

Teagasc Dairy Beef Research Programme

Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford

Update: October 2019

Animal Performance:

2.5 year old steers

- The sixteen 2017 born bullocks were finally killed on 21st October.
- They averaged 31.5 months of age at slaughter and were 765 kg live weight.

Yearlings (18 month old)

- The yearlings were weighed on the 1st October and averaged 509 kg.
- The heifers continue to be fed 5 kg concentrate at grass.
- The steers were housed on the 18th October, while the heifers remained at grass for an extra week before being housed on the 24th October.
- 17 heifers (8 AAX and 9 HEX) were killed on the 22nd October in ABP Waterford and Slaney; 6 from highs, 3 from mediums and 8 from lows. They averaged 560 kg live weight pre slaughter.
- The 9 HEX heifers achieved 265 kg carcass weight on average with an O+ and 4- conformation and fat score.
- The remaining 100 heifers are being fed 5 kg concentrates and *ad lib* grass silage indoors and will be killed over the next few weeks as factory space becomes available.

	Heifers @ housing	ADG (kg/day)	Steers @ housing	ADG (kg/day)
High	500 kg	0.83	557 kg	0.95
Medium	510 kg	0.80	560 kg	0.92
Low	480 kg	0.83	541 kg	0.85

Spring born calves

- The calves were weighed on the 9th October and averaged 213 kg.
- A group of 23 calves were housed on a straw bed early October due to deteriorating health. They will remain there for their first winter. The results of bloods and faecal samples showed no signs of coccidiosis, worms, fluke or any other infection; however they were treated with Vecoxan and Albex as a precaution.
- The other 200 calves remained at grass, supplemented with 2 kg of a 16% Crude protein calf ration per head daily, until the 29th October when they were housed due to forecasted heavy rainfall. The calves averaged 225 kg at housing.

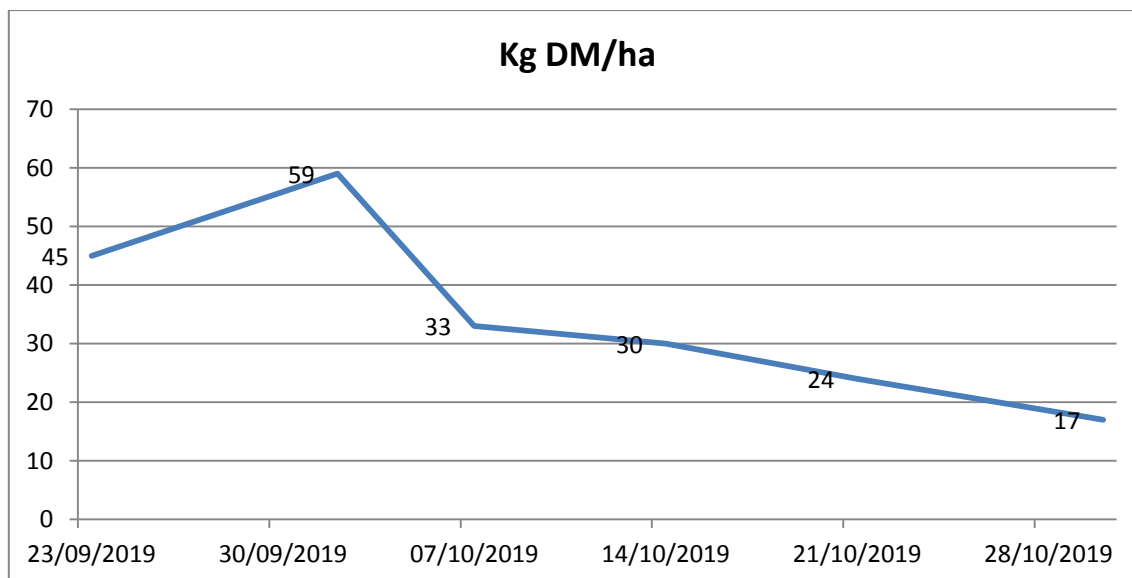
	Weight 09/10/2019	Weight @ housing	ADG first winter
High	208 kg	215 kg	0.59
Medium	218 kg	227 kg	0.69
Low	212 kg	233 kg	0.73

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Grassland Management:

- Grass growth for the month of October averaged 35 DM/ha/day. Growth gradually declined over the month as temperatures dropped (mean temp dropped 3°C) and rainfall increased (over 90mm).



- Despite very heavy rainfall the ground held up well and cattle continued to graze until the steers were housed on 18th October, followed by the heifers on the 25th and then the calves on the 29th October. The paddocks were grazed out well, averaging 3.47 cm. There was minimal damage to the paddocks through the implementation of strip grazing and being selective with paddocks during wet weather. There was some poaching around feeding troughs.

