



BEEF

July 2022



Sustainable parasite control

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Young calves are not resistant to stomach worms and this is why we need to treat them, especially in their first season at grass. However, spring-born suckler calves do not have a large intake of grass in the early and mid-season periods of the year, which means they may not have a large burden of stomach worms until much later in the season. Overusing any anthelmintic product (especially when it is not needed) runs the risk of the worms on your farm becoming resistant to that product and to all similar products in the class it comes from. Therefore, we should only treat cattle for stomach worms when we know there is a need to treat them. Otherwise you are just guessing. Taking fresh dung samples from suckler weanlings and getting a faecal egg count (FEC) test done on

them is an ideal way to tell whether or not they need to be treated for stomach worms. There are now a number of laboratories that will carry out this test for a very small fee. Some veterinary practices are also providing this service. Most will send you out a number of pots for filling with faeces for returning to them. They will then pool these samples to give you a result for the entire group of stock the samples were taken from. The FEC results will be returned to you within a couple of days and these will clearly show whether or not you need to treat now or can wait until there is an actual need. This will save you time dosing stock that don't need to be treated and money on an anthelmintic, and may mean that class of product can be used for many more years on your farm.

Use protected urea, it's cheaper than CAN



Time to Lime



Don't forget Sulphur - little and often



Reduce nitrogen on grass clover swards



Have you booked a milk recording ?



Consider weighing calves & yearlings to monitor performance since turnout



Five July jobs

1. Stop the breeding season – suckler cows bred in July will not calve until the end of April or into May. Late-born calves in a spring-calving herd do not cover the costs of the cow they came out of.
2. Remove heavy covers of grass as baled silage to maintain grass quality ahead of stock.
3. Castrate bull calves – there is no improvement in lifetime daily gains from delaying this procedure.
4. Spread ground limestone on the grazing fields that need it. This gives the quickest return on investment of all the fertilisers that are brought onto a beef farm.



Remove heavy covers of grass as baled silage.

5. Scan suckler cows 30 days after the breeding season ends. Carrying empty cows is unprofitable and only increases the level of carbon emissions produced on your farm.

HEALTH & SAFETY



The most dangerous month

July is the month with highest levels of farm workplace deaths based on past records. Let us change this trend in 2022. Children on the farm, long working hours and managing tractors and machinery are particular safety concerns during July. It is important to be vigilant and carry out tasks with safety in mind.

Farm Safety Week starts on Monday July 18 when the official launch occurs. Daily themes are as

follows: Tuesday 19 - Childhood Safety; Wednesday 20 - Farm Safety Champions and Farm Accident Survivors; Thursday 21 - Respiratory Health; Friday 22 - Mental Health Awareness. The week is a combined UK and Ireland event. In Ireland, the week will be co-ordinated by the IFA Farm Families and Social Affairs Committee. Follow Farm Safety Week messages in the media. The hashtag is #FarmSafetyWeek.



The Beef Edge Podcast

The Beef Edge is Teagasc's weekly podcast covering news, information, tips and advice for beef farmers.

Presented by Catherine Egan, The Beef Edge provides insights and opinion to improve your beef farm performance.

How do I listen?

The Beef Edge is available on:

 iPhone  Android  Spotify

Open the camera on your phone & scan the QR code for more information



BEEF2022

We are delighted to invite all beef farmers and stakeholders in the Irish beef industry to BEEF2022, on Tuesday, July 5, at the Teagasc, Animal & Grassland Research and Innovation Centre, Grange, Co. Meath, C15 PW93. More information is available on: www.teagasc.ie/beef2022.



RESEARCH UPDATE

Reducing enteric methane emissions using feed additives

STUART KIRWAN and SINEAD WATERS report on how a number of feed additives are being studied to see if they can reduce methane emissions from ruminants.

Agriculture is the single largest contributor (~34%) to overall greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Ireland, with methane being a potent GHG accounting for the majority of GHGs arising from agriculture. Methane is 28 times more potent than carbon dioxide and is produced from rumen microbial fermentation and from stored manure and slurry on farms. Methane from enteric fermentation in ruminant livestock accounts for ~60% of Irish agriculture-related GHGs and suppressing the quantity of methane emitted by livestock will be essential to achieving the agricultural sector's target of a 10% reduction in enteric methane emissions by 2030. Hence, there is an urgent requirement for innovative strategies to reduce methane emissions from agriculture. Over 56% of GHGs from agriculture arises from enteric fermentation, which provides the opportunity to reduce methane emissions from ruminants through dietary manipulation and feed additives.

As part of the METH-ABATE project funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food, and Marine (DAFM), a number of *in vitro* studies were conducted at Teagasc Grange using the RUSITEC system to assess the potential of some feed additives for their methane mitigation potential. One of the most promising feed additives tested to date is oxidising methane inhibitors. These are synthetic peroxide-based compounds, such as urea hydrogen peroxide or potassium iodide. Early results from the RUSITEC are encouraging, with ~60% reductions in methane observed, with no negative effects on digestibility. Following on from this, a feeding trial is planned to commence in August to see if the results obtained in the RUSITEC experiment can be replicated in the live animal. Research to date has highlighted that in order for any feed additive to be effective in reducing methane from ruminants, the additive must always be present within the rumen. This poses a challenge for pasture-based systems. Therefore, the next phase of the project will develop technologies for pasture-based production systems. Development of encapsulation technologies and slow release bolus formulations for feed additives, including oxidising methane inhibitors, is currently underway to ensure that the most promising feed additives can be delivered at pasture.