

## **Sheep Research Demonstration Farm, Athenry**

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Ewes were scanned in early January. The medium prolific flocks had an average litter size of 1.87 with the high prolific groups averaging 2.06. This is an exceptionally high result for both groups considering that all animals are hoggets lambing for the first time. It should be noted that all animals were in very good condition going to the ram (3.75-4.0 BCS) as a result of the high levels of quality grass available from new reseeds and the fact that there were no lambs competing for grass supplies as the flocks were only assembled during the summer months. Performance next year when flocks have been running within their full systems will be of more significance. Ewes are still being offered grass silage ad lib (70 DMD) and are now being supplemented with concentrates, with amounts varying depending on scanned litter size. Nitrogen in the form of urea will be blanket spread on all farmlets at a rate of 23 units/ac (half bag) in early to mid February to help boost grass covers prior to turnout in March. Once soil temperatures are above 6-7 degrees, grass growth will occur and a response will be obtained.