

Derrypatrick Farm Notes week beginning 28/08/2017

General details

Beef heifers and steers were weighed this week and the results are presented in table 1. Feeding value of grass has decreased considerably and is evident by recent performance (ADG²) therefore; both groups of beef animals will now be offered concentrate supplementation at grass ahead of planned slaughter. As sufficient grass is available and the fact we are establishing clover in 50% of the farm, concentrate supplementation will be offered at grass. In the case of extreme weather or grass supply deteriorates dramatically, the option is there to house these animals and finish indoors offering high-quality baled silage with the 5kg concentrates per animal. Concentrate will be gradually built up to 5kg/head/day before finishing at 20-22 months.

(kg)	LW	ADG ¹	ADG ²
Heifers	521	0.86	0.50
Steers	606	1.13	0.70

Table 1.

¹ ADG since turnout

² ADG since last weight 09/08/17

Last week, we recorded the highest grass growth (90kgDM/ha) on farm since the beginning of June. This burst of growth has dramatically increased grass supply. However, as it is now the beginning of September, grass growth will slow and the weather could deteriorate very quickly and challenge this grass supply. An additional challenge for us is to graze “clover” paddocks at a desirable herbage mass to aid clover establishment while trying to build grass supply and extend the grazing rotation.

Faecal sampling has been carried out on farm throughout the summer to determine worm burden in calves. Until now, there has been no issue with stomach or lung worm. The recent sample, taken a fortnight ago, revealed a faecal egg count of 175 eggs per gram (epg). As this is close to the threshold for treatment of 200epg and current weather conditions favourable for worm infestations, calves were treated this week with a Levamisole based product.

Grassland management

- Farm cover: 900kg DM/ha
- Growth: 90 kgDM/ha/day
- Demand/ha: 42 kgDM/ha/day
- Days ahead: 23
- Fertiliser following grazing: CAN (1bag/acre)

Weekly planner

- Spread CAN to help build grass supply
- Commence concentrate supplementation for beef animals



Picture 1. Grass at the 2-3 leaf stage in reseeded paddock prior to grazing



Picture 2. First grazing of reseeded paddock 7 weeks post-sowing



Picture 3. Reseed post grazing in the foreground with heifers grazing reseed in background



Picture 4. Cows & calves moving to new paddock