



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 26-10-2020

Farm Details:

Area available: 17.43 ha
Current Stocking Rate (MP): 3.27
Farm Cover: 650kg DM/ha
Growth Rate: 21kg DM/ha/day
Demand: 46kg DM/ha/day
Average Concentrate Supplement: 3kg/head/day
Average DIM: 253 days



Current Daily Feed Budget: Cows are being offered 3kg/day of concentrates as all cows are >180 DIM. As the final grazing rotation has begun, cows will now be offered an 18% protein concentrate until dry-off. The herd is also being allocated 14kg DM of grass and 3kg DM of silage per day.

Grazing Plan: The AFC on 27th October was 650kg DM/ha (range: 53-1222kg DM/ha) with a cover/LU of 191kg DM/cow. As of 27th October, 9.67ha (56%) of the MP was closed from grazing. Our aim is to have 70% of the MP closed on 1st November in line with the Teagasc autumn grazing targets. Between 19th - 25th October, worsening weather conditions impeded the grass growth rate. During this time, the average soil temperature at 100mm was 9.6°C and 9.7mm of rain fell (data from the nearby Met Eireann station, Casement Aerodrome).

Milk Production: The average milk production from 19th - 25th October was 18.3kg/cow at 4.69% milk fat, 4.22% protein, 1.68kg MS and 81,000 SCC based on milk recording on 15th October. Average milk production this time last year was 15.6kg/cow at 4.50% fat, 3.87% protein (1.31 kg MS) and SCC at 104,000.