

Teagasc Dairy Beef Programme

Update, Johnstown Castle

Date of writing: 06th Sept 2018

Covering period: July-August

July and August brought warm weather and some rain, and the drought conditions of May/June were slow to lift. Poor grass growth continued into July, however only the high stocking density yearlings had to be supplemented with silage for a few days at grass. Once conditions began to pick up at the end of July, 37% of the farmlets were set aside for a late second cut of silage in September.

The steers were killed at 28 months towards the end of July, which greatly reduced the demand on for grass. The yearling heifers started their meal finishing period late August, which also helped reduce demand. The calves have performed well for their second season so far. With the lack of grass, they have remained on concentrates for the entire period.

	May 2018	June 2018
Rainfall (ml)	52.4	49.2
Mean temp (°C)	17.2	15.5
Mean 10cm soil temperature (°C)	19.8	16.5

Animal performance:

2 year old steers

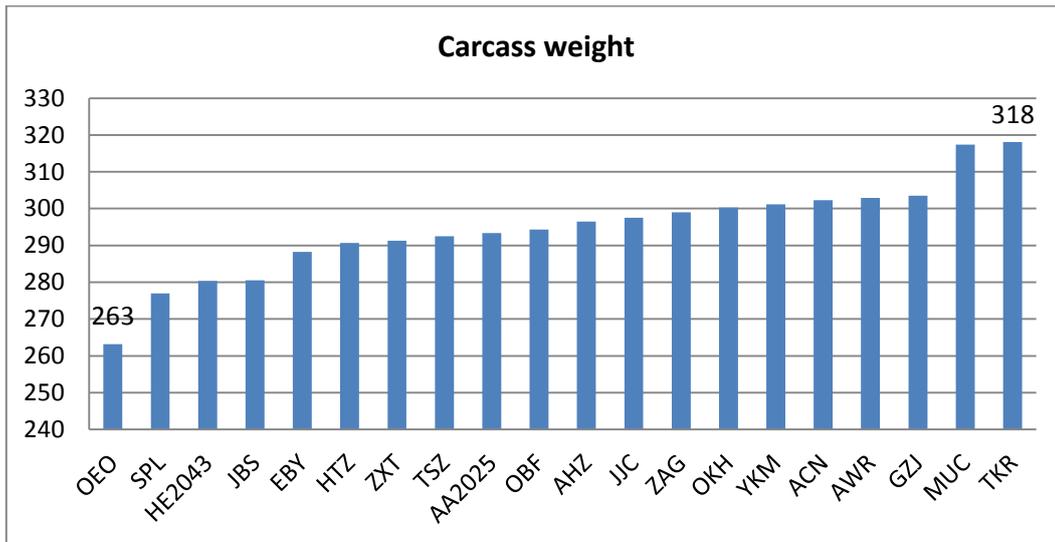
- The steers were killed on the 24th and 31st July, having been built up to 7 kg conc./head/day at grass before slaughter.
- They averaged 692 kg and 658 kg live weight, respectively.

	Live weight (kg)	Carcass weight (kg)	Fat score (1-15)	Conformation score (1-15)	Age at slaughter (days)	3 rd season ADG
High	664	333	8.5	5.1	877	1.55
Medium	687	349	8.8	5.7	877	1.50
Low	674	346	8.1	5.4	878	1.46

- From the 2016 born calves, the results show that there is a significant effect of sire on carcass weight, conformation score, fat score, age at slaughter and lifetime ADG.

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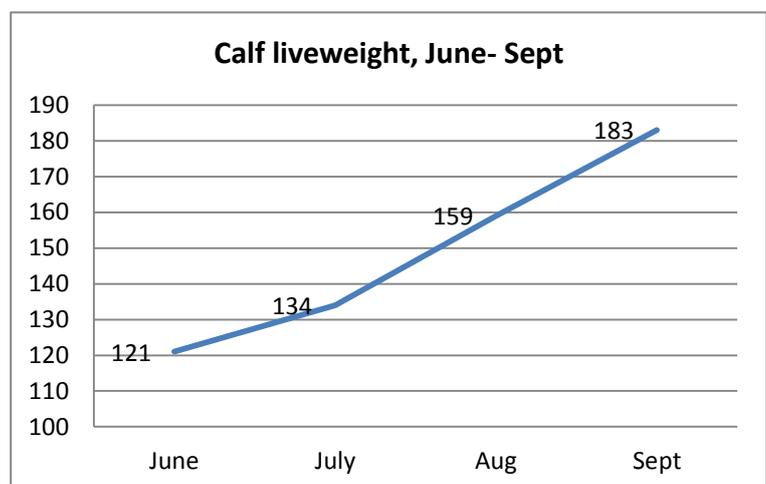
Yearlings

