

Shinagh Dairy Farm Report 29-03-2019

Farm Update

There are 230 cows calved. Planned start of calving was 10-Feb (based on a 282 day gestation length) Calving started on Feb 2nd and 45 animals (cows and heifers) were calved by the 10th Feb, that's 20% of the herd. 93% of the herd calved in 6 weeks. 50% of the herd was calved in the first 11 days from planned start date. 140 calves are gone to the contract rearer in Rosscarbery. These calves will be sold from there at or before weaning off milk replacer once there is a market for them. The first of the calves from here are due to be sold next week.

The farm grass cover is 1056kg/ha. Cows are grazing day and night at the moment and getting 2.5kg of a 16% ration. There is no silage in the diet. Our grazing area per day is based on our spring rotation plan, where we plan to have all the farm grazed for the 7th April. We got 31% of the farm grazed by the 3rd of March. These paddocks are recovering well and we are holding this day to start the second rotation based on the covers on the first paddocks grazed. The Spring Rotation plan target is to have 77% of the farm grazed by Sunday and we are at 79% grazed to date. Grass growth has been so good that some silage ground that always has been grazed once before being cut for silage this year will not be grazed at all before closing for silage. This ground will obviously have to be cut for silage earlier than usual this year.

The herd is being milked twice a day. The current co-op milk details are as follows: 23.0 litres/day at 4.23% fat, 3.55% protein, 4.95% lactose, 83,000 SCC and 8,000 TBC. That's 1.84 kg of milk solids per cow per day. 10 cows are on once a day milking based on condition score. This is to give them every chance to come bulling in the first 3 weeks of the breeding season.

All the farm got 0.5bag of urea in mid-January and has got its second 0.5 bag of urea in early March. We are moving to using protected urea instead of CAN from mid-April on this year. This is to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, and reduce the farm carbon footprint. 14% of the farm has got 2,000 gallons of slurry per acre, which went on the low grass covers.

Updates are on the Shinagh website: <http://www.shinaghdairy.ie/>