

Derrypatrick Farm Notes 23/03/2018

General details

At the beginning of this week, it was planned to turn all yearlings out to grass however, due to ground conditions and the weather forecast they remain housed. In total, 26mm of rainfall was recorded from March 16th to 18th which led to a further deterioration of ground conditions. There is a good supply of silage so fodder is not an issue however, 66 cows have now calved and space is becoming a problem. Space is limiting for cows and calves and therefore, we have improvised and have put in place temporary creep area adjoining a number of slatted pens. We are hopeful that ground conditions and the weather forecast will improve and allow the turnout of stock next week.

This week, two calves were treated by the vet. According to the vet, one calf had diphtheria, a respiratory disease that was noticed by a wheeze when breathing. The second calf was dull, off-form and weak and according to the vet, had early onset of viral pneumonia. Both calves were treated accordingly and have since improved. As animals remained housed, we are extra vigilant of potential issues regarding calf health. Any calf that appears off-form has their temperature checked immediately and corrective action taken if required.

Calving

- Start date: 10/02/2018
- Total calved 66/97
- Total live calves: 67
- Mortalities: 3 abortions

Grassland management

- Cover taken 22/02/2018
- Farm cover: 914 kgDM/ha
- Growth: n/a
- Demand: n/a

Weekly planner

- Move cows to the calving shed ahead of due date falls and indications of calving are visible e.g. elder, pin-bones etc.
- Primary focus remains on calving and ensuring assistance is provided when needed
- Disbud and vaccinate calves for respiratory diseases as they fall of age
- Check fencing and water supply are correct and fit for grazing to begin
- Measure farm grass cover
- Monitor ground conditions early in the week for possible turnout
- Ensure each grazing group has a number of reasonably dry paddocks ahead providing flexibility with grazing decisions



Picture 1. An example of water-logging on paddocks this week



Picture 2. Dividing a slatted pen in two acting as a creep area for adjoining slatted pens



Picture 3. Fiston heifer (born February 13th) treated by the vet this week for a diphtheria



Picture 4. A sample of 2018 born calves sired by (L to R) ZAG (M), QCD (M), FWO (M) & GWO (F)