

Teagasc Johnstown Castle
Teagasc/ABP Dairy Beef Research Programme

Update: 28-08-2018

Animal Performance:

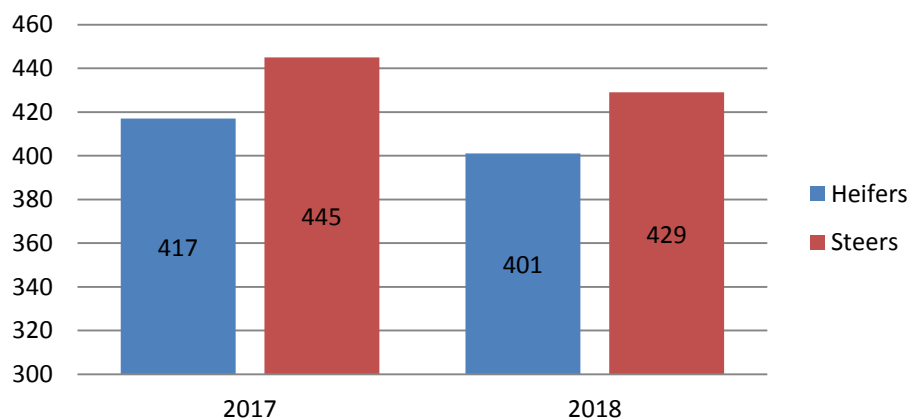
Older cattle

- The 17/18 month old cattle were weighed on the 23rd August. They averaged 415 kg.
- The heifers averaged 401 kg and have now been separated from the steers for meal supplementation. From today, they will be built up to 2.5kg concentrate/head/day at grass. This finishing feeding protocol is two weeks ahead of last year (started feeding the 2nd week of September 2017).

	Live-weight (kg)	ADG 2nd Season at grass
High	408	0.79
Medium	404	0.78
Low	434	1.01

- The aim is to kill the majority of the heifers off of grass before the second winter housing period. With the good quality grass that is now available and the meal supplementation, the heifers should gain 1kg/day over the next 60 days, reaching an average of 460 kg by the end of October.
- From previous work, the target is to have early maturing*Holstein Friesian heifers at 460kg live-weight by mid-October. For the 28-month steer system, the target is for steers to average 510kg by the end of October.
- It is likely that we will have to house some heifers (as these were weak as calves last year and hence are behind in weight) and kill them a later out of the shed (December/January).
- From the chart below, the 2017 born cattle (weighed 23 Aug 2018) are 16kg behind the 2016 born cattle (weighed 31 Aug 2017). Considering the high mortality and morbidity levels of the 2017 born calves last spring, the poor weather conditions of the 2018 spring and the summer drought, this is not too bad.

August weights, 2017 vs 2018



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Calves

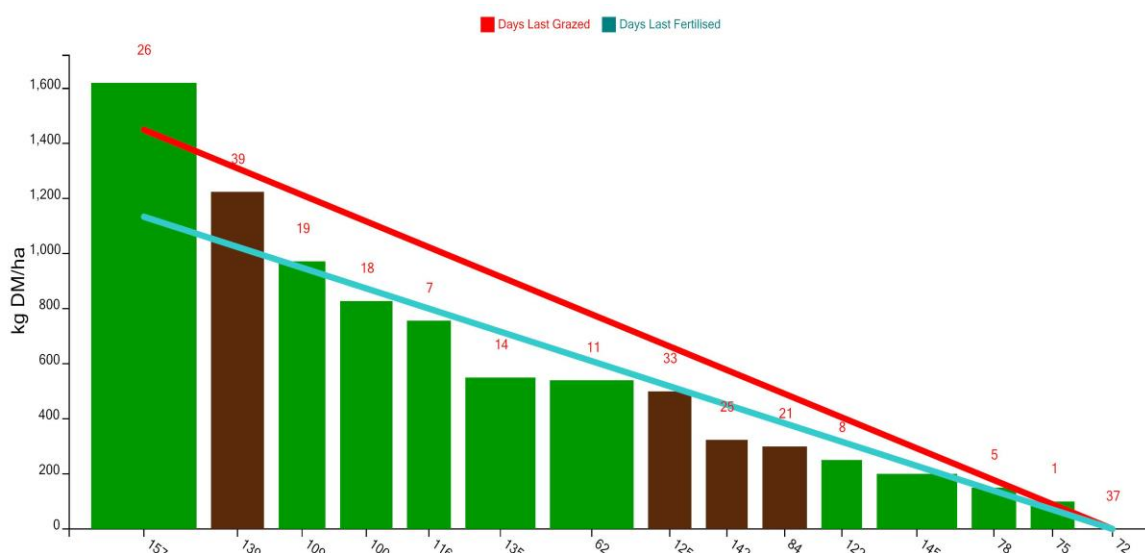
- The calves are still receiving ~2.2 kg/head/day at grass.
- We are monitoring the calves closely for stomach and lungworms, especially after the warm, wet weather over the last two weeks. Thankfully, the calves do not seem to be as susceptible to worm infestation as last year, possibly due to stronger immunity levels.

