



Lyons Systems Research Herd Notes

Background: The main aim of the **Systems Research Herd** at UCD Lyons Farm is to evaluate the feasibility (including profitability) of a higher input/output grazing system within a limited land holding scenario. The focus is on maximising milk solids output from the existing land holding which involves high output from individual cows and high stocking rates on the MP. This will occur most efficiently through maximising the use of grazed grass/home grown forage in the system and the strategic use of supplementation thereafter. Such a system might facilitate the successful expansion of the farm business without the need to buy or rent extra land, to buy stock, to acquire extra labour or to provide extra cow facilities. For the study purpose, stocking rate and concentrate inputs are fixed. For more details on the Systems Research Herd visit <http://www.ucd.ie/agfood/welcomemessage/systemsresearchherd/>.

Lyons Systems Research Herd Notes Week 23-10-2017

Farm Details:

Area available: 17.65
Current Stocking Rate (MP): 3.4
Farm Cover: 699 kg DM/ha (206 kg DM/cow)
Growth Rate: 28 kg DM/ha/day
Demand: 40.8 kg DM/ha/day
Supplement: Concentrate 3.4 kg/cow/day
Average DIM: 245 (range 183-276)



Grass Supply: AFC on 23rd of October was 699kg DM/ha (range 217 to 1628 kg DM/ha). Cows are cleaning out paddocks very well considering the high rainfall here last week. Ground conditions are beginning to deteriorate here on the heavier parts of the milking platform but, on most paddocks, little damage is being done.

Buffer feeding of one bale/day (~4kg DM/cow) of silage began on Monday morning (23rd) to reduce the demand on the platform. Cows are given access to the silage for ~1 hour after morning milking and continue to graze outside otherwise.

Current silage quality is as follows: 33%DM, 78 DMD, 13.7% Protein, 0.89 UFL.

We began closing paddocks on the MP on the 8th October with a target to have 70% of the MP closed by 1st November. After 2 weeks we have grazed 46% of the block, which is slightly ahead of the autumn planner target of 41%.

Feed Budget: Cows are being fed an average of 3.4 kg of concentrate. 34 cows are on 4kgs, 23 on 2.5kgs and 6 cows have moved to 6kgs as they reached 270 DIM. Grass DMI last week was 13.1kg at 14.8% DM on average.

Cow Condition: Cows were body condition scored (BCS) on October 11th. The cows are in good condition with an average BCS of 2.95. Within the group there are 4 thin cows (BCS = 2.5) and 3 fat cows (BCS = 3.5).

Milk Production: Average production is currently 16.5 kg/cow at 4.83% fat and 4.07% protein (1.46 kg MS). SCC is 60,500. Fat, protein and SCC figures are based on milk recording results from the 11th October.