



Lyons Systems Research Herd Notes

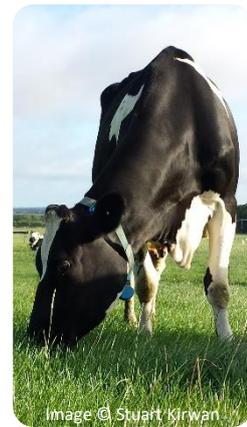
Background: It is widely recognised that grass-based systems offer a competitive advantage and will predominate in Ireland. However, grazing systems that have been developed to utilise large quantities of grazed grass have in the main been based on low output per cow. In this scenario, high levels of 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 <https://www.ucd.ie/agfood/about/lyonsresearchfarm/lyonsdairyherd/>

Lyons Systems Research Herd Notes Week 26/08/2019

Farm Details:

Area available: 17.53 ha
Current Stocking Rate (MP): 3.31 LU/ha
Farm Cover: 732 kg DM/ha
Cover/LU: 221 kg/LU
Growth Rate: 80 kg DM/ha/day
Demand: 60 kg DM/ha/day
Average Concentrate Supplement: 3.1 kg/hd/day
Average DIM: 189 days
Milking cows: 58



Current Daily Feed Budget: Cows are being allocated 18 kg DM of grass and an average of 3.1 kg of a high energy concentrate. From the beginning of the second rotation which began on the 2nd April, until the start of the last rotation, half of the group will be fed an 18% crude protein concentrate while the other half will be fed a 14% concentrate. Estimated grass intakes last week were 17.3 kg DM/hd/day.

Grassland: The current AFC is 732 kg DM/ha (range 100 to 1955 kg DM/ha). Average daily growth rate was 80 kg DM/ha this week and grass DM was 17.6 % on average. The first application of K (Muriate of Potash) was spread on 22nd August; 7.63 ha received 90 kg/ha, 2.06 ha received 50 kg/ha, 2.09 ha received 25 kg/ha. Application rates are based off soil fertility results and silage offtake this year. A second application will be spread in October.

Milk Production: Average production is currently 21.80 kg/cow at 4.41% fat and 3.56% protein (1.74 kg MS). SCC is 59,000. Fat, protein and SCC figures are based on milk recording results from the 14th of August. Milk production from this time last year was 22.90 kg/cow at 4.15% fat and 3.69% protein (1.79 kg MS).

BCS: Last herd body condition scoring was carried out on Friday 16th August. Average herd BCS was 2.87 with 1.7% of the herd thin (1/58 cows; ≤ 2.5) and no cows fat (≥ 3).