

Sheep Research Demonstration Farm, Athenry

Philip Creighton, Animal and Grassland Research and Innovation Centre, Teagasc
Athenry, Co Galway.

Lamb performance has improved post weaning with lambs gaining between 200g/hd/day in the high stocking rate groups and 220g/hd/day in the low stocking rate groups since weaning in June. While we were disappointed with the pre weaning performance, actions taken to control grass quality during the rapid grass growth in June are now paying dividends as lambs are grazing very high quality grass. Drafting of lambs has commenced with 51 lambs drafted by mid-July. The average live weight of the lambs was 43.8kg with a carcase weight of 20.0kg. This represents an average kill out percentage of ~45%. Approximately 50% of these lambs were from the two low stocking rate groups with 25% and 25% coming from the medium and high stocking rate groups respectively. Grass growth has remained strong averaging 75kg/ha/day for the past month. We have continued to remove surplus grass to control grazing quality but with silage requirements now met across the groups we will spray off between 10-15% of each farmlet for reseeding in early August.