- The yearlings were dosed for worms and given a fly/lice pour-on on the 4th September. .
- The heifers were put on to concentrates at grass on 24th August, three weeks earlier than last year's heifers. They are being built up to 4 kg/head. The aim is to get some killed by mid-October.

	26 July	04 September	ADG 2 nd season
High	398	433	0.88
Medium	406	441	0.95
Low	418	444	1.09

Calves

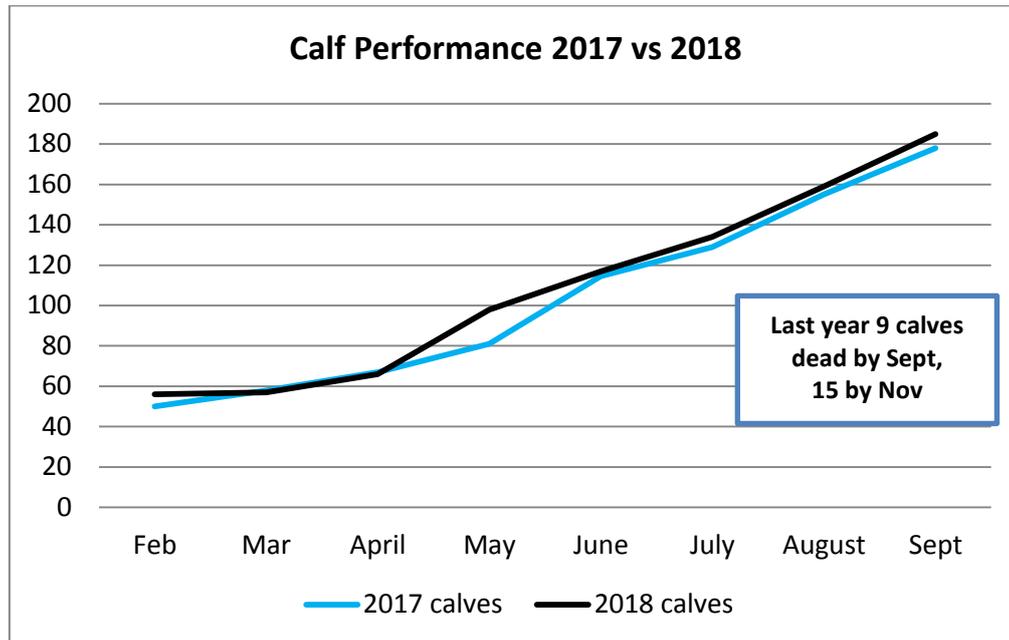
- The calves have had far less health issues than last year. They were being fed 2.5-3 kg concentrates in July and most of August, but this was reduced to 2.2 towards the end of August.
- The first two groups of calves that arrived were weighed and dosed for worms on the 5/6th July. They averaged 141 kg.
- All the calves were weighed on the 7th August, dosed for coccidiosis and given a pour on for flies. They averaged 159 kg.
- The calves were weighed on the 6th September, averaging 185 kg and gaining 0.80 kg/day. They were also divided into their stockign density groups.
- There are 72 calves per farmlet, grazing in two groups of 36. They are grazing covers of



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~1000-1100 kg DM/ha.

