

Teagasc Dairy Beef Research Programme

Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford

Update: January 2020

January brought average weather conditions, with rainfall for the month currently totalling 118.7 ml with a mean temperature of 6.1°C, and mean soil temperature of 5.2°C. Ground conditions have been poor across the farm, with conditions slightly improving towards the end of the month. Paddocks with heavier covers are particularly wet. The farm finally had a second clear TB test on the 17th January after months of restriction. The cattle are doing well, with very few illnesses other than the occasional foot problem. The second cut silage pit was opened in the New Year; although the pit is of lower quality in terms of digestibility, animal intakes remain high.

Animal Performance:

22 month old heifers & steers

- The remaining trial heifers were weighed on the 2nd January and averaged 516 kg.
- Out of the remaining 27 heifers to be killed, 23 were killed on the 13th January in Slaney. They averaged 533 kg live weight on the 10th January.
- Four heifers remain to be killed; although these are still very light (~420 kg), they are coming fat and will be killed in February. They continue to be fed 5 kg concentrates and *ad lib* grass silage.

Table 1. Average slaughter results of heifers killed according to breed.

	Age at slaughter (days)	Live weight	Carcass weight	KO%	Conf.	Fat
AA	642.6	554	265	48%	4.6 (O-/O=)	9.6 (3+/4-)
HE	633.9	539	259	48%	4.9 (O-/O=)	9.5 (4-)
LM	638.6	526	264	50%	6.1 (O+)	8.1 (3=)

Table 2. Average slaughter results of heifers killed according to stocking rate.

	Age at slaughter (days)	Live weight	Carcass weight	KO%	Conf.	Fat
High	636.3	531	261	49%	5.3 (O=)	8.9 (3=/3+)
Medium	638.1	546	265	48%	5.2 (O=)	8.8 (3=/3+)
Low	640.5	539	263	49%	5.4 (O=)	9.4 (3+)

- The steers are currently being fed *ad lib* silage only. They were weighed on the 6th January, averaging 596 kg. Some steers are becoming fit, at their next weighing they will be BCS and drafted out for slaughter if fit.

Table 3. Weight of steers, January 2020.

	06/01/2020	2 nd Winter ADG
High	591 kg	0.54 kg/day
Medium	604 kg	0.57 kg/day

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Low	594 kg	0.68 kg/day
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Spring born calves

- The calves were weighed on the 6th January. They averaged 274 kg, gaining 0.63 kg/day.
- The calves continue to be fed 2.5 kg concentrate/head/day. They will be weaned off concentrates from the start of February in preparation for turnout.
- The group of 23 weaker calves remain in Kildavin on a straw bed and have improved dramatically and are gaining ~0.7 kg/day.

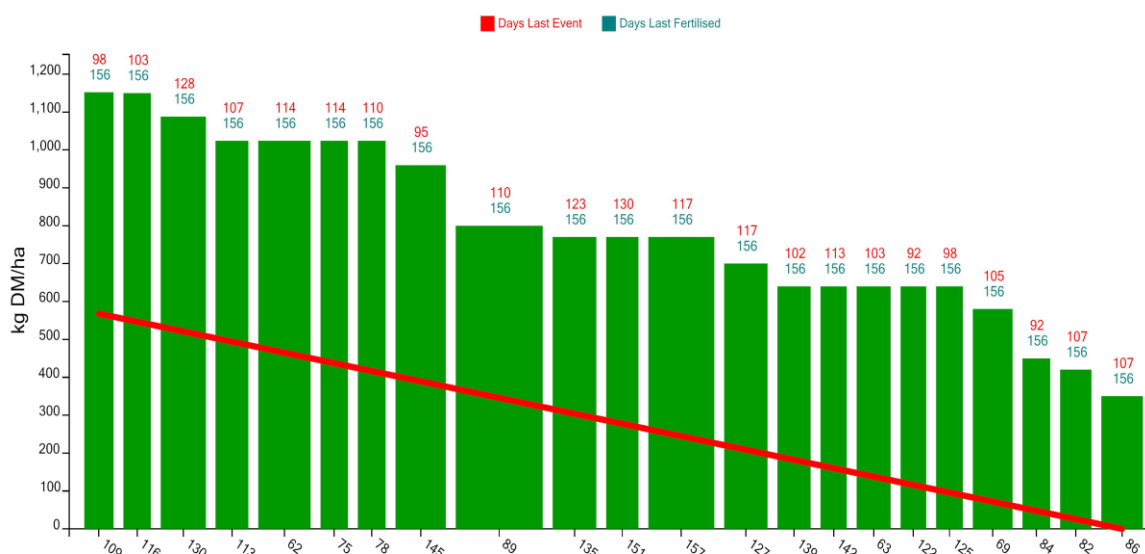
Grassland Management

- Soil sampling was conducted the week of the 20th January. A nutrient management plan will be drawn up once the results are returned. Slurry will be spread using the trailing shoe on the driest paddocks when ground conditions allow.
- A farm cover was taken the last week of January. The average farm cover, including commercial land, was 835 kg DM/ha.

Table 4. Farm cover, 29th January 2020

	Farm cover	Growth/ha	Demand/ha	Grazing area	Total LU	LU/ha	Days ahead
	Kg DM/ha	Kg DM/ha/day	Kg DM/ha/day	Ha			
High	790	5	29	22.32	67.4	3.02	27
Medium	944	6	26	24.26	67.4	2.78	36
Low	878	4	24	26.76	67.4	2.52	37

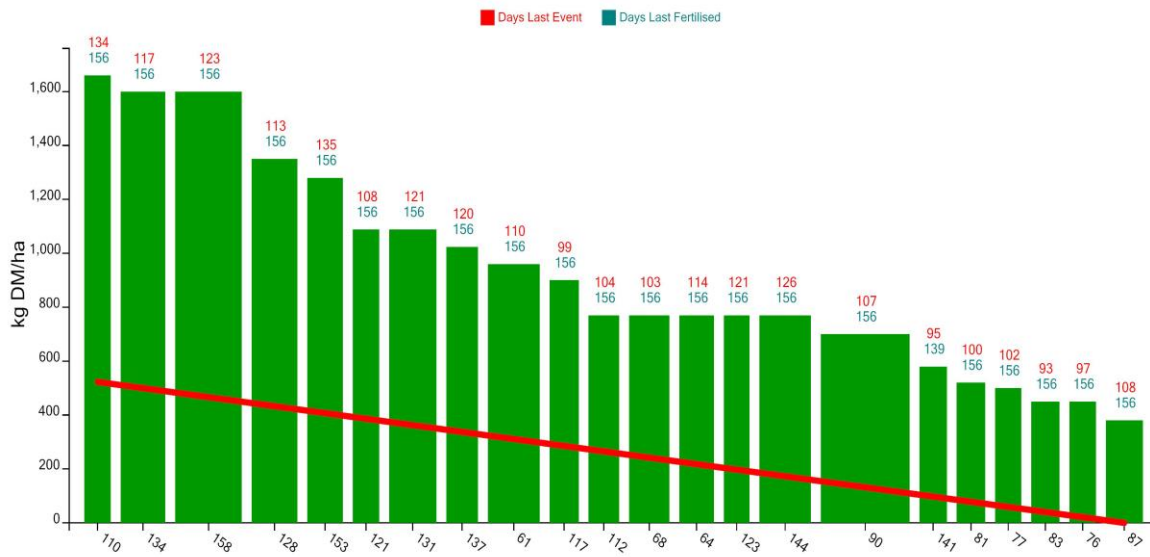
High stocking density farmlet



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Medium stocking density farmlet



Low Stocking Density Farmlet

