



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 30/10/2018

Farm Details:

Area available: 17.65 ha
Current Stocking Rate (MP): 3.34 cows/ha
Farm Cover: 577 kg DM
Growth Rate: 20 (25) kg DM/ha/day
Demand: 47 kg DM/ha/day
Average Concentrate Supplement: 4 kg/head/day
Average DIM: 255.5
Cows Milking: 59



Daily Feed Budget: Cows are being allocated 14 kg DM of grass and 4 kg of an 18% in-parlour concentrate.

Grazing Plan: AFC on the 30th of October was 577 kg DM/ha (range 52 to 1253 kg DM/ha) with a cover/LU of 173 kg DM. Average grass growth was 20 kg DM/ha/day last week. Average grass DM last week was 15.7%. Average soil temperature (at 100mm) for the last week was 8.8°C. The final rotation started on the 7th of October, it was targeted to graze 0.51 ha per day since then, with an aim to have 70% of the MP grazed by the 1st of November and the farm being closed, with 100% grazed, by the 17th of November. There is now, 70% of the MP grazed, which is slightly ahead of target so we have adjusted the planner to finish on the 14th of November.

Milk Production: Average production is 14.4 kg/cow/day, as of the week ending 28th of October, at 4.82% fat and 4.07% protein (1.27 kg MS). Average production this time last year as 15.7 kg/cow/day, at 4.72% fat and 4.01% protein (1.38 kg MS). SCC is currently 133,000. Fat, protein and SCC figures are based on milk recording results from the 10th of October.