Total rainfall (mm)	161
Mean temperature (°C)	10.4
Mean 10cm soil temperature (°C)	10.3

- The average pre grazing yield was 1800 kg DM/ha; pre-grazing yields fell substantially towards the end of the month as grass supply became tight on the high and medium farmlets.
- The average grass DM was 16 % for the month of October.
- The aim was to have the entire farm closed by 1st November – however, due to the early housing of the older cattle there are some paddocks left to be grazed, in particular on the low farmlet there are a number of paddocks with over 1500 kg DM/ha that did not get grazed out before housing.
- The target closing farm cover was 500 kg DM/ha. We achieved this with the medium stocking rate, however we the low farmlet was under grazed and the high farmlet was somewhat over grazed at housing.

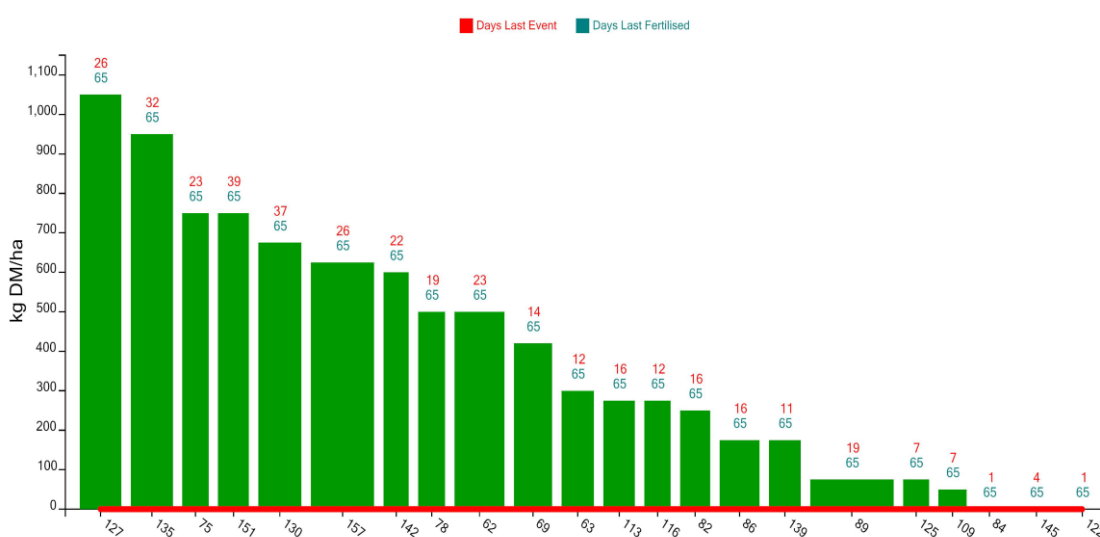
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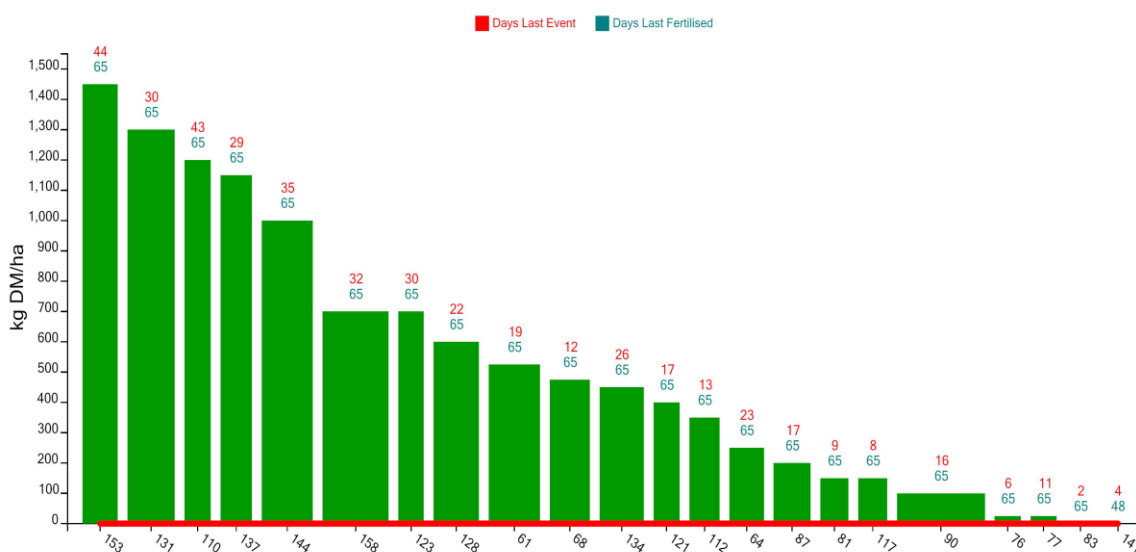
Closing farm Cover October 30th 2019

	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	17	0	392	22.32	0	0	0
Medium	17	0	526	24.26	0	0	0
Low	17	0	651	26.76	0	0	0

High stocking rate farmlet



Medium stocking rate farmlet



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Low stocking rate farmlet

