

BETTER Farm Update March 2023

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The flocks lambing yearling ewes pregnancy scanned these ewes in February and the results are presented in Table 1. with good results overall. These yearling ewes are currently being managed separately in the run up to lambing and this will remain the case after lambing also right up until weaning time. All of the lowland flocks have been aiming to spread fertilizer once weather and ground conditions were suitable pre-lambing with the target being 15-20 units of nitrogen per acre in the form of protected Urea. Fertilizer usage will be monitored carefully throughout the year and the first application before lambing commences is an essential one for spring grass supplies.

Table 1. Pregnancy scanning results from yearling ewes on the BETTER farm sheep flocks.

Location	Sligo	Roscommon	Kerry
Scanned Litter size	1.59	1.62	1.46
Scanned Pregnancy rate (%)	90.6	78.8	91.9
Scanning rate	1.44	1.3	1.3

The Teagasc BETTER hill sheep flocks pregnancy scanned their ewes during February with the results from three of the flocks presented in Table 2. Pregnancy rates across the flocks are on target (>90%) this year with litter sizes also within the targets for the three flocks presented below. Some of the flocks with harsher hills and more restricted green ground are targeting a scanned litter size of 1.2 to maximise the amount of single available to go the hill early in the summer while others with more green ground are happy to scan around 1.4 as there is more land available for twins after lambing.

Table 2. Pregnancy scanning results from the BETTER farm hill sheep flocks.

Location	Donegal	Sligo	Wicklow
Scanned Litter size	1.4	1.4	1.2
Scanned Pregnancy rate	92.6	96.1	96.9
Scanning rate	1.3	1.3	1.2