

Sheep Research Demonstration Farm, Athenry

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

Grass growth has improved greatly in late May and early June averaging 75kg DM/ha/day. With high growth rates we were splitting paddocks, allowing 3-4 days grazing in each division. This allowed surpluses to develop and so far we have harvested between 25% to 50% of winter feed requirements as top quality baled silage. These bales were made in ideal conditions after a 24 hr wilt. The DM content of the silage is ~30% and they should be in the region of 75 DMD. The main silage cut will be baled this week (June 17th). Table 1 shows lamb performance figures for the year to date. Lambs will be weaned at ~14 weeks (3rd week June). Lambs received their second worm dose in early June based on faecal egg count tests. They were also treated for blow fly strike and cobalt. Birth to weaning performance and weaning weights will be presented in next months update.

Table 1. Lamb performance (growth rate g/day)

Age	10 ewes/ha	12 ewes/ha	14 ewes/ha	Medium Prolificacy	High Prolificacy
0-12 weeks (g/day)	287	271	263	273	267
Wt (kg) @ 12 weeks	29.5	28.3	27.4	29.1	27.7