Teagasc Dairy Beef Research Programme
Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford

Update: July 2019

Animal Performance:

2.5 year old steers

- The remaining 2.5 year old steers began meal feeding towards the end of May; they were built up to 5 kg concentrate per head in preparation for slaughter.
- 49 bullocks were killed on the 22nd July. These were 28 months of age at slaughter and obtained an average carcass weight of 365 kg with a 51% kill out. They achieved an O+ conformation score and 3+ fat score on average.
- 16 bullocks were not fit and will be killed in the next few weeks; they remain on 5 kg concentrate/head/day.

Average slaughter results of 2017 born bullocks killed to date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No. animals killed</th>
<th>Carcass weight</th>
<th>Kill out %</th>
<th>Conformation score</th>
<th>Fat Score</th>
<th>Lifetime ADG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>338.3</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>5.9 (O+)</td>
<td>9.2 (3+)</td>
<td>0.766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>345.0</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>6.0 (O+)</td>
<td>9.0 (3+)</td>
<td>0.764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>345.4</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>5.9 (O+)</td>
<td>8.8 (3+)</td>
<td>0.798</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yearlings (18 month old)

- The yearlings have performed well over the summer, and are currently averaging 444 kg live weight, gaining 0.8 kg/day.
- The heifers and steers are co-grazing in their groups of 72. The heifers will be drafted out in a few weeks to commence their finishing period with concentrate supplementation.
Spring born calves

- The calves arrived into Johnstown castle on the 12\textsuperscript{th} July. This was later than normal due to the farm being locked up with TB.
- The calves had been on ad lib meal for an extra three to four weeks before they arrived.
- The average date of birth is the 25\textsuperscript{th} February 2019. The calves were on average 155 kg live weight on arrival, and were almost 4.5 months old (136 days).
- A few days after arrival, two calves died. It is suspected that the stress of transport and sudden dietary and environmental change (ad lib meal only to grass with meal; indoors to outdoors etc.) were contributing factors. All calves received antibiotic treatment a week after arrival as they suffered a health setback, which was possibly due to weakened immune systems because of elevated stress levels. This had a knock on effect on their performance in these first few weeks.
- The calves are grazing in two groups currently, and will be randomised into their three stocking density groups in a few weeks’ time once fully adjusted to the farm.
- The calves are being fed 2 kg concentrate at grass.

Grassland Management:

- The first cut of pit silage was cut on the 24\textsuperscript{th} May. 22 paddocks were cut, averaging 4648 kgDM/ha at 19% DM.
- 11 paddocks were cut and baled for silage on the 17\textsuperscript{th} June, averaging 5918 kg DM/ha.
- The second cut of pit silage was cut on the 24\textsuperscript{th} July. 23 paddocks were cut, averaging 5277 kgDM/ha at 23% DM.
- Growth rates remained strong for the summer months, over 50 kg DM/ha per day on average. The cattle are grazing paddocks out well, to 4.2 cm on average.
- Calves are grazing lower covers of 11-1200 kg DM/ha, while older cattle are grazing covers of 15-1600 kg DM/ha.

\textit{Cover July 31\textsuperscript{st} 2019}
High stocking rate farmlet

Medium stocking rate farmlet

Low stocking rate farmlet