

# Nutrition News

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## Good nutrition key to successful lambing

The weeks prior to lambing are a crucial period for sheep farmers looking to maintain ewe health and increase lambing percentage and survival.

As much as 55% of annual lamb losses can be attributed to poor ewe feeding in the final weeks before lambing, so it is essential to establish an effective pre-lambing feeding strategy.

### Energy requirements

In the six weeks before lambing, 70% of total lamb growth takes place. As the lamb grows it exerts increasing pressure on the ewe's rumen, significantly reducing the animal's appetite and limiting her intake of forage.

This reduction in appetite comes at a time when ewe energy requirements increase, and this situation can lead to a potential energy deficit; with ewes unable to acquire all their energy requirements from normal forage-based diets. To combat this potential energy deficit, high-energy concentrates should be included in the diet.

### Forage quality

Adequate energy and protein are essential for pre and post-lambing ewes, and whilst good quality silage can supply many of the nutrients required during early pregnancy, this is unlikely to be the case pre and post-lambing. It is important to analyse the nutritional quality of your silage to ensure that concentrate feeding is matched to quality of your silage, and that any mineral deficiencies are correctly supplemented. Silage quality will have a significant impact on the amount of concentrate required so it is important to know what you are feeding.

### Key nutrients

To help ensure successful lambing and the ongoing health of both the ewe and lamb, it is essential that sufficient levels of other key nutrients are also met.

**Protein:** A key nutrient which stimulates lamb growth and milk production. Multiple lambs and poor-quality forage will increase a ewe's rumen degradable (ERDP) and bypass (DUP) protein requirements.

**Vitamins:** In the six weeks prior to lambing vitamin supplementation will help maintain ewe health. Key supplements include vitamin E, which improves lamb vigour.



**Minerals:** Calcium supplementation will help prevent hypocalcaemia (lambing sickness) post-lambing and magnesium will reduce the incidence of grass tetany.

At Corby Rock Mill we offer a range of ewe pellets and blends designed to meet the needs of pre-lambing, post-lambing, and lactating ewes.

Our range includes:

Spec No.	Product	Key attributes
Spec 95	18% Grove Ewe Pellet	Complements poor quality forage/sheep with a high lambing percentage. Contains calcined magnesite.
Spec 97	18% Prime Ewe Pellet	Used before turnout. Contains calcined magnesite.
Spec 98	18% Ewe Cobs	14mm cob fed directly on grass or straw without the need for troughs. Contains calcined magnesite.
Spec 96	20% Super Ewe Pellets	Ideal for ewes with high lambing percentage. Contains calcined magnesite and Megalac.
Spec 491	18% Ewe Blend	Suitable for final three weeks pre-lambing and post-lambing to give maximum milk yield. Complements poor quality forage/sheep with a high lambing percentage. Contains calcined magnesite.

For more information about our range of nutritional ewe pellets and blends, contact your local Corby Rock Milk sales representative.