

Teagasc Dairy Beef Programme

Update, Johnstown Castle

Date of writing: 02nd March 2018

Covering period: January- February 2018

This winter and early spring has brought wet and cold weather to Johnstown Castle, as it has countrywide. Rainfall for the month of January was 109.8 ml, with 54.3 ml falling in February. The average soil temperature for February was 3.7°C.

The cold soil conditions have not allowed for any early spring growth. With snowfall and wintry conditions forecast for March, it will be a number of weeks before any cattle will be let out to graze. A new handling facility is being built on the beef unit, which will allow for easier handling and weighing of stock.

Animal performance:

Older Cattle

- The last group of heifers were killed on 29th January. All steers will be turned out to pasture as soon as conditions allow and will be killed off grass with some concentrate supplementation in June/July.
- The steers averaged 503 kg on the 25th January.
- For their second winter, the steers are averaging 0.426 kg/day of gain.
- From the silage intakes (23-25 January), the steers were eating 6.7 kgDM silage/head/day (26.1% DM silage), which was lower than the previous intakes taken in November.

Steer liveweight (kg) and ADG

	LW 25/01/2018	ADG second winter
High	487	0.392
Medium	510	0.446
Low	511	0.439

Heifer performance

	ADG second winter	Lifetime ADG (since first weight)	Final liveweight at slaughter (kg)
High	0.735	1.040	539
Medium	0.777	1.119	566
Low	0.775	1.211	561

Slaughter results

- The final group of heifers were killed on 29th January.
- In total, the heifers averaged 283 kg carcass weight at 22 months of age.
- The average conformation score was O+, with an average fat score of just below a 4-.
- 77% of the heifers made QAS bonus specification.

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Heifer slaughter result, stocking density

	Age at slaughter (days)	LW at slaughter (kg)	Carcass weight (kg)	Conformation	Fat
High	681	543	276	6 (O+)	9.5 (3+/4-)
Medium	683	568	286	6 (O+)	10.1 (4-)
Low	690	564	286	6.3 (O+)	10.1 (4-)

Heifer slaughter result, breed

	Age at slaughter (days)	LW at slaughter (kg)	Carcass weight (kg)	Conformation	Fat
Angus	679	572	286	5.9 (O+)	10.3 (4-)
Hereford	682	559	281	5.7 (O=/O+)	11 (4=)
Limousin	693	547	281	6.7 (O+/R-)	8.5 (3=/3+)

Weanlings

- Weanlings are on *ad lib* silage with ~2kg concentrate/head/day.
- Weanlings were weighed on the 25/26th January, averaging 264kg.
- Due to the building of the new facility, no weight was taken in February.
- The weanlings housed on straw have picked up greatly in performance.
- It is hoped to get the weanlings out to grass before the end of March, weather depending.

	Liveweight 25/01/2018	ADG second winter
High	257	0.687
Medium	268	0.734
Low	267	0.773