

Teagasc Johnstown Castle Teagasc/ABP Dairy Beef Research Programme

Update: 03-05-2018

Finally all the trial cattle are out at grass after what seems like an eternal winter.

A total of 125 ml of rain fell in Johnstown castle over the month of April. This was dramatically greater than the 17.5 ml that fell in April of 2017. However, with soil and mean temperatures averaging just below 9°C for the month, grass growth increased towards the latter half of April.

Animal Performance:

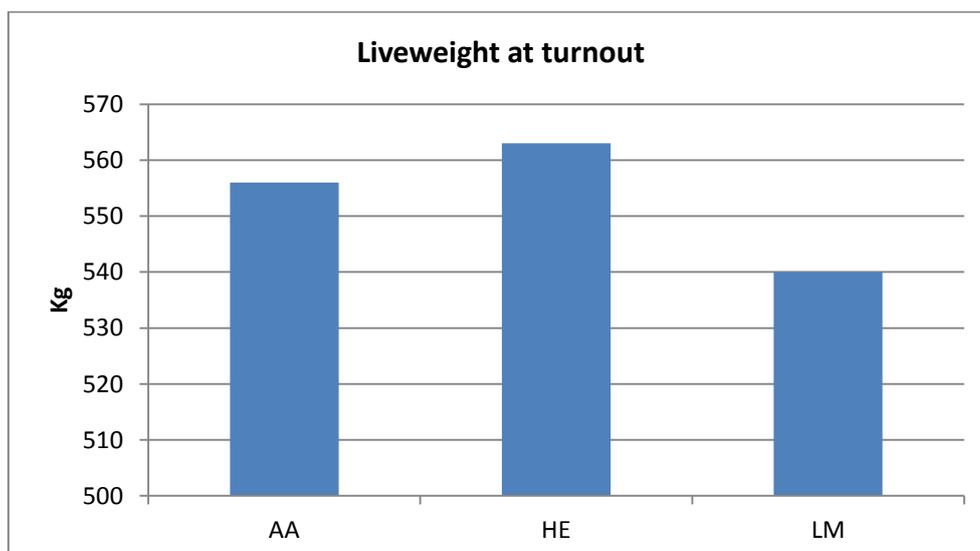
Older cattle

- The steers were turned out to grass on the 26th April. Their turnout was met with a night of heavy rainfall, however the paddocks held up well under the poor conditions.
- There is quite a variation in weight, with many Hereford and Angus steers becoming fat on their high meal allocation for the past 5 weeks.

	26/04/2018	01/05/2018
Max LW (kg)	720	718
Min LW (kg)	364	382

- The steers were reweighed 4 days after turnout. The steers averaged 553 kg at turnout.
- On average, the Herefords were heaviest at turnout.

	Liveweight at turnout	4 Day Reweigh
High	526	535
Medium	573	574
Low	560	558



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Yearlings

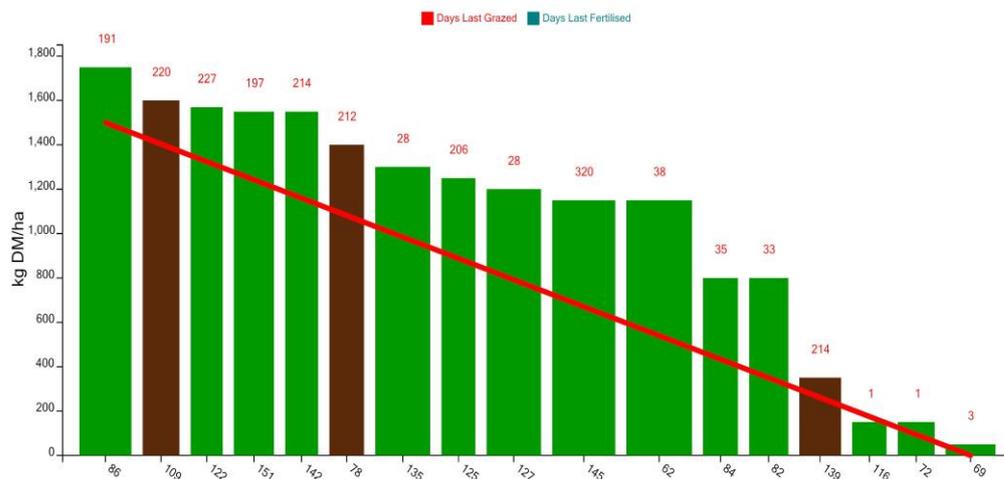
- The yearlings are doing well at grass. We are trying to keep paddocks as close as possible to 1600 kgDM/ha pre-grazing yield, however many of the paddocks are stronger than this which is not ideal. To help increase grass utilisation all paddocks are being strip grazed.
- The yearlings will be regrouped into their grazing groups of 72 over the next two weeks as the ground continues to dry up.

Grass Management:

- Grass growth averaged 38 kgDM/ha across the three farmlets. Demand has increased since the steers were turned out.
- 19 paddocks have been taken for silage (cut-later) as they became too strong to graze (>1800 kg DM/ha).
- Grass DM averaged 19.5% on the 26th/27th April.
- Grass cover was taken on the 30th April.

	Growth/ha (kg DM/ha/day)	Demand/ha (kg DM/ha/day)	Farm Cover (kg DM/ha)	LU/ha	Days Ahead
High	34	56	1053	5.6	19
Medium	40	53	1218	5.31	23
Low	36	45	1283	4.58	29

High stocking density



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Medium stocking density



Low stocking density

