

Shinagh Farm Update:

Milk: 10.60 litres per day at 5.50% Fat and 4.07% Protein giving 1.04kg of milk solids per day. The herd is getting 4 kg of baled silage drymatter and 3kg of ration per day currently. The not in calf cull cows have been sold off the farm. There are 234 cows milking. The herd has produced 335kg of milk solids per cow to the end of Sept. This is 30kg down on the same period in 2020. The main reason is litres and protein % were down in May and June this year compared to 2020.

The herd has been scanned and there is 7.4% of the cow herd not in calf after 12 weeks breeding. There is no difference between the cows that got sexed AI straws and conventional AI straws in the first 3 weeks of breeding. There is 1.8% of the replacement heifers not in calf after 12 weeks breeding too.

Grass: the farm cover is 1012kg drymatter per hectare, and the stocking rate is 2.91cows per hectare on the grazing area, giving a cover per cow of 348kg/cow. Growth was 41kg/day for the last week which is exceeding the current demand of 29kg/ha/day.

18 acres of the leased outside ground which is used for silage has been reseeded with a red clover hybrid grass mixture. The plan is to graze this in spring and autumn before and after silage cuts. This ground will get no bag nitrogen just P and K. It will get slurry applications as normal. We will find out how well red clover will persist when it is grazed like this in conjunction with silage cutting.

The autumn grazing plan is to graze 70% of the farm from early Oct to early Nov. This is on target, grazing 2ha of the farm per 24 hours. The remaining 30 % will then be grazed until about the 20th Nov, with a target closing cover of 750kg/ha. We need to close at this high cover because of the high grass demand in spring, which is driven by the very compact calving of 93% in 6 weeks and the high grazing area stocking rate of 3 cows/ha.

The mixed species paddock that was set in May 2020 has produced slightly higher yield of 12.62tonnes/drymatter/hectare compared to the average of 12.12 tonnes for all paddocks to date in 2021. It has only got 93kg/ha of bag nitrogen, up to mid-April in 2021. It also got 2,500 gals/ac of slurry in March and 2000gals/ac of soiled water from the parlour tank in May. The clover in this sward is producing the nitrogen to drive this level of production.