



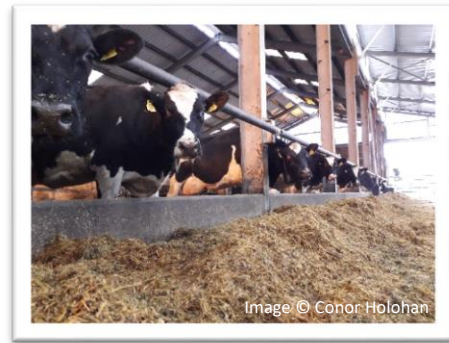
Background: It is widely recognised that grass-based systems offer a competitive advantage and will predominate in Ireland. However, grazing systems that have been developed to utilise large quantities of grazed grass have in the main been based on low-output per cow. In this scenario, high levels of 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 12-03-2018

Farm Details:

Area available: 17.65
Current Stocking Rate (MP):2.72
Farm Cover: 780 kg DM/ha
Growth Rate: 8 kg DM/ha/day
Demand: 19 kg DM/ha/day
Supplement: 8kg/head/day
Average DIM: 34 days
Cows Calved: 51 (out of 60)



Current Daily Feed Budget: AFC on the 12th of March was 780kg DM/ha (range 100 to 1900 kg DM/ha). Cows have been allocated 7kg DM of grass and 6.5kg DM (31% DM; 81% DMD;0.92 UFL) of 1st cut silage at night time. Cows are being fed 8 kg of a high energy concentrate. Once calved they start on 4 kg/day and are built up to 8 kg over 7 days.

Spring Grazing Plan: Cows are back out grazing by day since Friday the 9th of March but were in at the weekend due to wet conditions. To have adequate grass covers going into the 2nd rotation, the decision was made to extend the first rotation to the 9th of April. The paddocks grazed first have seen poor growth since with low covers of 300-400kgDM/ha and poor growth expected for the coming days due to low soil temperatures. This week the cows will be out grazing during the day and in at night.

Milk Production: Average weekly production is currently 24.89kg/cow at 4.73% fat and 3.31% protein (2.01kg MS). SCC is 78,000. Fat, protein and SCC figures are based on milk recording results from the 21st of February

Calving Season: Our 6-week calving rate is 85%. Expected calving start date was the 31st of January. 30% of the herd calved in January (18/60), 41.66% of the herd calved in February (25/60). So far in March, 8 cows have calved and there is a further 6 cows to calve this month and 3 cows are due in April.