

Planning For Profit – Barnside Factsheet

Farm details	<p>Farm size: 625 acres (253 ha) of which 480 acres TGRS and PGRS, 50 acres heather, 36 acres RGR. Height above sea level 500 – 900 feet.</p> <p>Flock size: 800 ewes, 220 hogs</p> <p>Herd size: 70 spring calving Welsh Black cows to Aberdeen Angus bull</p>
Sheep flock objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run an easily managed low intervention flock. • Minimise expensive purchased feeds. • Improve grass utilisation.
Beef herd objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run an easily managed low intervention herd. • Select bulls for easy calving and high growth rates. • Finish at grass at 22 months with a premium.
Life objectives	Simple easy to manage, enjoyable farming system which leaves a respectable margin and time for family and social life.
Flock developments	<p>Changed from pure Romney to flock crossed to Easycare to produce a 75% Easycare Romney</p> <p>In 2008 purchase Chevease, also put to Easycare then to Romney x tup.</p> <p>Current ewe are at least $\frac{3}{4}$ Easycare genetics. Tups $\frac{7}{8}$ Easycare genetics</p>
Tupping	<p>27 November to New Years Day!</p> <p>Feed concentrates at 0.2 kg/head if required (snow on ground in recent past)</p> <p>Post tupping – baled silage (chopped) fed in Duncan Shell feeder design (low level of waste), 800 ewes on a 40 acre sacrifice field.</p>
Pre lambing	Provide concentrates at 0.2 kg/head if required. Set stock fields 2 – 3 weeks before start of lambing (22 April). Check 1 or 2 times a day to let ewes get used to bikes, man and dogs. Put up lambing shelters in twin fields at 1/acre.
Lambing	Drive through 1 or 2 times a day or less if bad weather. Minimal disturbance. No longer cross foster indoors. Pen in field on birth site with skin.
Post lambing	<p>No tailing, no castration. From mid May tag lambs starting with singles. Tag lambs using colour tags indicating A or B breeding status (group A breeding stock, B non breeding stock). Increase group sizes and sub divide field with temporary electric fence and paddock grazed from June.</p> <p>Use plate meter and clover condition to rotate paddocks.</p> <p>Mid June – preventative flystrike treatment to ewes and lambs.</p> <p>Go on holiday.</p> <p>Late July early August – pre-weaning draw?</p>
Weaning	<p>Lambs remain in field, ewes move out. Worm lambs – rotate product on an annual basis. 10 days post weaning move lambs to silage aftermaths.</p> <p>Further draws at 3 – 4 weeks.</p> <p>Market through Farmstock.</p> <p>Prime lambs weight range 15 – 21 kg, majority within 16 – 18 kg range, 90% good or very good grid rating, 60 – 70% R grade, 30 – 40% O grade.</p>
Farm equipment	<p>4 WD tractor c/w loader and various attachments</p> <p>Bale trailer</p> <p>Bale feed trailers x 6 (cattle)</p> <p>Bale unroller</p> <p>Quad bike and farm pick up</p>
Contractors	<p>Silage – mow, bale and wrap</p> <p>Field cultivations and sowing</p>

Sheep Variable Costs

	Cost per Ewe	QMS 2013	QMS 2012
Tupping	3.00		
Pre- Lambing	1.22		
Lamb Finishing	0.94		
Minerals	3.53		
Concentrate Total	£8.69	£13.81	11.64
Vet & Med	1.66		
Fallen Stock	0.61		
Other Costs	5.76		
Health + Other Total	£8.03	£14.66	15.19
Forage cost			
Grass seed	2.18		
Swedes	1.29		
Forage Total	£3.47	£7.71	£6.33
Total Variable Cost	£20.19	£36.18	£33.16

QMS 2013 variable cost per ewe for LFA upland flock

Barside Performance stats for an "Average" Year

Per 100 Ewes Topped

Rams (no)		1.25
Lamb numbers:	Scanned	167
	Marked	141
	Deaths	4
	Ewe lambs retained	28
	Finished lambs	109
	Total Lambs	137
Ewe numbers:	Culls	15
	Drafts	10
	Deaths	3
Wool sales		0
Concentrate use:	Ewes at tupping	800
	Ewes in March	325
	Lamb finishing	250
	Total Concentrates	1,375kg
Forage	Grazing (ha)	8
	Silage & aftermaths	3
	Other aftermaths	2
	Total forage (ha)	13

Key Points for discussion

- Labour saving with low intervention animals and farm infrastructure
- Better management of grass to increase utilisation efficiency
- Management and costs of paddock grazing system



Barnside Fencing & Water Development 2001-2014

	Fields	Water Troughs	Swing Gates	
2001	17	8	2	Unfenced tracks & farm roads
2014	35	35	150+	3 km fenced lanes

Temporary Subdivision for Paddock Grazing Project:

The 35 fields are subdivided into 69 paddocks using 42 x 3 reel temporary electric fencing systems, average paddock size is 7 acres

To service these paddocks 25 additional water troughs were installed and 5.5 kilometres of pipe laid over the ground.

