

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

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The first of the ewes have been housed with both high stocking rate (14 ewes/ha) groups housed in early December and both medium stocking rate groups housed in mid-December. Silage quality analysis shows silages varying in quality between 67 and 73 DMD. Housed ewes are currently being fed a maintenance diet of the 67 DMD baled silage, with the higher quality 73 DMD being kept to be fed in the later stages of pregnancy which will reduce the quantities of meal required. Weather permitting the low stocking rate groups have sufficient reserves to support extended grazing until mid January. Groups are being strip grazed using temporary electric fencing. Grass growth on the paddocks closed since late October/early November has been good but this grass will be of more benefit next March than grazed now. Total grass grown for the year has ranged between 11.0 tons DM/ha (low stocking rate) to 12.5 tons DM/ha (high stocking rate). Ewes will be scanned in early January. Lamb drafting is almost complete with 97%, 94% and 90% of lambs in the low, medium, and high SR groups drafted up to mid December. Lambs have been on silage (73 DMD) and meal (0.7kg/hd/day) since late November.