



Lyons Systems Research Herd Notes

Background: It is widely recognised that grass-based systems offer a competitive advantage and will predominate in Ireland. However, grazing systems that have been developed to utilise large quantities of grazed grass have in the main been based on low-output per cow. In this scenario, high levels of profitability are possible through avid cost control and comparatively high stocking rates for grazing systems. There are now reasons to consider the development of grazing systems that are based on high-output per cow. These reasons include (i) concerns about increasing dairy cow numbers and environmental emissions, (ii) facilitating farm expansion post EU-milk quota removal for land limited and fragmented farms, (iii) lack of available skilled labour on farms to deal with expanding animal numbers. The rationale for this research is that a high output grass-based spring milk production system can be profitable when built on a foundation of good grassland management and meeting both milk and fertility targets and has a place in a sustainable Irish dairy industry.

For more details on the High Output Systems Research Herd visit <http://www.ucd.ie/agfood/welcomemessage/systemsresearchherd/>.

Lyons Systems Research Herd Notes Week 09-07-2018

Farm Details:

Area available: 16.09 (1.56 removed for reseeded)
Current Stocking Rate (MP): 3.73
Farm Cover/LU: 91 kg DM/LU
Growth Rate: 9 kg DM/ha/day
Demand: 0 kg DM/ha/day
Average Concentrate Supplement: 5 kg/head/day in parlour and 4 kg/head/day in the partial TMR
Average DIM: 143.5
Cows Milking: 60



Daily Feed Budget: Due to the severe drought cows are being allocated 0 kg DM of grass, 9.3 kg fresh weight of silage (2.5 kg DM), 30.6 kg fresh weight of maize silage (10.1 kg DM), 2 kg of beet pulp (1.8 kg DM), 2 kg of soya bean meal (1.8 kg DM), 0.5 kg of alfalfa and 5 kg of in-parlour concentrate.

Grazing Plan: AFC on the 9th of July was 340 kg DM/ha (range 100 to 649 kg DM/ha) with a cover/LU of 91 kg DM. Average grass growth was 9 kg DM/ha/day due to extreme drought conditions, approximately 90 mm in the region. The decision was made to put the cows on a sacrifice paddock and feed maize silage-based partial TMR with zero grass in the diet. This diet is fed out along the fence in the sacrifice paddock and started on Friday 6th of July and it is planned to continue this diet until grass growth improves.

Milk Production: Average production this week is 24.7 kg/cow as of the week ending the 8th of July, at 3.86% fat and 3.56% protein (1.82 kg MS). Average production this time last year was 26.7 kg/cow, at 4.20% fat and 3.52% protein (2.1 kg MS). SCC is currently 104,000. Fat, protein and SCC figures are based on milk recording results from the 20th of June.

Breeding Season 2018: The breeding season started on Monday 30th of April and are now in week 11 of 12 weeks. Breeding is all by A.I. and is being done twice daily. Bulls used for the first 10 weeks were as follows: HZB, LWR, FR2031, FR2236, FR2297, FR2298, FR2314, FR2371, FR2460, FR4020, FR4244. Since week 10, beef genetics (Hereford) is being used on all cows. Heat detection is being done using Moo Monitors with a scratch card and crayon system used to replace visual heat detection.



Lyons Systems Research Herd Notes

Silage: Second cut silage was harvested on Thursday last (5th of July) and was put into the pit on the same day, which was approximately 3 weeks later than last year. From a separate block to the MP, 7 ha was cut with a DM% of 24.3 on the morning of cutting. This silage consisted mostly of PRG and red clover. Average cover was 4424 kg DM/ha. Grass was picked up as soon as it was mowed.