Temporary Subdivision Costs	£
40 x 3 reel electric fence systems including poly posts & wire gates	7,537
25 water troughs	3,075
5.5km pipe & fittings (mostly 25 & 32mm, some 50mm)	4,147
Total for 480 acres	14,759
Cost per acre subdivided	30.75

Also cost in:

Digger hire to site troughs and bury pipe through gateways.

Own labour to lay pipe and plumb in troughs.

Management time to survey and plan siting of troughs and subdivisions.

Management time to "learn to drive" the system.

There is no doubt that the system could be installed more cheaply if fewer temporary water troughs and fences are used but moved regularly.

Rotational Grazing

- There is potential for 30-50% more grass growth with rotational grazing versus set stocking.
- Current pasture utilisation in set stocked systems is estimated at 50% (and is probably less this year).
- The best grass based dairy farmers achieve 85% utilisation or better.

So, if we grow 20% more grass in a rotational grazing system and utilise 25% more of what is grown (improve from 50% to 62.5% utilisation) we will be increasing production by 50%.

Late Lambing

Lambing Percentage, Survival, Growth and Kg of Lamb Weaned

As scanning percentage increases beyond around 170%, the proportion of twins scanned remains fairly static so that the extra lambs conceived are triplets rather than twins. This can be of limited benefit in a low input, grass based system.

Using survival rates (scanning to weaning, excluding pets) of 90% for singles, 85% for twins and 50% for triplets and weaning weights of 38kg for singles, 32.4kg for twins and 26.75kg for triplets gives the following:

Scan %	Weaning %	Weight of lamb at weaning	% Lambs left that are triplets
167	138	4600	7
178	142	4650	13
189	146	4701	18

This is not advocating aiming at low scanning percentages, but illustrates the increased management focus on survival and growth of triplets necessary to reap the benefits of a higher scan. This will not suit every farm or farmer, particularly if outdoor lambing is practised in Upland environments.

A 170% scan with good survival and lamb growth is far preferable to a 185% scan with poor survival and mediocre growth. In a late lambing system, the pressure on grass from unfinished weaned lambs can impact heavily on ewe condition, winter grazing and the following years lamb crop.

Wool Related Costs For 1000 Ewe Flock

Operation	Notes	Pence per ewe
Shearers	Per ewe (incl. hoggs & rams)	123
Labour at Shearing	2 casuals for 2 days (7.5/hr)	24
	Shepherd for 4 days (10/hr)	32
Lamb growth loss at Shearing	150g/day for 3 days	45
Crutching ewes	Per ewe	45
Labour at Crutching	Shepherd for 2 days	16
Dagging 25% of lambs	At L% of 150 @ 45p	17
Labour for Tail docking	Total time 6 hours	5
Lamb growth loss at Tail docking	150g/day for 3 days	45
Blowfly control	Pour-on twice @ 50p	100
Labour at blowfly control	Shepherd for 2 days	16
Lamb growth loss at blowfly control	150g/day for 1 day	15
No deaths of cast ewes	5 per 1000 ewes	25
Reduction in shepherding for cast ewes	30 days at 1 hour per 1000 ewes	30
Total Cost Saving		538

Wool income must be set against the cost saving of £5.38 per ewe.

No allowance is shown for the increased growth of hair sheep due to the re-direction of protein from wool to meat production. Neither does it take into account the increased management time and flexibility available when “woolly” tasks can be eliminated or reduced.

The table is not meant as a cast iron model of hair sheep versus wool sheep, it merely serves as an illustration of the potential benefits to a conventionally run wool sheep flock, and as a model on which producers can base their own assessment of the benefits of hair sheep in their particular system and environment.

Taken from:

http://nuffieldinternational.org/rep_pdf/1253801058C_H_Walker_Nuffield_Report_read_only.pdf