

Sheep Research Demonstration Farm, Athenry

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Lambs were weaned in late June at approximately 14 weeks of age (100 days). Preliminary analysis suggests an average weaning rate of 1.53 lambs/ewe for the medium prolific groups and 1.75 lambs/ewe for the high prolific groups. Lamb performance from birth to weaning and weaning weights is presented in Table 1. Current lamb growth rates have been in the region of 220 – 280g/day. Lambs are being drenched with mineral supplement every 2 weeks. Grass growth rates have averaged 75kg/DM/ha for June. We have conserved about 80% of silage requirements to date for the high stocking rate groups, 95% in the medium stocking rate groups and approximately 160% in the low stocking rate groups. These figures are based on a 100 day winter with a silage allowance of 1.3kg DM/ewe/day. Removing strong paddocks have contributed about 50% of silage stocks and should provide high quality silage (DMD ~75DMD) for winter feeding. We also completed one round of topping on paddocks that were not cut for bales to remove stemmy material and ensure quality regrowth for weaned lambs.

Table 1. Lamb performance (birth to weaning @14 weeks)

Age	10 ewes/ha	12 ewes/ha	14 ewes/ha	Medium Prolificacy	High Prolificacy
0-14 weeks (g/day)	271	265	253	266	260
Wt (kg) @ 14 weeks	32.6	31.9	30.4	31.9	31.4