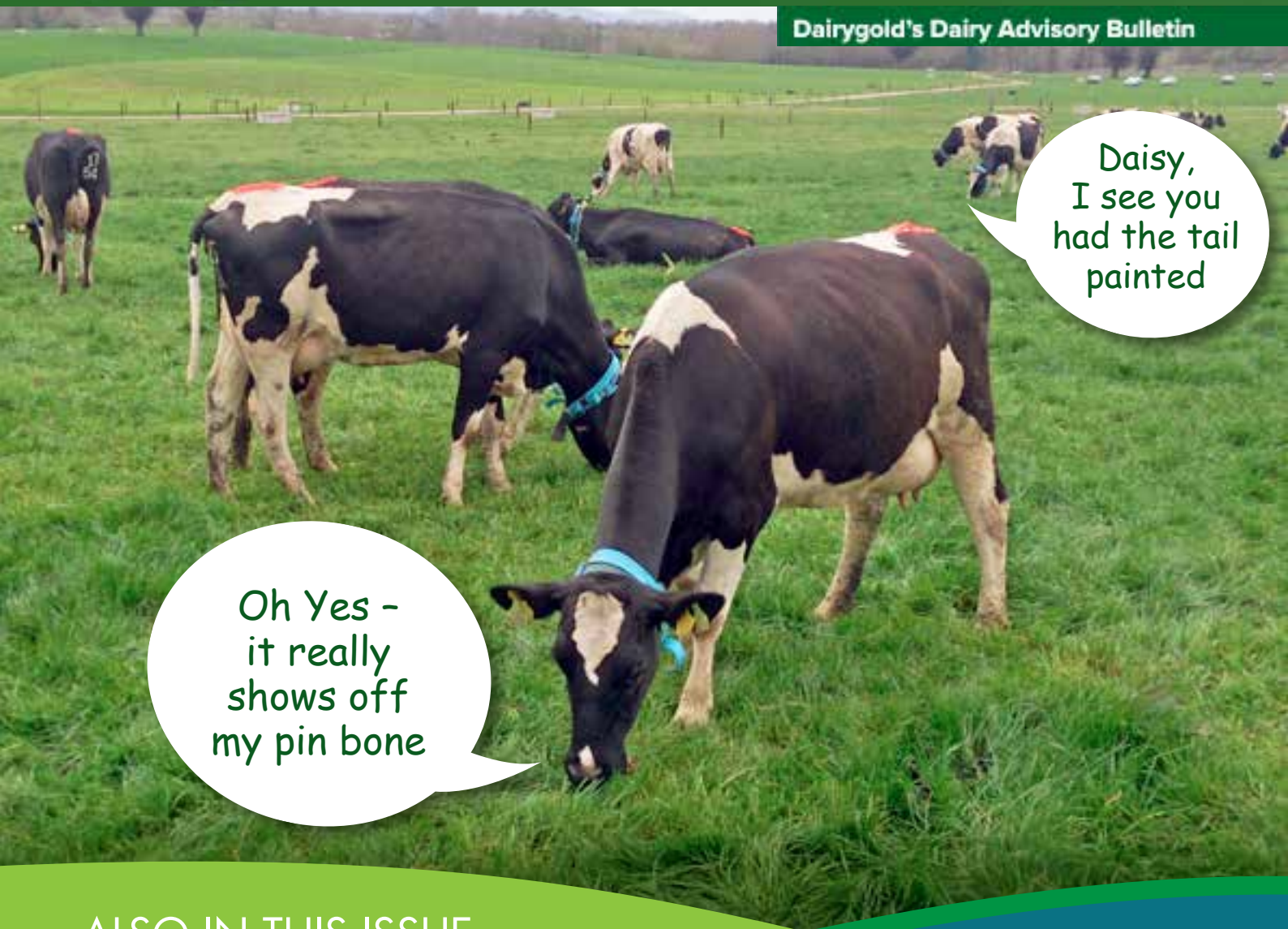
dairygold
Golden Valleys, Growing Naturally

AGRI DIVISION

MILK MATTERS

Issue 50 - APRIL 2017 www.agritrading.ie

Dairygold's Dairy Advisory Bulletin



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome to the April edition of

MILK MATTERS

DAIRYGOLD'S DAIRY ADVISORY BULLETIN

Dear Milk Matters reader,

For nearly a decade our post calver gold range has been the market leader. It combines the best in raw materials and additives. From this month on we are including Biotin as standard within our gold range. Biotin has proven benefits on lameness and milk yield. The addition of Biotin further distances the gold range from any other feeds in the market.

