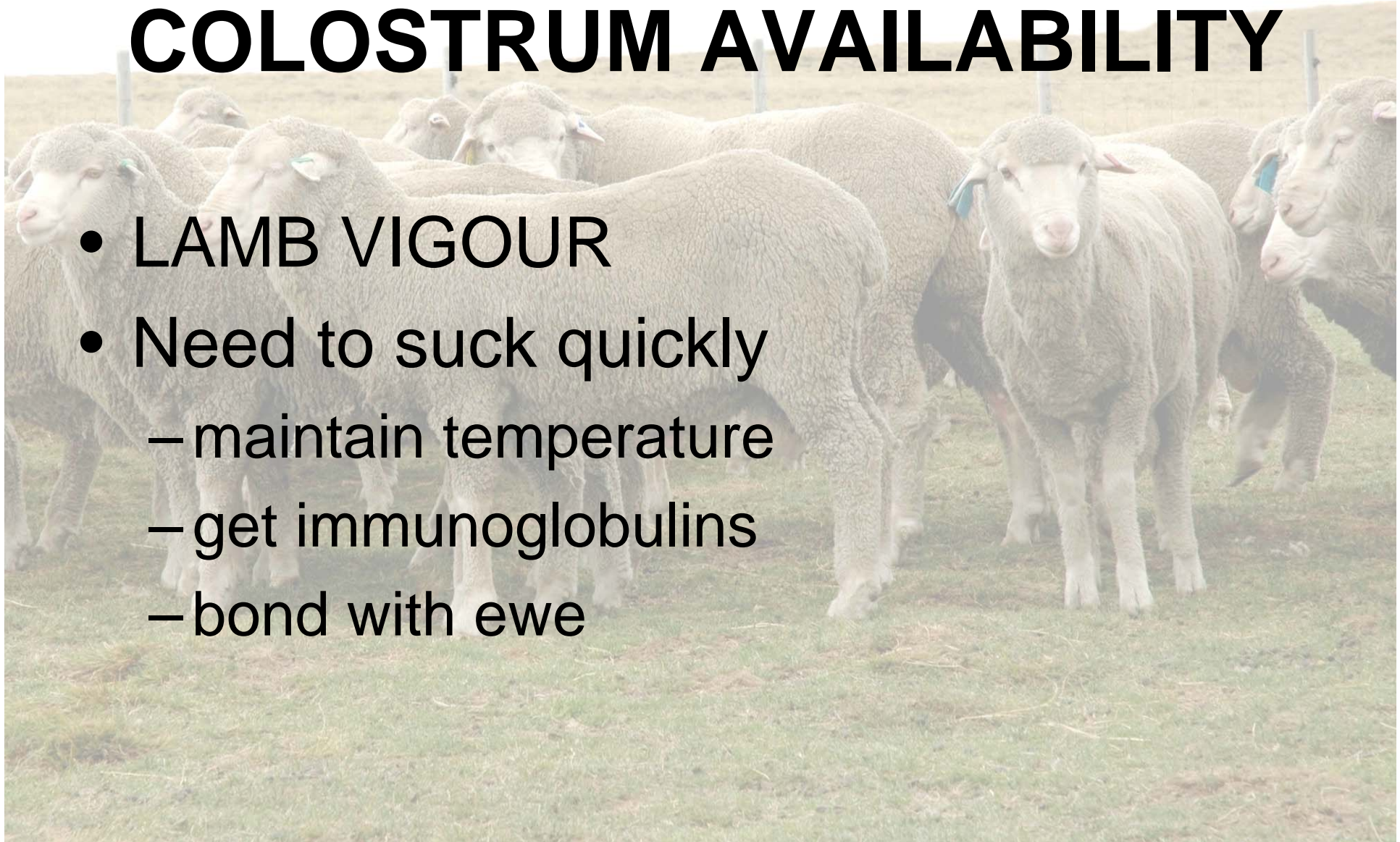
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COLOSTRUM AVAILABILITY

- LAMB VIGOUR
- Need to suck quickly
 - maintain temperature
 - get immunoglobulins
 - bond with ewe





