

## BETTER Farm Update February 2022

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As presented in Table 1. the lowland flocks pregnancy scanned their ewes in late December/January. Overall the scanned litter size was similar to last year while pregnancy rates were up by 1% on average across the flocks compared to last year with most of the flocks recording a greater than 96% pregnancy rate for their mature ewes. Any empty ewes, and empty ewe lambs where ewe lambs were put to the ram, are being sold immediately this year to try and reduce demand for fodder supplies and grass later on in the year given the current costs of fertilizer and concentrate feeds. Some of the flocks have scanned yearling ewes with some still to scan them in the coming days. Winter fodder budgets are also being reviewed to ensure there are sufficient fodder supplies remaining on farms. All the farms will do grass walk in January in order to assess how farm covers are looking.

The hill flocks will be pregnancy scanning this month. This time will also provide a good opportunity to assess how these ewes are doing on the hill over the winter and assess ewe BCS in case any very thin ewes need preferential treatment after scanning.

Table 1. Mature ewe scanning results from lowland BETTER farms 2021/22

Farm	Carey	Gavin	Gonley	Keane	Moore	O'Connell	O'Leary	Powell
Location	Mayo	Carlow	Sligo	Wexford	Roscommon	Leitrim	Kerry	Tipperary
<b>Scanned litter size</b>	1.90	1.91	1.94	1.77	1.89	2.06	2.16	1.68
<b>Scanned pregnancy rate (%)</b>	97.8	96.8	96.6	93.0	96.8	97.4	98.5	93.4
<b>Scanning rate</b>	1.86	1.85	1.88	1.65	1.83	2.01	2.13	1.57