

Teagasc Dairy Beef Research Programme

Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford

Update: July 2019

Animal Performance:

2.5 year old steers

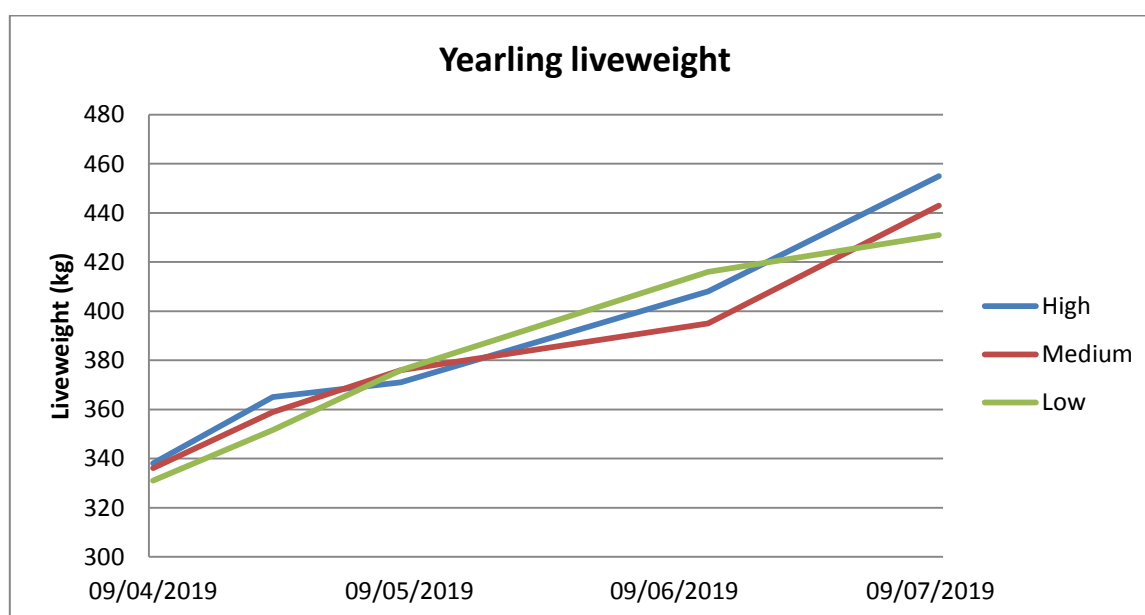
- The remaining 2.5 year old steers began meal feeding towards the end of May; they were built up to 5 kg concentrate per head in preparation for slaughter.
- 49 bullocks were killed on the 22nd July. These were 28 months of age at slaughter and obtained an average carcass weight of 365 kg with a 51% kill out. They achieved an O+ conformation score and 3+ fat score on average.
- 16 bullocks were not fit and will be killed in the next few weeks; they remain on 5 kg concentrate/head/day.

Average slaughter results of 2017 born bullocks killed to date

	No. animals killed	Carcass weight	Kill out %	Conformation score	Fat Score	Lifetime ADG
High	29	338.3	50.8	5.9 (O+)	9.2 (3+)	0.766
Medium	34	345.0	50.4	6.0 (O+)	9.0 (3+)	0.764
Low	29	345.4	51.3	5.9 (O+)	8.8 (3+)	0.798

Yearlings (18 month old)

- The yearlings have performed well over the summer, and are currently averaging 444 kg live weight, gaining 0.8 kg/day.
- The heifers and steers are co-grazing in their groups of 72. The heifers will be drafted out in a few weeks to commence their finishing period with concentrate supplementation.



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Spring born calves

- The calves arrived into Johnstown castle on the 12th July. This was later than normal due to the farm being locked up with TB.
- The calves had been on *ad lib* meal for an extra three to four weeks before they arrived.
- The average date of birth is the 25th February 2019. The calves were on average 155 kg live weight on arrival, and were almost 4.5 months old (136 days).
- A few days after arrival, two calves died. It is suspected that the stress of transport and sudden dietary and environmental change (*ad lib* meal only to grass with meal; indoors to outdoors etc.) were contributing factors. All calves received antibiotic treatment a week after arrival as they suffered a health setback, which was possibly due to weakened immune systems because of elevated stress levels. This had a knock on effect on their performance in these first few weeks.
- The calves are grazing in two groups currently, and will be randomised into their three stocking density groups in a few weeks' time once fully adjusted to the farm.
- The calves are being fed 2 kg concentrate at grass.

Grassland Management:

- The first cut of pit silage was cut on the 24th May. 22 paddocks were cut, averaging 4648 kgDM/ha at 19% DM.
- 11 paddocks were cut and baled for silage on the 17th June, averaging 5918 kg DM/ha.
- The second cut of pit silage was cut on the 24th July. 23 paddocks were cut, averaging 5277 kgDM/ha at 23% DM.
- Growth rates remained strong for the summer months, over 50 kg DM/ha per day on average. The cattle are grazing paddocks out well, to 4.2 cm on average.
- Calves are grazing lower covers of 11-1200 kg DM/ha, while older cattle are grazing covers of 15-1600 kg DM/ha.

Cover July 31st 2019

	Growth/ha	Demand/ha	Farm cover	Grazing area	Total LU	LU/ha	Days ahead
	Kg DM/ha/day	Kg DM/ha/day	Kg DM/ha	Ha			
High	39	48	434	22.32	91	4.08	9
Medium	57	46	479	24.26	96	3.96	10
Low	46	41	345	26.76	94	3.51	8

