

Derrypatrick Farm Notes week beginning 06/11/2017

General details

The Derrypatrick cow herd currently consists of animals from the suckler herd and Limousin sired animals from Friesian cows (LM x FR), with the herd a ~50:50 split between the two cow breed-types. This week, the last of the suckler-bred replacement heifers arrived to Grange following purchase directly from farm. These animals are Limousin and Simmental sired heifers. All heifers were blood sampled, vaccinated against respiratory diseases, treated for parasites and quarantined from the main herd upon arrival. Blood samples from the heifers that arrived last week showed evidence of liver fluke present with no other issue to report. A summary of the suckler-bred replacement heifers is presented in Table 1. We have yet to source LM x FR replacements however, this will be carried out over the coming weeks.

Replacement heifers	No.	DOB	Weight (kg)	Rep Index (€)	No. Genotyped
Suckler-bred	17	21/02/2017	327	118	9

Table 1.

There is currently 104 weanlings still at grass. Ground conditions, although improved in comparison to 4 weeks ago, remain quite sticky. Weanlings are grazing the area of the farm not closed (~30%) and with little or no ground damage to report. Grazing is being managed by offering 12-24 hour allocations, paddock depending. All weanlings are receiving 1kg concentrate/head/day at grass. Last week, soil temperatures to a 10cm depth were 8°C, providing the foundations for grass growth to exceed demand by 11kg. This week, a couple of frosty nights have reduced this temperature below that required for grass growth (6°C) to ~5°C and should see grass growth decline below current demand level. Next week, a pasture cover of the full grazing area will be measured in order to assess current farm cover. The farm cover reported below is of the area currently open for grazing. Target average farm cover of the whole grazing area at the point of closing is ~550 kgDM/ha.

Grassland management

- Farm cover: 740 kgDM/ha
- Growth: 43 kgDM/ha/day
- Demand: 32 kgDM/ha/day
- Days ahead: 18
- Percentage of farm closed: 69%

Weekly planner

- Draft animals for slaughter
- Monitor newly purchased replacement heifers
- Source LMxFR replacement heifers
- Check ground conditions for possible Potash spreading



Picture 1. Weanling steers at grass



Picture 2. Clean-out achieved by weanling steers



Picture 3. A selection of replacement heifers that arrived this week



Picture 4. Replacement heifers at grass