

# Johnstown Castle Winter Milk Herd

## Management Notes 08/06/20

- Total Rainfall for the month of **May** was **17.7mm**, with soil temp around the 10 year avg. of 11.4°C. Just **2.0mm rainfall in June** to date, so we are in a drought situation for most of the farm – some of the heavier soil types still grew ~ more than 40kgs last week, but the drier paddocks stood still with a few loosing grass, leaving us with an average growth rate across most treatments of **~30kgs/dm/Day**. Soil moisture deficits are around 65.
- We have 4 treatment “herds” on the farm at present, along with a general herd, our plan for all herds during drought conditions is to maintain a rotation length of ~ 22 days, if there’s not enough grass in that area for the day, then we have make up the shortfall with silage or concentrate or both. I see no point in trying to extend rotation length beyond the normal in a scenario where some paddocks might be losing grass – graze it when it’s there! We had blanket spread 25kgs/N 14 days ago, plan would be to go again next week, assuming we get some of the rain that’s forecast for this weekend (probably spread only 20kgs). If we get no rain, we won’t spread.

**Intensive Autumn treatment** stocked at 4LU/ha, in big trouble, feeding silage for past 10 days along with 5kgs concentrate, target would be to conserve ~ 0.5T Dm/cow of grass silage for winter period –only 13% of that requirement made yet (& feeding silage at 8kgs/day at present). Milk performance holding up very well.

**Extensive Autumn treatment** stocked at 2.75LU/ha, have had no issues up to now – pre-mowed a couple of plots that we would have targeted for surplus, the extra land area is saving this herd up to now – we have silage after-grass ground which I expect we’ll pull in for grazing within the next 5/6 days, this should see us ok for another 10 days or so, before we’ll have to supplement hard if we don’t get significant rainfall. Feeding just 2kgs conc to this group at present. Target winter silage of ~1.4T dm/cow, we have ~40% of this requirement. I’m happy with milk performance (1.82kgs MS @ 240days in milk).

**Grass/Clover Spring herd.** stocked at 2.75LU/ha, Again this herd have had adequate grass supply up to now (this will change over the next week or so given growth rates of 20 or less, but the lower stocking rate & grass coming back in after silage will see them ok for another week at least, if drought conditions persist we will increase concentrate& pull in all area to the grazing platform, a target of ~1.4t silage DM/cow, with 42% of this made. Milk performance is good at 2.18kgs ms/cow, feeding 3kgs concentrate.

**Multi-species Grass/Clover Spring herd.** stocked at 2.75LU/ha, This herd have had adequate forage up to now, growth rates have been similar up to the last week, they appear to be significantly higher on this herd over the past week at ~ 40kgs, this might be a result of the better drought resistance of the multi-species swards – we’ll know more if this pattern continues over the next week or two, cows have been happy grazing the multi-species, clean out has been excellent. We have some silage ground coming back in & we’re ok for at least another week with this herd (possibly longer if growth rates hold up). Current performance is back a bit compared to Grass/clover (2.18 v 1.96), but for the year to date the multi species are actually a little ahead so far. Target silage conserved is same as grass/clover, but we’ve only 24% of requirement made yet.

- Breeding season for the spring herds has gone well to date (5 weeks in, all heifers served & all bar 2 cows) Moving to beef sired Ai this week. Our scan of the autumn herd came in with an empty rate of ~13% overall, it’s ok but is a little higher than we would have hoped, following two years of <10% empty, (this is off an 11 week breeding season).
- The lack of rainfall is beginning to cause a few headaches, but since Patrick’s day (when we were swamped with water!) grazing conditions have been excellent and very easy to manage, so if we could get some of that March rain back for a few days we’d be grand!

	<i>This week (08/06/20)</i>	<b>Autumn Herd (Intensive)</b>	<b>Spring Herd (Grass/Clover)</b>
<b>Production</b>	% of Herd Milking	100%	100%
	Milk Kg	23.2	27.7
	Fat %	4.43	4.38
	Protein %	3.97	3.57
	Milk Solids kg	1.94	2.18
<b>Intake Estimates</b>	Grazed Grass kgs/dm/cow	8	16
	Silage kgs/dm/cow	7	0
	Maize silage kgs/dm/cow	0	0
	Concentrate in TMR –	0	0
	Parlour concentrate	5	3.0
<b>Totals</b>	<b><i>Lactation to date per cow</i></b>	Mean calving date 6 <sup>th</sup> October	Mean calving date 19 <sup>th</sup> Feb
	Days in Milk	246	109
	Milk kg	6369	3017
	Milk Solids kg	513	230
	Concentrate Fed	1454kgs—(840 parlor + 614 blend)	358

Farm: Johnstown Castle Dairy

Treatment: Autumn Reds

**Management Decisions**

Rotation Length (days):	22	Residual Cover (cm)	4
Target Pre-Grazing (kg DM/ha):	1300		

**Cover Parameters**

Farm Cover (kg DM/ha):	475.00	Total LU:	44.0
Cover / LU (kg DM/LU):	119.00	LU / ha:	3.98
Growth/ha (kg DM/ha/day):	31(47)	Grazing Area:	11.05 ha (14)
Demand / ha (kg DM/ha/day):	32.00	Reseed:	0.00 ha (0)
Demand / day (kg DM/day):	352.00	Silage - Cut Later:	0.00 ha (0)
Days ahead:	15.00	Silage - Cut Now:	0.00 ha (0)
Kg LWT / ha:		Other:	0.00 ha (0)
		Rotation Length Back (Days):	21

