



## 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 29-05-17

#### Farm Details:

Area available: 16.6 ha (1.05 ha closed for silage)  
Current Stocking Rate (MP): 3.61  
Farm Cover: 637 kg DM/ha (176 kg DM/cow)  
Growth Rate: 95 kg DM/ha/day  
Demand: 65 kg DM/ha/day  
Supplement: Concentrate 5.8 kg/cow/day  
Average DIM: 97 (range 35-129)



#### Grass Supply:

AFC on 29th May was 637 kg DM/ha (range 222 to 1502 kg DM/ha). We will continue to measure twice a week as we increase grass allocation to 18 kg. We baled 4.53 ha (25%) of the MP last week when growth was strong. We also sprayed off a further 1.94 ha (11%) of the MP with a view to reseeding it. The reseed will be min tilled and sown with Abergain & Abermagic (50:50). Grass grazed over the weekend was 17.5% DM. We have had 41 mm of rainfall in the past seven days.

#### Supplements:

Cows are being fed on average 5.8 kg (between 3.5 and 8 kg) of a high energy, medium protein concentrate. Cows were built up to 8 kg of concentrate in the first 7 DIM, once they reach 60 DIM this is reduced to 6 kg and once they reach 120 DIM this is reduced to 3.5 kg of concentrate. Some cows have now had their feed level reduced to 3.5 kg of concentrate.

#### Fertiliser:

154kg/ha (125 units/acre) of Nitrogen has been spread on the MP to date. We are aiming to blanket spread the MP on Friday this week with a compound fertiliser.

#### Milk Production:

Average production is currently 31.3 kg/cow, at 3.97% fat and 3.42% protein (2.3 kg MS). SCC is 128,000. Fat, protein and SCC figures are based on milk recording results from the 10th of May.

#### BCS:

The average BCS on 26th May was 2.9, with a range of 2.5 to 3.5. 92% of the herd were in the range 2.75 to 3.25. All cows put on OAD milking due to low BCS are now BCS 2.75 or above, and will be milked twice daily from next Monday, 6 weeks from MSD.

#### Breeding Season 2017:

Breeding started on April 24th and will continue for 12 weeks. By the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> week of breeding, 96% of eligible cows have been served. Cows above the voluntary waiting period of 42 days that hadn't shown heat were examined and treated last week.