Calving patterns for winter milk herds

Johnstown Castle experiment outline

- How does calving pattern affect milk profile?
- Consequences for feed budget cost?
- Systems compared: Spring, 50:50, Autumn calving
- Herd EBI €156 (€53 milk, €63 fertility)
- Stocking rate 2.90 cows/ha

### Analysis of milk supply patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SPR</th>
<th>SPLIT</th>
<th>AUT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milk solids (kg/cow)</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentrate (kg DM/cow)</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>1050</td>
<td>1380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Peak milk (kg/cow)</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov-Feb milk (% of total)</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>43.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margin(^1) over feed per cow (€0.30 c/l base milk price)</td>
<td>€1785</td>
<td>€1782</td>
<td>€1794</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bonus value per cow (7.5 c/l)**

- Liquid Milk 50% Daily Contract
  - SPR: -
  - SPLIT: €129
  - AUT: €135
- 5 Month Winter Milk Contract
  - SPR: -
  - SPLIT: €150
  - AUT: €230

**Take home messages**

- EBI + Grass Utilisation = Drive profit in all systems
- Autumn calving - modest effect at summer peak
- Winter bonus required to offset overheads & labour

\(^1\)Must also account for overheads differences per system