

Impact of early weaning on rumen development and fermentation profiles in artificially-reared lambs

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Introduction

- ❖ Dairy sheep is an emerging industry in New Zealand.
- ❖ Early weaning apply to artificially-reared lambs is attractive to reduce costs.
 - After weaning:
 - Reductions in growth rates
 - Increased mortality



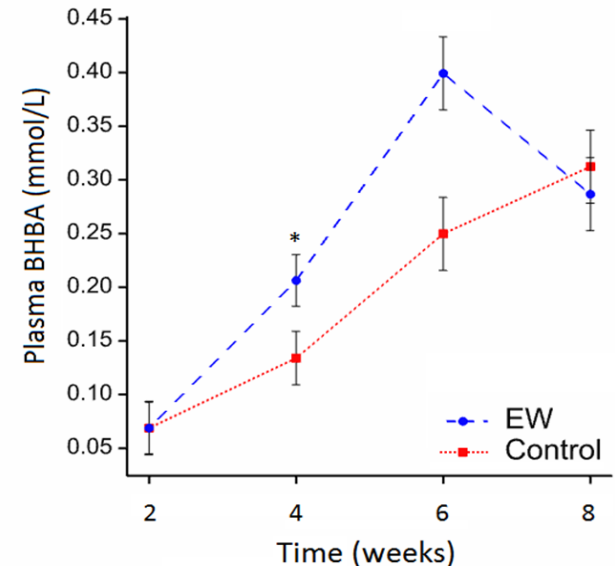
Objective

- To investigate the impact of early weaning of artificially-reared lambs on rumen development and fermentation profiles.

Results

- Similar proportions of rumen SCFA.
- Few differences in rumen morphology

➤ Rumen function



Conclusion

- This study illustrates that early weaning, using a step down weaning process, initiates **early functional rumen development** and does not limit post-natal growth rates or live weights at 16 weeks of age in artificially-reared lambs.



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