

Sheep Research Demonstration Farm, Athenry

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Drafting of lambs continues. Preliminary analysis shows a total of 228 lambs have been drafted to date (22nd August). Average liveweight was 43.1 kg with average carcass weight 19.1 kg. This represents an average kill out percentage of 44%. On a stocking rate basis, 46% of lambs drafted were from low stocking rate (10 ewes/ha) groups with 27% each from the medium (12 ewes/ha) and high stocking rate (14 ewes/ha) groups. Prolificacy levels are not having a big effect with 52% of lambs drafted from medium prolific groups and 48% from high prolific groups. Lamb growth rates remain in the region of 170-185 g/day. A faecal egg reduction test (drench test) showed a possible resistance problem to levamisole (yellow) drenches and so lambs were switched to a moxidectin (clear) based product. Egg counts reduced to zero following the switch and continue to be monitored on a regular basis. Lambs are receiving a cobalt drench every 2-3 weeks to maintain thrive. Attention has turned to preparing the flocks for mating. Ewe BCS is satisfactory at 3.0-3.5. Flushing will begin in late August for ram turnout in early October. Rams and ewes are being footbathed at regular intervals and any problem cases being dealt with. Grass growth rates are still in the region of 40kg DM/ha/day sufficient to meet flock demands but a little below average for time of year. All paddocks were blanket spread with nitrogen ($\frac{3}{4}$ CAN/ac) in mid August to begin building covers for the autumn. Maintenance dressings of P and K are also being applied.

