

SIL Survival - Quick Reference Guide

"SIL assumes lambs are alive unless told otherwise"

Best practice

- Record **ALL** dead lambs using lamb fate (BFATE) codes
 - Record date of death where possible.
 - Code J** - Born dead (died before tagging)
 - Code K** - Died later (after tagging, before tailing)
 - Code 1** - Died between birth and weaning (usually used when recording weaning weight)
 - Code M** - Use sparingly - SIL assumes these dead lambs would have survived.
 - Code 4** - Lambs culled at birth are assumed to survive to weaning. NB: tagged lambs culled later do not need a lamb fate code (BFATE)
 - Code Q** (Died, dam's fault) - is no longer used now that SIL analyses survival for maternal effects
- Code as dead (1)** - lambs **missing at weaning** . . . **When** you will be right more often than you will be wrong *i.e.* if most missing lambs stay missing! You can change this code if they reappear.
- A lamb can have more than one BFATE code e.g. LFK
 - Address queries to your bureau

Birth fate	
J	Born dead
K	Died later
1	Died between birth & weaning
M	Died due to misadventure
4	Culled at birth
F	Fostered
H	Hand reared
L	AI progeny
E	ET progeny

SIL Survival - Quick Reference Guide

What about storms?

SIL does not recommend coding these lambs as BFATE "M". Coding a lot of dead lambs from one sire as "M" will cause a bias.

The SIL analysis needs to know that some families had better, or poorer, survival under such a challenge.

It is possible one sire gets a worse "throw of the dice" when a lot of his ewes lamb in a storm period. There is no simple way to correct for this that will not introduce other anomalies.

To avoid such biases, SIL recommends that sires be mated to all ewes in an age group at the same time, where possible. This includes AI sires. They will then have lambs born in a similar period.

Note that the three main ewe age groups can be mated at different times if this suits management but that SIL recommends a sire be used to link the ewe age groups within a year.

Similarly, SIL recommends some sires be used to link years.

If you think there is a bias in your survival data, caused by one sire with a lot of deaths in his lambs due to causes largely not affecting the lambs for other sires, talk to your bureau about how best to cope with this.

Need more information?

Contact your SIL bureau or call **0800-silhelp** (0800-745-435). See also www.sheepimprovement.co.nz