

## BETTER Farm Update February 2017

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### Early Lambing Flock

At the time of writing, over 90% of the ewes in the early lambing flock in Co. Wexford have lambed. However, weather conditions are making very difficult to get ewes and lambs out to grass. Once the weather allows ewes will be turned out sheltered paddocks closed up since early-mid October. Ewes will be supplemented with 0.5 kg of meal for the first couple of weeks at grass. Creep feed will be introduced to the lambs 7-14 days after turnout. Lambs were weighed at birth and will be weighed again at weaning when they are approximately 8 weeks of age.

### Mid-season Flocks Scan Results

The mid-season flocks scanned their ewes in late December/January and a summary of the results are presented in Table 1. Scanned litter size this year is similar to last year on average for the flocks. Ewes have now been penned by litter size and where possible divided by raddle marks within litter size. Yearling ewes and the hill flocks will scan over the coming weeks and there will be an update in the next newsletter.

Table 1. Mature ewe scanning results from lowland BETTER farms 2017/18

Farm	O'Leary	McLaughlin	Kearney	O'Connell	Doyle	Prendergast	Gonley	Dunne
Location	Kerry	Donegal	Louth	Leitrim	Wexford	Mayo	Sligo	Wicklow
Scanned litter size	2.12	1.96	2.21	2.00	1.94	1.92		
Scanned pregnancy rate	97.1	97.1	95.2	94.8	98.2	98.2		
Scanning rate	2.06	1.90	2.11	1.89	1.91	1.88		

### Time to start thinking about grass again!

All the farms are measure opening grass covers in late January/early February in order to assess what grass is in place prior to lambing commencing. Once weather conditions allow the opening round of fertilizer will also be applied early this month.