

Teagasc Johnstown Castle
Teagasc/ABP Dairy Beef Research Programme

Update: 07-11-2018

Animal Performance:

Older cattle

- The older cattle were housed on the 25th October. The heifers averaged 468 kg while the steers averaged 493 kg.
- Currently the heifers are being fed 9kg conc., 2kg straw and 16kg silage (fresh weight). The steers are being fed 3.5kg conc., 3 kg straw and 15kg silage (fresh weight). Normally the steers would be fed ad lib silage only for the second winter however this year we are very tight for silage so the steers will have to be supplemented.
- Silage will be tested this week. The steer ration will be amended depending on the resulting quality. The objective is to have the steers maintaining/gaining as though they are on only ad lib silage (gaining 0.5 kg/day). They will be turned out in March to be finished off grass.

	Heifer		Steer	
	Heifer LW	ADG	Steer LW	ADG
High	461	0.87	489	0.88
Medium	474	0.87	489	0.91
Low	470	1.00	502	0.95

Calves

- The calves were housed on the 6th November, averaging 243 kg. They are being fed 3 kg conc., 2 kg straw and 9 kg silage (fresh weight).
- The calves will be reweighed in 4 days' time, dosed and vaccinated for blackleg and pneumonia.

	Live weight	ADG second season
High	242	0.84
Medium	247	0.86
Low	242	0.83

Grass Management:

- Grass growth for last week averaged 25 kg DM/ha/day, which was 8kg greater than the week previous (see table below). This was due to increased temperatures and the absence of frost over the last number of days.
- Grass DM for the last week has been 19%; pre-grazing yields remained low at ~800 kg DM/ha, however this was sufficient for the calves as they were being fed 2.4kg/head/day at grass.

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Farm cover 01/11/18

	Growth/ha (kg DM/ha/day)	Demand/ha (kg DM/ha/day)	Farm Cover (kg DM/ha)	LU/ha	Days Ahead
High	13	15	411	1.03	27
Medium	17	14	305	0.95	22
Low	22	13	378	0.86	29

- The demand was greatly reduced over the last two weeks by housing the older cattle. All cattle are now housed, so we hope to build some farm cover before growth ceases.
- Closing farm cover was completed on the 7th November. The average farm cover was 439 kg DM/ha which is below the closing target of 500-550 kg DM/ha.

Farm cover 07/11/18

	Growth/ha (kg DM/ha/day)	Demand/ha (kg DM/ha/day)	Farm Cover (kg DM/ha)	LU/ha	Days Ahead
High	26	0	493	0	0
Medium	26	0	365	0	0
Low	23	0	460	0	0