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DISEASE

- TOXOPLASMOSIS/NEOSPOORA
- CHLAMYDIA
- TWIN LAMB DISEASE
- HYPOCALCAEMIA
- BACTERIAL



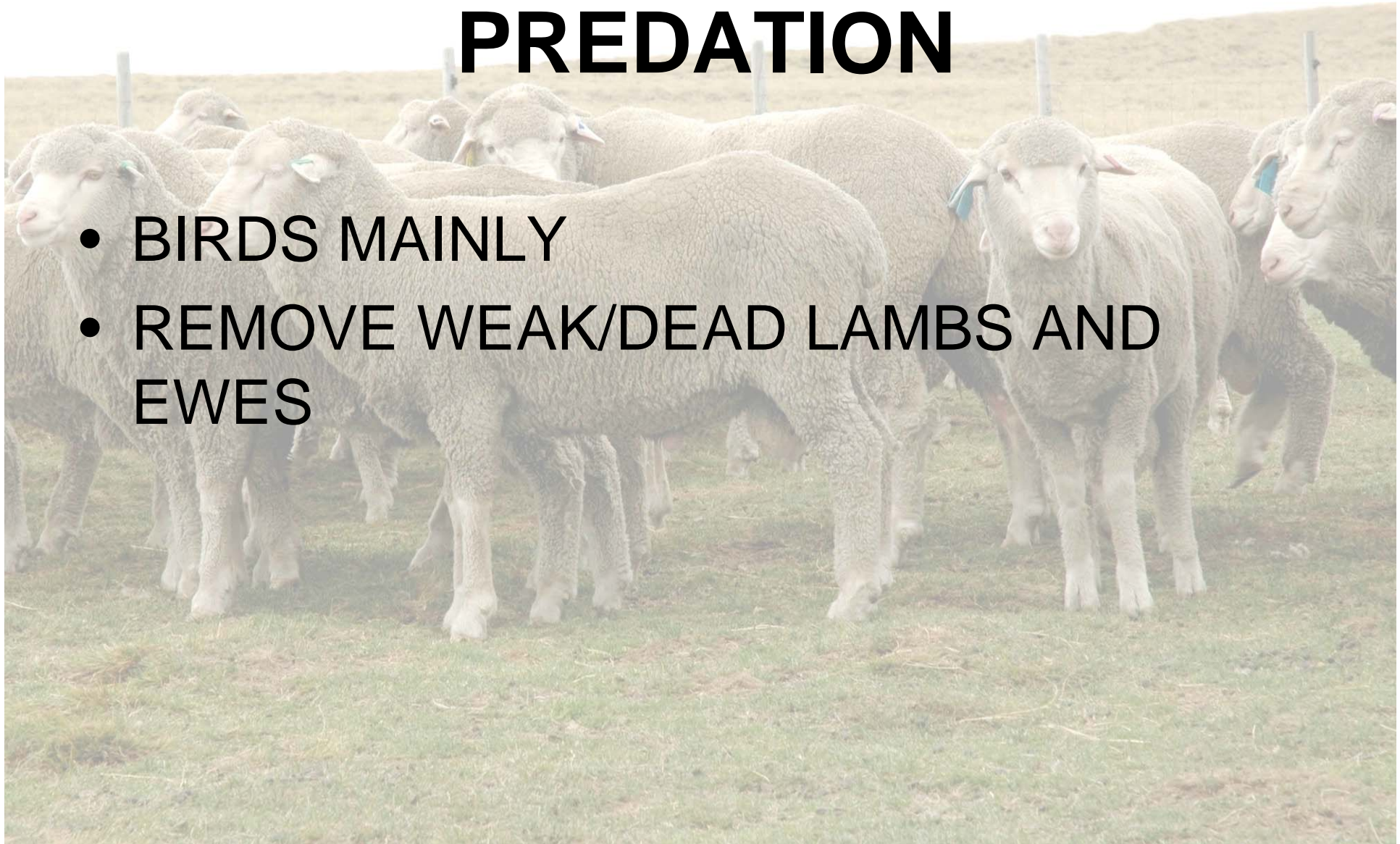
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PREDATION

- BIRDS MAINLY
- REMOVE WEAK/DEAD LAMBS AND EWES





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BIRTH WEIGHT OF LAMBS

- 4-6KG OPTIMUM BIRTH WEIGHT FOR SURVIVAL
- BIRTH WEIGHTS ARE MOST SENSITIVE TO CHANGES IN EWE CONDITION IN LATE PREGNANCY
- BROWN FAT RESERVES
- VERY HIGH BIRTH WEIGHT = INCREASED RISK OF DYSTOCIA



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CRUTCHING/SHEARING

- CLEAR AND CLEAN TEATS AND HIND QUARTERS
- PRE-LAMB SHEARING – DISCUSS!
- Ewes seek shelter/abandon lamb to feed or shelter
- Increased appetite off shears – all to ewe or some to foetus?
- NZ some work showed that shearing at 54-80d increased birth weight and survival of lambs



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OTHER FACTORS

- EARLY WEANING
- PARASITE MANAGEMENT
- DYSTOCIA
- MISMOTHERING
- LAMB MARKING





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OTHER FACTORS

- EWE GENETICS
- LITTER SIZES AND SEX
- STOCKING DENSITY
- PREGNANCY SCANNING
- PASTURE MANAGEMENT

