



## How we record lambs outside - Barry and Elizabeth Sangster

We lambed around 200 recorded Easy Care ewes and ewe lambs this season. We singled sired mated for 18 days and then used Hampshire rams as sweepers for the last 12 days as it is very easy to tell their lambs! We both work off-farm, so it is important that lambing is compact and we like selecting our replacements from the earliest born lambs.

We also have some commercial ewes and the overall scanning percentage across both flocks was 173%, which is ideal for us. We lamb any triplets in the shed to ensure problems can be dealt with. The ewe lambs are housed to make sure we have control of their ration before moving them to the best keep on the farm after they've lambed. All other sheep lambed outdoors in set stocked paddocks.

Before lambing, we mark the ewe's ID on their side, which makes recording easier.




Ideally within 12 hours of birth we will record the ewe's ID, tag her lambs and record their date of birth, sex and birth weight.



To collect the birth weight, we use a pouch from an angling shop and a spring balance. All the info is recorded on paper and then moved on to the Signet system.



We also record information on lambing ease, mothering ability and lamb vigour based on this scoring system, with ewe 1771 getting a +1! We occasionally have to record a ewe, normally a cross, in the commercial flock that isn't fully shedding but not something we have to do in the recorded flock.

	<b>Lambing score</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+1</b>
	<b>Lambing ease</b>	Assisted	Minor help	No assistance
	<b>Mothering ability</b>	Leaves lambs	Stands well back	Follows whatever
	<b>Lamb vigour</b>	Has to be sucked	Slow to suck	Up and sucks



Performance recording outside is a lot of work but it is crucial as it means that I can breed functional and high-performance stock for myself and customers. The hard work we put in means that the commercial buyers don't need to collect records in the detail that we do, and they can have confidence that the sheep will do their job.

We have a few more problems with joint ill this year than normal, particularly in the recorded flock after the lambs have been tagged. We will need to investigate using a disinfectant for the lamb tags next year – the tags were new this year and kept clean, so it is curious that we have had more a problem this year.

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<https://maternalssheep.co.uk/easy-care-sheep/>

Barry and Elizabeth have an exposed coastal farm in Scotland. Alongside full-time jobs, they run over 300 Easy Care ewes with just under half being performance recorded. They are starting to select one family as carriers of Myomax, which increases carcase value, another for muscle depth over the loin and a third for ewe efficiency. These means that you can select rams based on a range of breeding objectives.

Their Easycare rams are guaranteed to have been born and suckled without assistance and are reared on grass and forage.