



9 TOP

REASONS TO START SUPPLEMENTING YOUR EWES NOW FOR HEALTHY LAMBS



David Thornton,
Rumenco Technical Manager

Rumenco Technical Manager, David Thornton, considers which supplements are most likely to optimise the value of this year's forages and pasture in the run up to lambing time.

1

The first 50 days after tupping are critical for safe implantation and early embryogenesis. Grazed grass will be the basis of the pregnant ewes' ration at this time, but we should recognise some of its shortfalls in terms of nutritional supply. Dry matter, energy content and mineral supply are all likely to be compromised during this important period.

2

This season's grass silage and haylage shows the same low protein trend that was seen last year. Protein is an important factor in the diet of ewes pre-lambing, as it has a big influence on milk output, colostrum yield and immunity to disease challenges and parasites.

3

Immunoglobulin content is an important measure of colostrum quality that infers passive immunity to disease in young lambs, enabling them to better withstand early infectious challenges.

4

Healthier lambs that have received their target colostrum intake (target is 10% of their birthweight) within four hours of birth show improved early vigour, growth and general health.

5

Lambs are less likely to suffer from conditions such as coccidiosis, hypothermia and mis-mothering. Losses due to predators may also be reduced when lambs are livelier if born outside.

6

Targeted supplements such as Rumenco Lifeline Lamb & Ewe are formulated to increase colostrum quality, optimise ewe and lamb vitamin and mineral status and promote an easier lambing. Their value to the in-lamb ewe and her lambs at this stage is critical. A SRUC study showed that feeding Lifeline pre-lambing can significantly increase immunoglobulin levels in the colostrum. Ewes fed Lifeline showed a 25% increase in colostrum immunoglobulin content.

7

Pre-lambing nutritional supplements should be introduced six weeks before lambing at grass or to housed ewes, in addition to the standard feeding programme.

8

Any new or different elements in the ewes' ration has to be justified in terms of cost benefit and value for money. Choose carefully based on information supplied that supports the product, including independent trial data and user testimonials.

9

Lifeline Lamb & Ewe is a unique formulation that has proven highly successful over the past 10 lambing seasons. The product is highly advantageous for triplet bearing ewes, thinner twins and hogs lambing for the first time, as they often struggle to produce high quality colostrum.