

## **BETTER Farm Update April 2022**

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The start of March provided an opportunity for the flocks to get out the opening round of fertilizer (protected Urea @ 15-20 units/acre). Fields which will respond best to nitrogen were targeted with poorer performing paddocks or areas designated for silage being left until later. Average farm cover for the flocks at the time of writing is very good with average for the group being 788 kg/DM/Ha, ranging from 250 kg/DM/Ha to 1538 kg/DM/Ha. A key part of the grazing management for this month will be to ensure ewes and lambs are grouped into bigger grazing groups within 2-3 week. This is important as leaving too many grazing groups means a large part of the farm is being grazed at once which reduces grass growth across the farm and lowers the farm cover which can lead to a grass shortage then.

The flock in Co. Carlow lambed a small proportion of the ewes in late January/February and these lambs will be weighed shortly to assess performance to date. The ewes and lambs are finishing grazed a hybrid brassica crop initially after turnout with supplementation being offered to the ewes before moving to grass where the lambs will be offered supplementation. As with any early lamb system it is a comparatively high cost system so the plan will be for regular weighing of these lambs so they can be drafted for sale as soon as they are ready.