Grass Management:

- The latest farm cover was taken on the 28th August. Grass growth averaged 46 kgDM/ha/day across the three farmlets.
- Grass DM is around 16.5%. Pre-grazing yields are ~1300kgDm/ha.
- The paddocks set aside for second cut silage are growing rapidly. These will be cut by the end of September to allow for some cover build up prior to closing.

	Growth/ha (kg DM/ha/day)	Demand/ha (kg DM/ha/day)	Farm Cover (kg DM/ha)	LU/ha	Days Ahead
High	57	45	627	4.17	14
Medium	40	43	593	3.99	14
Low	40	40	620	3.76	16

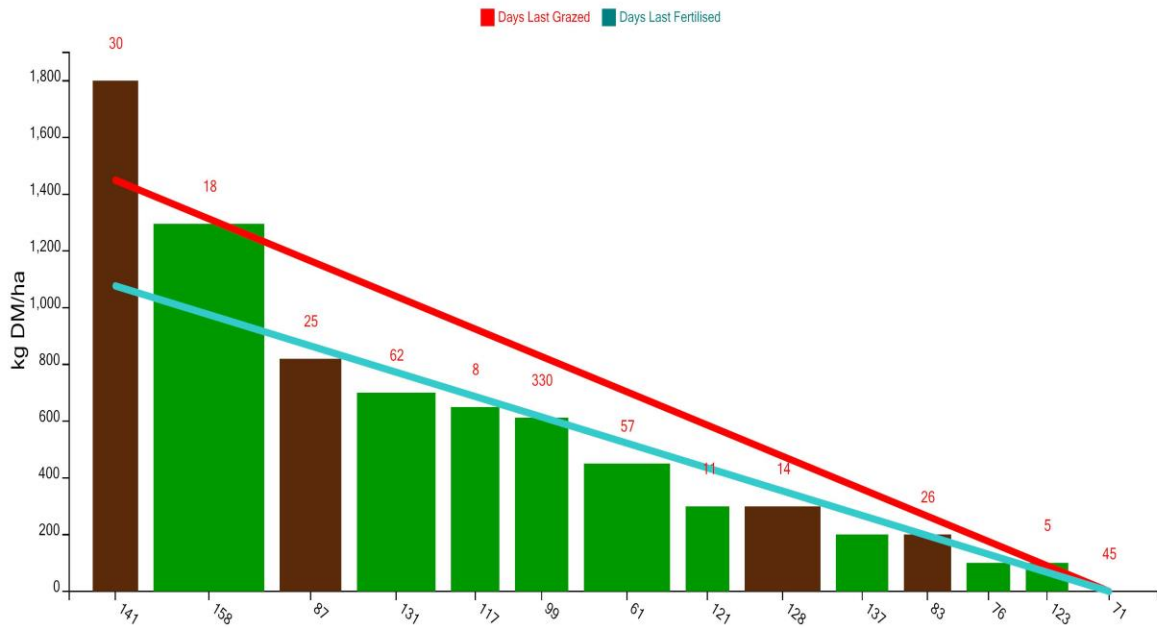
High stocking density



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Medium stocking density



Low stocking density

