

HSP Farmer comments on Spring 2019 - 31st March 2019

Ballinagree

Grazing has been very good bar two or three tough weeks in the March, calving has also gone really well, as for labour it's just my father and I this year and again going good

Athea

Very easy spring, once a day milking till 1st March, cows out day and night from 13th Feb till 1st week of March. 27% grazed in Feb, near 60% grazed to 1st April. Haven't been up any night with calving's so far! Labour -slurry out with umbilical cord in Jan. Just myself round the yard in spring with a bit of help from father with calves.

Kiskeam

We decided last year to delay start of breeding, so calving started on February 17th. All has gone well, now have 75% in 5 weeks, and haven't had to leave the bed! 3 assists.

With high covers and "late" start of calving, we didn't get much grazed up to Mar 2nd when we housed full time. Out again Mar 20 and going good. Expect only about 30% to be grazed by April 1, 10 acres (10% of grazing platform) cut for round bale silage today.

Re labour, contractor for slurry in Jan/February. All fertiliser spread by contractor to date. I have a guy coming in every evening, Monday to Friday, at 4.30. All done by 6.30. Family help at the weekend. Bull calves go as soon as possible from the yard and heifer replacement calves now on OAD.

Doonbeg

Been a busy but good spring to date. Got about 19 grazing's in Feb. Housed full time from March 1st to March 20th as place was saturated. Out full time again. Over 85% calved in 6 wks. 13 left to calve. All calves sold at home. Have student during week and doing it myself the weekends. New shed a massive help and no calves reared outside this year.

Stradone

Been a good enough spring. Very good in Feb (13 Feb to March 2) with cows out day and night for a good part of it. Cows housed from March 2 till March 20. Just over the 6 weeks calving so close to 80% calved with 20 left to calve. Calving has gone good enough and put jackets on calves this year and very happy with them.

Labour wise just dad and I and nephew around the odd weekend.

Rossmore

Spring was very busy but good calving went very well cows got 25% grazed in February they were put back in on 2nd March till the 21st March, out day and night since. 85% calved in 6 weeks, got out of bed one night for a calving so it never went as well. Just me and dad doing the bulk of the work had a man for a few days for slurry and fencing.

Swanscross

Spring started off well here in Monaghan. Cows were out Feb 13th (earliest ever) till Mar 2nd. We had to rehouse as ground got saturated with the heavy rain. Sowed 30 units Urea on Feb 26th in the entire grazing block. Hopefully will have 50% grazed by April 1st. Calving has gone well so far with minimal fuss but could do with a higher % calved in six weeks, currently running around 40%. Re: Labour, Milking is done by myself, do get in help in morning for about 3 hours for calf feeding, etc. and family help in the evenings.

Castleisland

A busy two months with 83 % six week calving. Started calving on the 9th of February and out by day for a couple of hours on the 12th February. 30 grazing's achieved in February; this would not have been possible without the new road infrastructure.

March started off well but was slowly deteriorating by 16th at which point I housed until the 18th. Out by day again on the 19th and 20th with on off grazing.

All Day and night by the 21st to the end of the month. Will have 60% of the Farm grazed for the 1st of April Labour on the farm was myself and family with slurry and Fertilizer spread by contractor

Lisselton

Busy spring in north Kerry. Cows out grazing fulltime from 18th February. Had to be housed on 10th March for ten days. From 20th March cows out day and night. All grazing block had half bag of urea on 1st February. Umbilical system was used to spread slurry. Great supply of grass, 10 acres yielding over 2,500kg dry matter per hectare round baled in the last few days. Father and son partnership looked after all labour requirements.