



New arrivals abound

Lambing time has arrived on Helen Forsyth's farm, which always has its ups and downs

I love lambing time! And even though they may not admit it, I don't believe there is a livestock owner in the country that doesn't dance a little jig around the kitchen when the first lamb arrives every year.

Not least because there's nothing like cuddling a baby lamb but also it signals spring has arrived, the days are getting longer and the hazy days of summer are on the way. We're now in the not so lovely phase where the last few ladies are hanging around on the maternity ward and the effects of the disturbed sleep

pattern are kicking in. Exacerbated by a Red Tractor inspection, followed by a day of blood testing all the ewes and rams for our second MV qualifying tests.

It is however a great time to reflect on how lambing has gone and what we need to tweak for next year. It's always frustrating when you make mistakes and things go wrong, but I always try and tell myself it's OK to make mistakes as long as you learn from them. But, as Nick often points out, unlike other trades and professions where if you make a mistake you can often rectify it as soon as the

next day, in farming you usually have to wait at least another year until you get another shot at getting it right.

Our first lambing season at the farm the weather turned evil about a month after we had turned all the ewes and lambs out and when I went to feed one morning to my horror I found the corpses of four dead ewes scattered in each corner of the field. The one was still just alive as I arrived but fitting badly and another ewe was high stepping and looked like she was drunk. Which I now know are the signs of magnesium deficiency.