

Sheep Research Demonstration Farm, Athenry

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The remaining lambs from the groups housed in October were drafted on the 10th of December at an average liveweight of 45kg and carcass weight of 20.2kg. These lambs had been on silage and meal from mid October and were moved onto close to ad-lib meal in mid November. Performance had been in the region of 180g/day but increased to ~260g/day as concentrate level increased. As reported in the last update the high stocking rate ewes were housed at the end of November. The medium stocking rate groups were housed in mid December. Grass growth on the paddocks closed since late October/early November has been good but this grass will be of more benefit next March than grazed now. The low stocking rate groups have sufficient grass reserves to continue grazing into early/mid January. Grass is being allocated using electric fencing to improve utilisation. Ewes will be scanned in early January. Housed ewes are currently being offered baled silage (70 DMD). Silage analysis has shown that the earlier cut silage has a 75DMD value and this will be saved for feeding after Christmas. This silage was the surplus grass removed from the systems in early May as a result of the high grass growth rates in March and early April on the newly reseeded swards.

