



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 04-12-2017

Farm Details:

Closing Cover: 476 kg DM/ha
 Current Cover: 493 kg DM/ha
 Supplement: Concentrate 5.4 kg/cow/day
 Cows Milking: 49 (of 60)
 Average DIM: 284 (range 225-318)



Feed Budget: Milking Cows are being fed an average of 5.4 kg of concentrate. 35 cows are on 6 kgs, with the remaining cows on 4 kgs.

Milking cows are being allocated 13 kg DM/day of silage. Current silage quality is as follows: 34% DM, 81% DMD, 16.6% Protein, 0.92 UFL.

Dry Off: Drying off of cows began last week with a batch of 11 cows. Cows will be dried off to give them a minimum 60-day dry period or if their yield drops below 9 kg/day.

Cows are not restricted in feed prior to drying off. All cows are given teat sealant, but selective dry cow therapy is being practised across the herd. Only problematic high SCC cows (SCC > 100,000 in past 3 months or cows treated for Mastitis over the lactation) are being treated.

Once dry, cows will be offered a silage only diet of 9 kg DM. The silage being offered to dry cows is as follows: 31% DM, 67% DMD, 13.2% Protein, 0.74 UFL.

Milk Production: Average production is currently 14.1 kg/cow at 5.3% fat and 3.95% protein (1.3 kg MS). SCC is 125,000. Fat, protein and SCC figures are based on milk recording results from the 22nd of November.

BCS: The herd was Body Condition Scored (BCS) on Friday last, December 1st. The milking cows had an average BCS of 3 while the dry cows have an average BCS of 3.3. Dry cows are currently being fed a restricted diet to hit target BCS at calving. We will continue to monitor BCS throughout the dry period and alter diets where necessary to ensure calving down at the correct BCS (3.00-3.25).

Herd EBI September 2017:

| EBI | Milk | Fert | Calv | Beef | Maint | Health | Mgt |
|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|------|
| 124 | 40.36 | 47.58 | 37.74 | -8.89 | 5.19 | 0.77 | 1.25 |