

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

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Lambing commenced on March 3rd. At time of writing (March 21st), progress has been good with 85% of the ewes lambed in the first 17 days. Lamb mortality is running at approximately 8% on average, although this figure excludes losses prior to lambing. Over the last few years we have seen a scanning to drafting difference of 15%. Lamb birth weights are ranging from 6.0kg for singles, 4.8kg for twins and 3.8kg for triplets. Grass growth has averaged 15kg DM/ha/day for mid to late March. Sheep are grazing grass covers of 7-8cm (1000-1200kg DM/ha). Average farm cover at present is in the region of 670kg DM/ha which means we have about 28 days grazing ahead of us at our current average ewe demand of 2.5kg DM/day, although demand will increase as the remaining ewes go to grass. We will continue to monitor grass growth rate and covers during the current cool weather and make decisions on any supplementation if required, based on grass budget figures.