

Heavy Soils Programme

Farmer comments on March 2017

Rossmore, Tipperary

- 6 week calving rate 80%
- One of the wettest Marches
- Grazing from 8th March by day, hosed 13th, out again 22nd, housed 30th.
- Good quality silage keeping milk solids on track

Lisselton, Kerry

- Very difficult March, worse than last year
- Grazing 15 days in month by day and night. Too wet for on-off grazing.
- 30% of farm grazed by end of month
- Once a day milking (OAD) up to mid-March. Great effect on cow condition, particularly second calvers.
- 10 cows left to calve
- While cows were off grass fed good silage and 6 kg concentrate.

Stradone, Cavan

- March was a difficult month, week up to St Patrick's Day was good, and then heavy rain and everything housed again.
- On- off grazing to help get some grass into cows.
- Fertilizer spread on grazing and silage ground.
- Tough times with labour as two key members of team were sick.

Athea, Limerick

- Calving went well, 75 calved by March 1st.
- OAD milking up to March 10th. Great relief on labour.
- On-off grazing by day till 10th, by day and evening from 13th, housed fulltime 17th. On-off from 22nd out fulltime since 25th.
- 40% farm grazed 31st March

Swanscross, Monaghan

- March reasonably dry and mild here, still ground was just reasonable and any rain was leaving conditions very soft.
- Ground drying a lot quicker as month progressed.

- Growth was 6kg/ha at start of month rising to 22kg/ha at the end.

Ballinagree, Cork

- Difficult grazing conditions.
- 40% grazed at end of month.
- 101 cows calved by end of month.
- Good response to early fertilizer.
- Good grass growth.

Doonbeg, Clare

- Been a better march than 2016.
- Out 10.5 days as opposed to 7.5 days last year.
- Early urea worked well as we have a lot of grass on the farm.
- March 31st solids per cow were 2.57 kg solids per cow as opposed to 2.11kg solids same time last year where they were in full time on silage.
- Out full time since 24th march.
- Ground conditions not great but managing to stay out.
- 6 cows left to calf.

Kishkeam, Cork

- Start of grazing this year on Mar 12, by day.
- Cows inside all Paddy's weekend.
- Day and night from the 24th to end of month.
- For most of last week in March it was 3 hours grazing after each milking, no silage in diet.
- 45% grazed by month end.
- Happy with clean out in majority of paddocks, though some damage done.
- Calving has gone well, 80% calves in 5 weeks, 88% by end of March.
- Happy with milk production & body condition good.

Castleisland, Kerry

- March was a busy month with a lot of pressure on calf housing as a result of six week calving just under 80%.
- Grazing conditions were poor resulting in four day and night grazing's and few 3hr grazing's from the 14th to the 17th. Just 5% of the farm grazed in March.
- Conditions haven't improved much on into early April but managing to stay out day and night , struggling with the heavy covers to get a good graze out.
- It's unfortunate the weather is as poor as cows are heading for peak milk production.