

Sheep Research Demonstration Farm, Athenry

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Lambing finished on April 16th. Mean lambing date was March 16th with 95% of ewes lambed by the end of March. Lamb mortality is running at 9% on average with a slightly higher level (11%) in the high prolific groups versus (7%) in the medium prolific groups. A number of lambs died suddenly at 4-5 weeks of age and this was put down to clostridia/pneumonia challenge and so all lambs were vaccinated immediately with 8 in 1 plus P vaccine. Lambs received their first worm dose at 5 weeks for Nematodirus infection. Seven week weights will be included in the next update. Grass growth has dropped back to lows of 20kg DM/ha/day in early / mid April from highs of 60 Kg Dm/ha/day in Late March. Regrowths have been slow and as a result sheep are currently grazing higher than desirable covers (2000+kg DM/ha, 13-14cm) which would have ideally been removed for silage but it is buying time until growth rates pick up. Grass is being allocated using temporary fences to try and improve utilisation, especially during wet periods. Paddocks are receiving $\frac{3}{4}$ of a bag of CAN (20 units/ac or 25kg N/ha) after grazing. As a result of the higher than normal growth rates in March 25% of the grazing area was removed/skipped over and closed for silage in late March.