

Organic or conventional farming – what’s the difference?

Data sheet A2 – Sheep farm data

These data come from a real scientific investigation comparing sheep production on conventional and organic farms. The study collected data from four flocks.

Your task is to analyse the data from all the data sheets and make recommendations to help the farmers increase their yields of lamb and wool.

Ewe mass

		Average ewe live mass (kg)			
		Lower Twiddle Farm	Higher Twiddle Farm	Cairn Farm	Burnside Farm
Type of farm		conventional	organic	organic	organic
Year	1998	57.7	54.1	58.0	57.1
	1999	58.1	51.3	55.0	53.0
	2000	57.8	52.9	52.8	50.6

Wool yield

		Mean fleece mass (kg/head)			
		Lower Twiddle Farm	Higher Twiddle Farm	Cairn Farm	Burnside Farm
Type of farm		conventional	organic	organic	organic
Year	1998	1.71	1.79	2.09	2.12
	1999	1.95	1.79	1.90	1.88
	2000	1.80	1.86	2.12	2.02

Questions

- Describe the changes in live mass of the ewes during the three years of the study for the flocks on each farm.
 - Do the data show any differences between organic and conventional flocks?
- Describe the changes in wool yield during the three years of the study for the flocks on each farm.
 - Do the data show any differences between organic and conventional flocks?