

BETTER Farm Update May 2021

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Grass growth during the month of April has been variable with cold weather for the time of year and frost at nights slowing grass growth. However, as a result of having an autumn closing plan and managing grass available on the farm most of the flocks have had sufficient grass supplies with grass growth rates starting to increase again at the time of writing. Grass growth rates for the second week of April were averaging 29 kg DM/Ha/day with average farm cover sitting at 755kg DM/ha/day. Second rounds of fertilizer went out during April which will be very important to ensure grass supplies keep up with demand in the coming weeks.

A key management ask during this month for the flocks has to be group up ewes and lambs into larger groups and use temporary divisions where necessary to improve grass utilisation, reduce residency times in paddocks and to give paddocks a chance to recover ahead of the next round of grazing. The flocks have also begun closing off paddocks for silage with the focus on paddocks gone too strong for grazing.

Lambs were treated for Nematodirus in April in line with the DAFM forecast using a white drench (Benzimidazole; 1-BZ). Some of the flocks may need to go in and dose a second time for Nematodirus where some of the lambs are still quite young at the time of the first dose. Faecal sampling of lambs will begin this month (May) to allow for FECPAK analysis to establish when further anthelmintic treatments are required.