

Teagasc Notes for week ending Friday 30th April 2021

Grassland

Grass growth rates have been below normal in the past two weeks with the colder weather and frosts that we have been experiencing. We have also had a very little rain coinciding with the colder temperature. Growth is predicted to increase in the coming week which may ease the pressure but in the interim if grass is tight with an Average Farm Cover <550 Kg/DM/Ha, you need to take action. Many farmers are now mid-way through the 2nd rotation. Regrowth's are slow currently and a "hole" is forming in many grass wedges. It is critical to keep the grazing rotation at a minimum of 24 days during April. Don't get into a tail spin going around the farm too quickly. Fill the balance with extra meal feeding until the average farm cover recovers to allow you to reduce to normal levels of feeding for this time of year. Where the farm cover is very tight or below 500 kg DM/ha, a combination of silage and meal feeding may be needed to ensure that there is enough forage in the diet along with the meals. You can consider taking other stock from the grazing platform to prioritise the available grass for the milking cows as we approach breeding.

Supplementary feeding is expensive and time consuming. A turn in the weather to more growthy conditions can happen very quickly at this time of year. To avoid supplementary feeding for longer than is necessary, it is critical to walk your farm to monitor the total amount of grass available. This will enable you to reduce supplementary feeding as soon as the situation recovers.

Congratulations to Caroline & Joe Walsh and family from Lyre, Clonakilty on winning the Grass 10 Farmer of the year Competition 2020. Caroline hosted a very successful Webinar on Wednesday 21st of April. The webinar was recorded so if you missed it or would like to view it again, it is available on the Teagasc website at the following link.

Newford Suckler Herd Breeding programme Update

There are 86 suckler cows and 26 maiden heifers for breeding this season. Cows in the herd are in good condition and the Breeding season started on Wednesday the 21st of April. All cows were tail painted the previous week and heat detection was recorded in a note book to monitor breeding activity. Cows will be batched into two groups (43 per group) for the breeding season and a teaser bull will run with each group. Each teaser bull will be fitted with a chin ball harness for marking the cows and cows will be presented for AI only once a day at midday for each day of the breeding season. It will last for 10 weeks and finish on 30th of June. No stock bulls are used and 100 % AI will be used on the farm again this year. If a cow is inseminated at 12 noon and she is still displaying standing heat again that evening that same cow will be inseminated again the next day (12 noon).

The following criteria was used this year when selecting sires for the Newford Herd: 5 Star Terminal Index (within & across); < 8 % calving difficulty for strong mature cows (beef cow); < 5.8 % calving difficulty for young cows (beef cow); 70 % reliability on the calving difficulty index; 2.25 score on Conformation; < 5.8 % for 1st calvers (beef heifer); 80 % reliability; 35 Kg predicted carcass weight for mature cows; 25 Kg predicted carcass weight for young cows and heifers and the cost of AI straws at less than €18.

The following table shows the AI Sires which will be used on the Newford Herd for 2021.

Important Scheme Closing Date

Basic Payment Scheme: 17th May 2021;

REAP Scheme

The REAP scheme is a new pilot environmental scheme for farmers who are not involved in GLAS or any other environmental scheme. The scheme is piloting a move to a results based agri-environmental schemes and may be the basis for future environmental schemes. Applications must be submitted on-line by your agricultural advisor on behalf of the farmer. The closing date for applications is currently the 10th of May 2021. Contact your local Teagasc office for more information.


AI 5 Stars Sires selected for 2021 Breeding Season (Main Herd)

Code	Sire Name	Breed	Terminal Index	Calving Difficulty	Reliability	Carcase Weight	Reliability	Conformation
H J D	Hideal	CH	€175	7.20%	99%	47 Kg	99%	2.54
F S Z	Fiston	CH	€158	5.70%	99%	40 Kg	99%	2.27
CH 4436	Derryolam Matt	CH	€165	6.30%	94%	40 Kg	82%	2.30
CH 4321	Lapon	CH	€173	4.40%	98%	42 Kg	85%	2.23
CH 4159	Knockmoyle 10 Loki Et	CH	€167	5.70%	99%	36 Kg	99%	2.40
LM 4330	Meelickaduff Lamborghini	LM	€178	6.70%	86%	47 Kg	69%	2.55
LM 4185	Laurel	LM	€149	5.40%	94%	32 Kg	92%	2.61
LM 4366	Gstaad	LM	€197	5.10%	86%	44 Kg	75%	2.76
K Z G	Kilmore Gle	BB	€176	6.50%	86%	36 Kg	85%	3.08
BB 4492	Kilconnelly Kodaline	BB	€194	2.60%	77%	31 Kg	68%	2.98

AI 5 Stars Sire selected for 2021 Breeding Season (Replacement Heifers)

Code	Sire Name	Breed	Terminal Index	Calving Difficulty	Reliability	Carcase Weight	Reliability	Conformation
L M 2014	Ewdenvale Ivor	LM	€161	5.8%	99%	31 Kg	99%	2.51