

Teagasc Johnstown Castle
Teagasc/ABP Dairy Beef Research Programme

Update: 24-11-2017

Animal Performance: Older cattle

- The weather has been changeable over the last few weeks; however the cooler frosts of late are suiting the housed cattle better for fear of pneumonia in the older sheds.
- Heifers continue to be fed *ad lib* silage with 5.55 kg of concentrate (fresh weight). Steers are on *ad lib* grass silage only.
- The grass silage being fed is last year's pit silage which is of moderate-to-good quality.
- We have been measuring the intakes of the heifers and steers over the past two weeks; silage is weighed out to each pen using the diet feeder for three days. Whatever silage is left over is collected and weighed on the fourth day. The pens contain 9 animals and are penned by sex and breed.
- Cattle were tagged for genotyping on the 8th and 9th of November. They were also weighed, dosed for worms and adult fluke and clipped and drenched for lice.
- Average daily gain of heifers and steers for their second winter is 1.10kg and 0.76kg/day, respectively.

Silage Analysis	
DM	24.7%
DMD	72.1%
Crude protein	13.9%
ME	10.4 MJ/kg

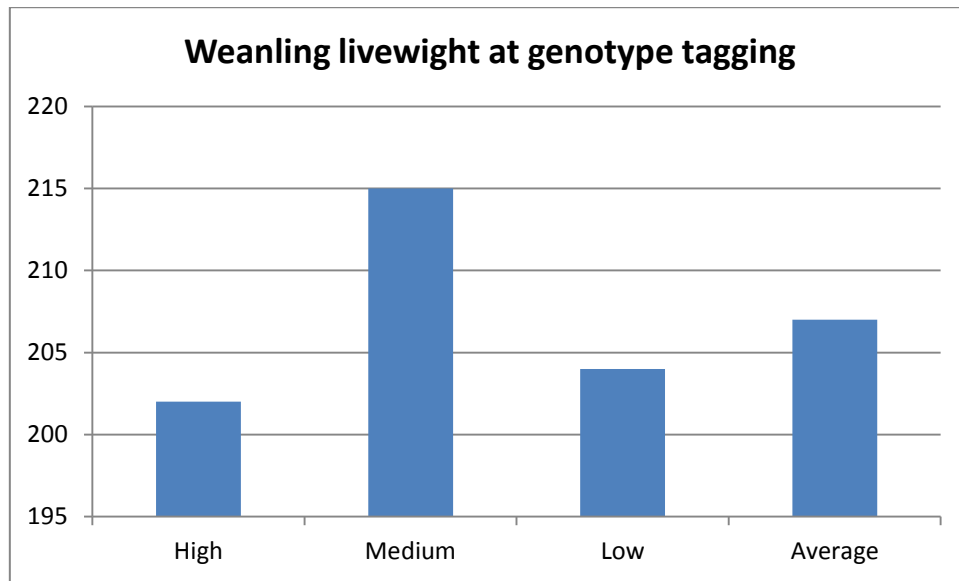


08/11/2017	Liveweight Heifers	Liveweight Steers
High	473	475
Medium	488	484
Low	493	475
Average	484	478

Animal Performance: 2017 calves

- Calves are being fed 2.0kg concentrate and *ad lib* silage.
- Calves were tagged for genotyping, weighted and dosed for worms and fluke. They were also clipped and drenched for lice. The calves on slats were sorted by breed within their stocking density groups. This took place over three days;
 - Highs and lows: 17th Nov
 - Mediums: 23rd Nov
 - Sick calves and spares: 24th Nov

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- There are 68 sick calves being housed on straw. These are divided into two groups; a pen of sick calves (32) and a pen of poorer performing calves (36). The poorer performing calves have improved over the housing period thus far and some will be drafted back into their stocking density groups on slats shortly.
- The sick calves have poor coats, ring worm and a heavy cough.
- Overall the average liveweight of the 68 calves is 177kg. However, when separated out, the 32 sick calves are only averaging 157kg.
- The rest of the calves (majority housed on slats, only a few other spares are housed on straw) are averaging 215kg, almost 40kg ahead of the poor performing calves.
- So far we have lost 13 trial calves, giving a mortality rate of 5.13%.
- The commercial calves in Johnstown castle are averaging over 245kg, showing a difference of almost 40kg between these and the trial calves.
- The average daily gains of the good calves were variable, with many showing a slight loss in weight per day. This may have been due to a gut fill effect on the day of weighing.

ADG since last weighing	
Poor calves	0.56
Good highs	0.03
Good mediums	0.29
Good lows	0.15