



**Lowland Sheep Farm Walk**  
*August 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023*  
**Farm of Des Powell**  
**Templederry, Co. Tipperary**



### Farm Details

- 97 ha –fragmented
- Farm system
  - Mixed enterprise system – Sheep and beef
  - 320 ewes + replacement ewe lambs
    - Targeting 400 ewes lambing
    - Replacement ewe lambs bred within flock
  - Ewes lamb from early March onwards
    - Changed from lambing in late January

### Farm Plan

- 1. Breeding
  - Increasing ewe flock numbers
  - Increase ewe output – more prolific sires
  - Belclare genetics
  - Expanding shed space to allow for bigger numbers lambing
- 2. Grassland
  - Address soil fertility issues
  - Improve grazing infrastructure – permanent and temporary divisions
  - Grass measuring and budgeting – using Pasturebase Ireland (see below)
- 3. Flock Health
  - Dosing to FECPAK results – suspected resistance issues
  - Close the flock to reduce risk buying in disease (except rams)
  - Lameness issues being addressed

### Flock Performance

**Table 1.** Performance of the mature ewes in the mid-season flock for 2019, 2021 & 2023

	2019	2021	2023
<b>Ewes joined</b>	173	277	314
<b>Litter size</b>	1.6	1.7	1.7
<b>Ewes lambed (%)</b>	97	90	87
<b>Lambs reared per ewe joined</b>	1.4	1.4	1.3

- Focused on improving output, building ewe numbers and stabilising breed profile
- Target to wean in excess of 1.6 lambs weaned per ewe joined in mid-season flock
- Maximise contribution of grazed grass in the lambs' diet

**Table 2.** Lamb performance to date for lambs reared by mature ewes.

Litter Size	Birth Wt. (kg)	7 Week Weight (kg)	14 Week Weight (kg)	ADG 0-14 weeks (g/day)
Singles	6.7	19.7	29.7	235
Twins	5.3	17.4	26.8	218
Triplets*	4.7	15.0	25.9	216

\*Small numbers treat with caution

### Lameness



## Lameness Survey

### A National Survey on Lameness within Irish Sheep Flocks

- An outbreak of Infectious lameness within a sheep flock can have a range of negative impacts on flock productivity
- Lack of information on infectious lameness i.e. Scald, Footrot and Contagious Ovine Digital Dermatitis (CODD) in Irish sheep flocks
- By completing the survey we can identify the factors that effect the on farm lameness prevalence

#### Survey seeks to establish information on:

- On-farm presence of Scald, Footrot and CODD
- How farmers treat cases of lameness in their sheep
- Steps farmers take to control lameness in their flocks
- Farmers bio-security protocols for newly purchased sheep
- Where farmers source their information on lameness

Scan me!





## Ewe soundness check

### Selecting ewes for breeding

- Good records essential
- Identify problem ewes throughout the season
- Recheck ewes after weaning or 10 weeks pre-breeding

### Examine & cull

#### Teeth

- Under & Over shot mouths
- Missing teeth
- Worn/long teeth
- Uneven molars

#### Feet

- Footrot, scald & joint stiffness
- Separate and treat problem ewes
- Cull those that don't respond to treatment

#### Udder

- Mastitis
- Pendulous udders
- Blind teats
- Cording or tread like teat canal
- Lesion/sores on teats

#### Reproduction

- Ring womb – Likely to reoccur
- Prolapse- Likely to reoccur
- Barren from abortion
- Mothering ability

### Condition & Health

- Thin ewes that fail to respond to improved feeding
- Is there a underlying health issue that should be investigated

## Ewe BCS

- BCS is the most accessible tool to assess and manage flock nutritional status
- Focus attention on under conditioned ewes within the flock
  - Target < 10% less than BCS 3.0 at mating
- Overfat ewes are harder to find – some very limited exceptions
- Regular ewe BCS assessment and management should start 2-3 weeks after weaning and run right through until after lambing

### Powell Mature Ewe BCS from Mating 2018, 2020 & 2022

	2018	2020	2022
<b>Average ewe live weight (kg)</b>	61.0	65.2	63.9
<b>Average ewe BCS</b>	2.9	3.5	3.1
<b>% &lt; 3.0</b>	47	6	31



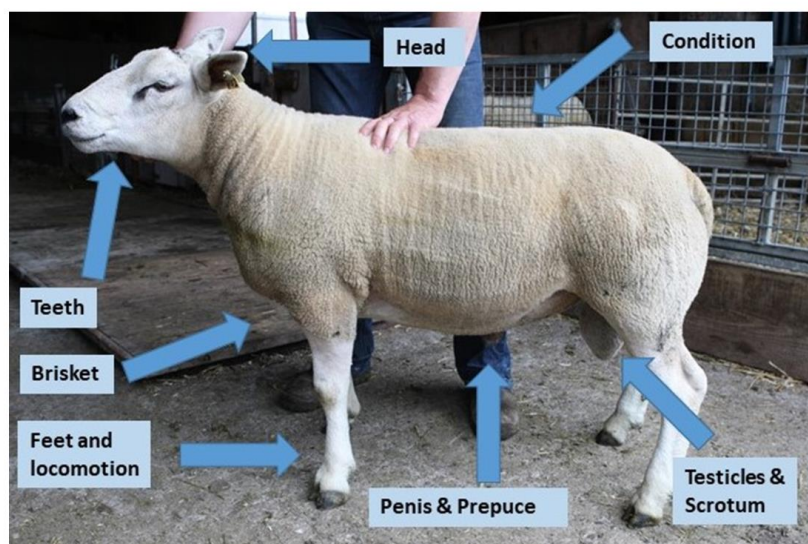
# Ram NCT

## Is your ram fit for this breeding season?

8-10 Weeks prior to mating assess all rams

Areas to look at:

- Body condition 3.5 - 4 at start of mating
- Longevity and condition linked to teeth
- Good feet important to maintaining condition & working ability
- Bigger is better- Sperm quality related to testicle size



# The SIS Genotyped Ram Task, everything you need to know

## SIS: Genotyped Ram Task

- Flocks must **purchase** a Genotyped Ram in their selected year
  - The Ram must be Scrapie Type 1/2/3
  - Lowland Rams must be 4 Stars or more ★★★★★
  - Hill Rams must be DNA Sire Verified
    - Both the Sire and the Ram have had DNA submitted to Sheep Ireland, and they have verified parentage via their DNA



## Where to Find SIS Rams

1. All SIS-eligible Rams can be found on [www.ramsearch.ie](http://www.ramsearch.ie).



2. Society sales will display SIS eligibility in their Catalogues

3. Sheep Ireland Breeders Directory



Try the  
**Ramsearch.ie**  
Today

