

## BETTER Farm update November 2021

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Grass growth rates and grass utilisation at the time of writing are good for most of the lowland BETTER sheep flocks which is allowing paddocks to be grazed out properly ahead of closing for the winter. All of the flocks are following an autumn closing plan will aim to have 20% of the farm closed by the end of October. Pre- grazing grass covers were comparatively high for this time of year on some of the farms in late September and early October meaning paddocks had to be sub-divided to allow ewes to graze out paddocks correctly without forcing the ewes to have long residency periods in the paddocks. Analysis of mating live weights and BCS for the mature ewes from seven of the lowland BETTER sheep flocks is presented in Table 1. with mature ewe BCS generally looking good across the flocks.

**Table 1.** Initial analysis of mature ewe live weight and BCS on eight of the lowland sheep flocks.

<b>Flock</b>	<b>Boyle</b>	<b>Gavin</b>	<b>Gonley</b>	<b>Keane</b>	<b>Moore</b>	<b>O'Leary</b>	<b>Powell</b>
<b>County</b>	<b>Donegal</b>	<b>Carlow</b>	<b>Sligo</b>	<b>Wexford</b>	<b>Roscommon</b>	<b>Kerry</b>	<b>Tipperary</b>
<b>Mean live weight (kg)</b>	66.4	80.9	70.1	69.8	69.6	74.8	65.5
<b>Mean BCS</b>	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.6	3.2

November means mating time for the hill flocks and ewes will be weighed and condition scored prior to be joined with the ram. While culls have already been identified and removed any additional ewes that are in poor condition or have other issues will be culled before mating. Lambs are gone one nearly all the flocks at this stage with most taking advantage of the store lamb trade to sell their lambs this year.