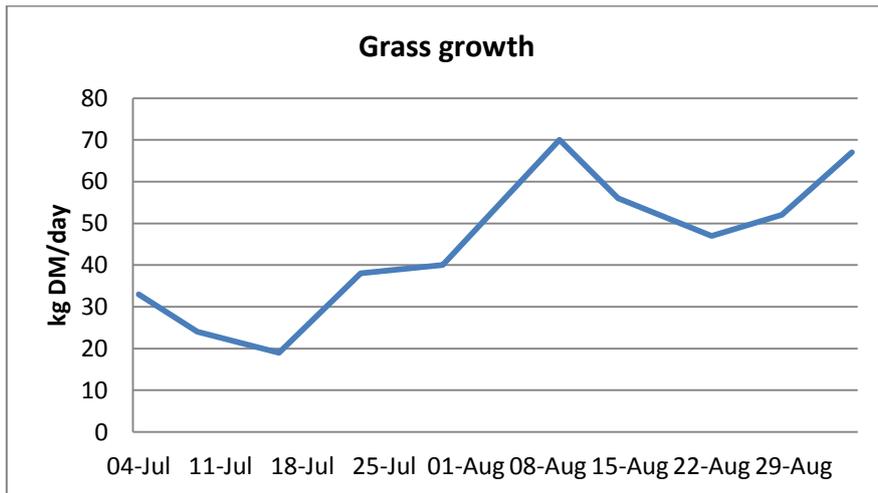


Grass Management:

- July brought further drought with poor grass growth. However, growth picked up in August and has remained good, with paddocks recovering quickly after grazing.
- 37% of the paddocks on the three farmlets were put aside for a late second cut of pit silage at the end of July.
- Towards the end of July, paddocks pre-graze grass yields were ~1400kgDM/ha, however the heavier covers contained a large amount of stemmy grass with seed heads.
- By mid-August there was a change on the ground; grass DM reduced from 33% to 21.5%. Older cattle were going into paddocks of 1350-1600kgDM/ha, with calves going into lower covers of ~1000-1200kgDM/ha.
- Last week, grass DM was around 16.5%, with pre-grazing yields ~1300kgDm/ha.
- The medium stocking density group are becoming tight since the paddocks were closed for silage, so some paddocks may have to be released back for grazing over the next few weeks depending on growing conditions.

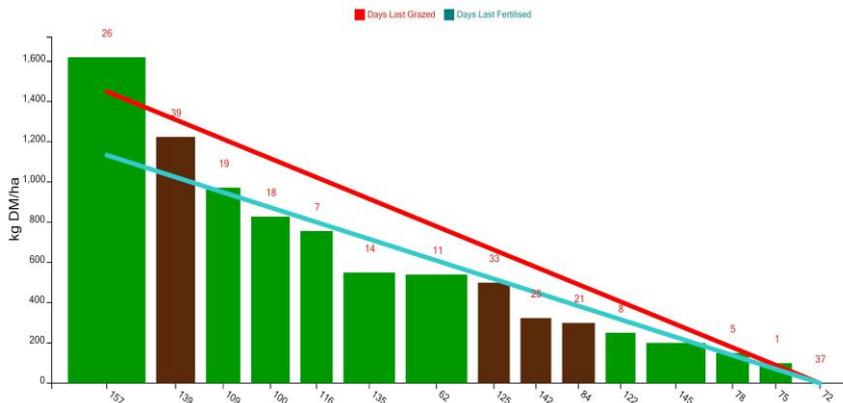
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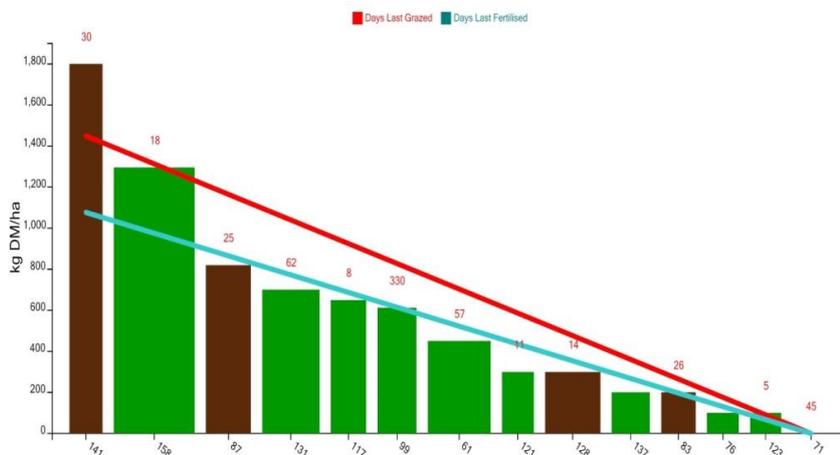


Grass covers, 28th August 2018

High stocking density



Medium stocking density



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Low stocking density

