

## **BETTER Farm Update April 2023**

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At the time of writing the lowland flocks are in the midst of lambing and although weather conditions are variable and slowing down the turning out of ewes and lambs to grass there are still suitable opportunities to get them turned out. For the most part lambing has gone well for the flocks aside from the usual issues and headaches that turn up every lambing. The hill flocks in the programme will be lambing this month and flocks have gathered any remaining ewes off the hill onto enclosed ground for lambing. For these flocks' single bearing ewes and in some cases twin bearing ewes will be lambed outdoors.

Grass covers across the lowland flocks were good at the point of lambing with the average for the group being 675 kg/DM/Ha, ranging from 250 kg/DM/Ha to 1120 kg/DM/Ha. As we come into April an essential component of grassland management on the farms will be to get ewes and lambs grouped into bigger grazing groups within 2-3 weeks of turn out. Having too many grazing groups at any one time means a bigger proportion of the farm is being grazed at once reducing grass growth and lowering the farm cover which could lead deficits in grass supply in the coming weeks. As the flocks move through April close attention will be paid to the average farm cover and the grazing days ahead to monitor if grass supplies remain on track or if remedial action (supplementation) is needed to slow down the rotation while grass growth rates catch up to demand.