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Who are we?

- 200 acre, sheep & beef farm in central England
- Breeding Suffolk rams since 1960
- Developed the Aberblack with Innovis
- Aim to Sell 250 rams / year



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Why did we move to a forage only system?

- Economics!
- Experience from the pig industry with PIC
- Working with Innovis Breeding Sheep
- Asked customers / ex-customers



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What does our forage system look like?

- Ewes lambed later – March & April
- Stop feeding concentrates to Ewes after turnout





What does our forage system look like?

- Lambs never receive hard feed, just grass & milk.
- Weaned onto herbal leys



What does our forage system look like?

- All lambs fully recorded when the mob average is approx. 45kg (approx. 16 weeks)





What does our forage system look like?

- All young stock out wintered on cover crops
- Come back onto grass rotation in late March



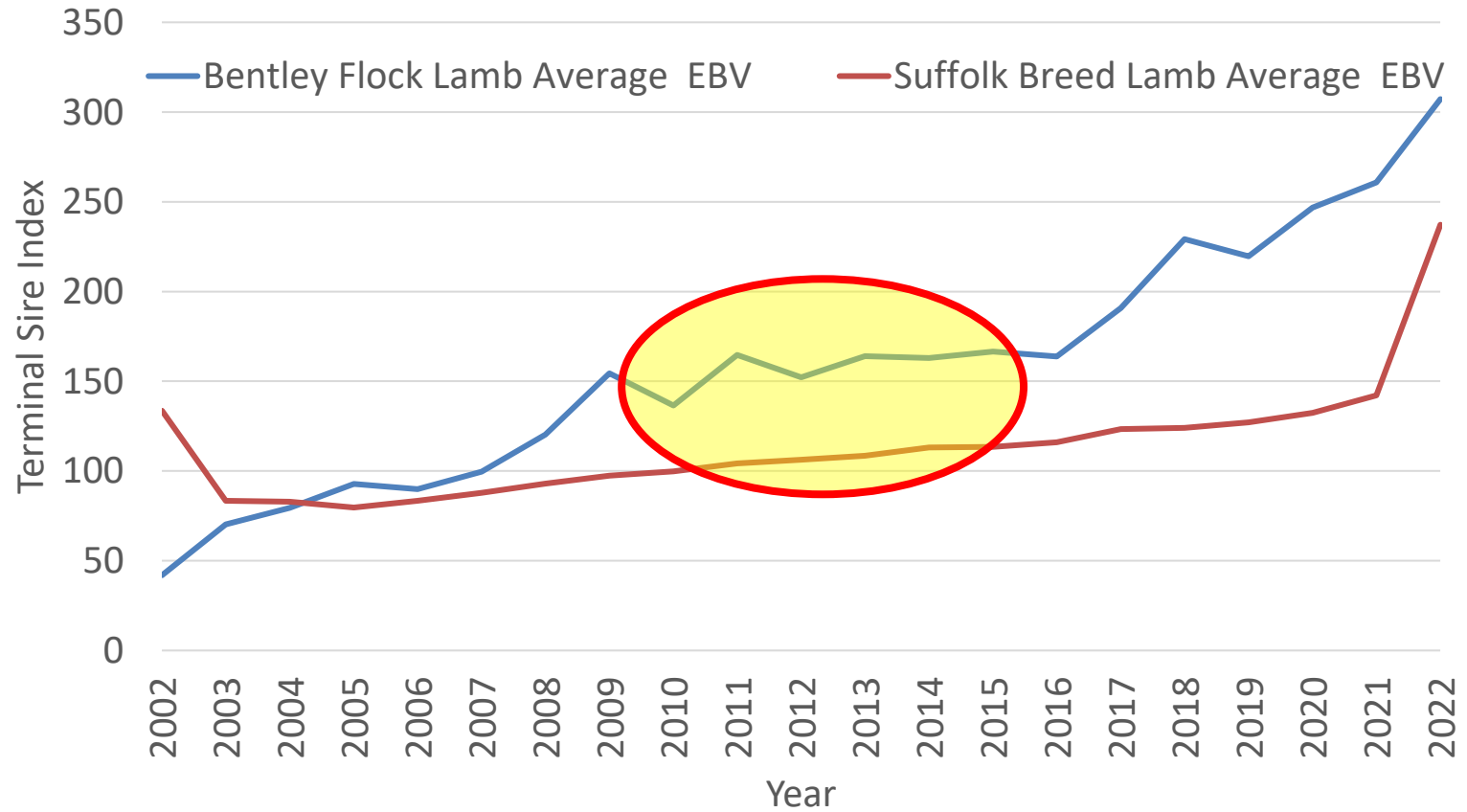


What has this changed for us?

- Initially a huge fall out rate from the original flock
 - A different phenotype!
 - Lower mature weight of the ewes (av 105 – 95kg)
 - Higher % of ewes CS 3+ at weaning
 - 8 week weights
 - Higher culling % in ram lambs & ewe lambs
 - Lower labour requirements on the stock
 - Steep learning curve on grassland management



Genetic Trends for Terminal Sire Index





What has this changed for our customers?

- A different phenotype!
- A smaller ram at purchase...
- Rams holding condition better / longevity
- Breeding values produced on a similar system to theirs.





What has changed for our customers?

- All Rams sold direct from the farm
- More time
- More Information
- More feedback
- Biosecurity
- No pressure to feed!





Any questions?

