



FAR Case Study Sheep

Paul Mardell Feed Adviser Carrs Billington



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Key outcomes of feed advice

- 1. Reduced feed costs
- 2. Increased efficiency
- 3. Lower carbon footprint

Background and area of expertise

After graduating from Myerscough College, Paul started his agricultural career managing dairy farms in Lancashire.

He spent 6 years working in the Dairy Select team at SAC Dumfries specialising in nutrition, farm management and practical farming systems. Following this, he worked for compound feed manufacturers responsible for technical support and feed formulations. In 2012 Paul took on a tenancy on a Warwickshire farm and now milks 300 dairy sheep. He is the chairman of the British Sheep Dairy Association and joined Carrs Billington in 2020 as Technical Manager South.

Give an example of how your feed advice has made a measurable difference

Paul offers sheep advice on nutrition, animal welfare and best practice using technical knowledge to drive improved margins and profitability. By matching forage quality to feed requirements, Paul's advice is enabling farmers to hit industry targets by finishing lambs sooner. He achieved this by focussing on ewe body condition score in pregnancy.

Paul has seen many positive outcomes from this, one being

ewes have held condition throughout pregnancy, are producing a higher quality colostrum and milk has become more abundant.

Lambs have improved their average eight-week weight from 18.1kg to 21.3kg surpassing the target set of 20kg as well as increasing average daily lamb growth weight from 232g to 285g.

A farm target was set to increase their current forage energy level. This was achieved by bringing forward their grass cutting date by 2 weeks. Using forage sampling and analysis he saw a rise of 1MJ/kg DM to 10.8 MJ/kg DM. This resulted in reduced feed costs but also balanced the nutrient requirements for the ewes. As a result, the farm has lowered its carbon footprint.

What difference does FAR make to you and to your customers?

FAR gives confidence to farmers that members are up to date with the latest developments in the industry. The regular training and module exams ensure that advisers are equipped with the technical and commercial knowledge to make a difference to the businesses they work with.