

# Pre Lambing Management of Hogs Practical Guide



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Scotland is working towards the target to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2045. For the sheep industry, this gives an opportunity to evaluate systems and practices, while looking to enhance flock efficiency and productivity, which will in turn reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Having the first mating as ewe lambs, rather than gimmers is a mitigation strategy. It has a potential to reduce methane and nitrous oxide and therefore have a positive effect on a carbon footprint of a sheep system and farm. This is only possible with a combination of excellent management, health and genetics. Without this, the system can be wasteful and have the opposite effect.

This practical guide takes a closer look at the management of lambs during pregnancy to lambing.



## Manage for Growth

Ewe lambs must be managed to allow for their own growth during pregnancy and lactation, as well as rearing and nurturing a lamb. Ideally this means managing the group of ewe lambs separately from mature ewes or the main flock throughout pregnancy.

### Mid Pregnancy

During mid pregnancy (50-100 days) the ewe lambs requirements will be 20% higher than a mature ewe due to growth and pregnancy requirements. Ensuring the ewe lamb continues to grow throughout pregnancy, is an essential step for her future longevity and production within the flock. The growth should be aimed at ~130grams/day up to 6 weeks pre lambing. This means during pregnancy she should be gaining 12-15kg of body weight.

Ewes do not typically reach their total liveweight until they reach three years old. With ewe hogs having pregnancy requirements, as well as growth. The aim is to keep them growing in mid pregnancy to ensure their future productivity is not affected.

## Websites

[www.farmingforabetterclimate.org](http://www.farmingforabetterclimate.org)

See also:

[Farm Carbon Storage Network - SAC Consulting](#)

Post lambing management of hogs  
[SRUC Vet Services | Premium Sheep & Goat Health Schemes](#)

[Lamb Crop 2023 - YouTube](#)

[Body condition scoring sheep](#)



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
[gov.scot](http://gov.scot)



  
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## Late Pregnancy Nutrition

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In the last 50 days of pregnancy, the pregnant ewe lamb should be fed similarly to the mature ewes in the flock of a similar weight, meaning at this point she is being managed for maintenance. The energy and protein requirements of a pregnant ewe lamb Vs a mature ewe are shown below. Where it is clear the requirement is ~20% higher at the 8 week stage where the ewe lamb requirements are higher in energy for growth, after this they are comparable.

Single Bearing 70kg		Weeks pre lambing			
		8	6	4	2
Pregnant ewe lambs	Metabolisable Energy (MJ ME/Day)	13	12.1	13.1	14.6
	Metabolisable Protein (g MP/kg DM)	83	89	95	102
Pregnant mature ewes	Metabolisable Energy (MJ ME/Day)	11.1	12	13.2	14.8
	Metabolisable Protein (g MP/kg DM)	85	89	95	102

When concentrate feeding is required to supplement available forage, be aware that ewe lambs may have never experienced this method of feeding before, and may be slow to come to the trough/snacker. It would be recommended to start feeding in their first autumn before going to the tup at a rate of 0.20kg/head/day to train them to eat concentrate. Another method may be introducing feed one month post mating in a small field. Lambs should be monitored closely to ensure they are all eating, this may take two weeks. Ensure there is adequate trough space of 30cm/ewe lamb.

## Management

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Management of ewe hogs is extremely important to ensure she rears her lamb well, and continues to grow and be productive in the flock. Below are management tips to enhance breeding from ewe lambs during pregnancy,

- Condition score at every handling, and act upon the findings e.g. animals that are leaner should be offered supplementary feeding and investigated to why they are leaner e.g. feet, worms, etc.
- Scan at 80 days after the tup was introduced to the ewe lambs, to identify barren and multiples. Manage these groups separately e.g. barren, singles and twins, as their nutritional requirements will vary.
- Barren lambs could be marketed in the store or prime rings or alternatively retained for gimmers. However, there will be a reason she is barren!
- Manage ewe lambs separately from mature ewes through tugging, pregnancy and lambing.
- Benchmark scanning results and reflect on how management over the year has influenced scanning performance. This can be used to influence future management and breeding decisions e.g. grass management, genetics, condition score, etc.

*Farming for a Better Climate (FFBC) is funded by Scottish Government and delivered by SAC Consulting. Keep up to date with the project via our webpages and newsletter at [www.farmingforabetterclimate.org](http://www.farmingforabetterclimate.org) or on Facebook and Twitter [@SACfarm4climate](https://twitter.com/SACfarm4climate)*