

## **Sheep Research Demonstration Farm, Athenry**

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Drafting of lambs continues. On a stocking rate basis, 49% of lambs have been drafted from low stocking rate (10 ewes/ha) groups with 28% from the medium (12 ewes/ha) and 19% from high stocking rate (14 ewes/ha) groups. Prolificacy levels are not having a big effect with even numbers of lambs drafted from each group so far. Average liveweight for lambs drafted to date (August 20<sup>th</sup>) was 43.6 kg with average carcass weight 19.86 kg. This represents an average kill out percentage of 45%. Current lamb growth rates are in the region of 180-210 g/day, although growth rates did suffer during the heatwave in July. Current average lamb live weights range from 39.8kg (low stocking rate) to 37.4kg (high stocking rate) 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. 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 have improved to between 50 -60 kg DM/ha/day. This is allowing covers to begin to build as we go into the autumn. All paddocks will receive their final nitrogen applications at the rate of 17 to 25 kg N/ha (depending on stocking rate) in late August to continue building covers for the autumn. Maintenance dressings of K are also being applied.