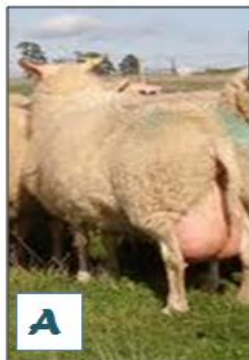


# Which ewe is the best?



You bought dairy ewes from different flocks. All the ewes have milk records. How do you know which ewes are the best? The ewes A and B came from different flocks. How do you compare their milk production?

## Is ewe A a better milker?



2,1 kg milk/day

Dam:  
1,9 kg milk/day

Grand-dam P : 1,0 kg milk/day

Grand-dam M : 0,87 kg milk/day



1,7 kg milk/day

Dam:  
2,5 kg milk/day

Grand-dam P : 1,9 kg milk/day

Grand-dam M : 2,2 kg milk/day

You cannot compare production data especially when they come from different farms, seasons or environments. There are too many environmental factors that may affect the ewes' production that are not related to the genetic merit they will pass through their progeny. Also, how do you take into account the performance of their relatives?

## The dairy genetic program will take into account:

- *Breed or cross*
- *Age of the ewe*
- *Season of lambing*
- *Number of lambs born*
- *Heritability of traits (some traits are more heritable than others)*
- *Correlations between traits (favourables or non favourable)*
- *Relatives and progeny performances*
- ...

Genetic values can be compared between animals in a flock and also across flocks. This is a powerful tool to compare ewes' production based on accurate values.

