

Sheep Research Demonstration Farm, Athenry

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Lambs were weaned on June 19th at approximately 14 weeks of age (100 days). Preliminary analysis suggests an average weaning rate of 1.51 lambs/ewe for the medium prolific groups and 1.72 lambs/ewe for the high prolific groups. The average for the high prolific groups is reduced by a lower weaning rate for the 14 ewe/ha, high prolific group at 1.6 lambs/ewe. Average lambs weaned per ewe for the 10 and 12 ewe/ha, high prolific groups was 1.77. Lamb performance from birth to weaning and weaning weights is presented in Table 1. Lamb growth rates are slightly back on last year, mainly due to parasite problems as discussed in last month's update which impacted performance at a critical period. Current lamb growth rates have recovered to average 250g/day. Lambs are being drenched with cobalt every 2 weeks. Ewe body condition score is ranging from 2.9 to 3.3.

Grass growth rates have averaged 80kg/DM/ha for much of May and June. As a result we have conserved about 80% of silage requirements to date for the high stocking rate groups and have a surplus of between 30 and 60% in the medium and low stocking rate groups although these figures will rise as further surplus grass is baled this week (June 23rd).

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)	266	262	244	258	256
Wt (kg) @ 14 weeks	32.0	31.3	29.8	31.5	30.6