Grass Matters looks at managing grass in the month of April. When should you start the 2nd round of grazing? Spring fertiliser application drives early grass growth. The aim is to have 90-100 by the 1st of May. Should you be using straight N or should you apply some P&K now?

In **Fertility and Breeding Matters**, Doreen Corridan has an in-depth look at how to manage the breeding season. To achieve a 90%, 6 week incalf rate you need to maximise maiden heifer and cow fertility performance. Dorreen lays out a plan to for this.

Yours Sincerely,

Liam Stack

Liam Stack M.Agr.Sc

RUMINANT TECHNICAL MANAGER,
DAIRYGOLD AGRIBUSINESS

CONTENTS

To contact the editor of

MILK MATTERS

email: lstack@dairygold.ie

DON'T COMPROMISE ON COW FERTILITY BY FEEDING POSTCALVER GOLD

By Elaine Fenton
Technical Advisor, Alltech Ireland

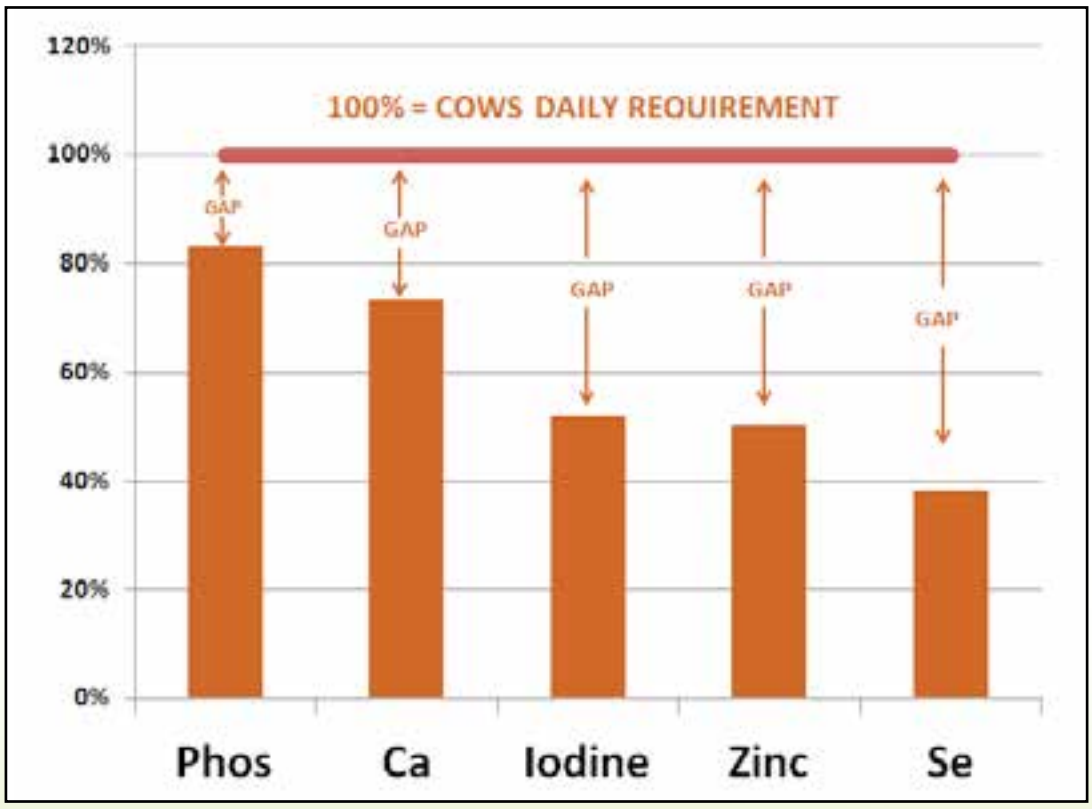
Right now the focus is on getting cows back in calf as soon as possible in order to hit the desired target in 2018, which is to have 90% of cows calved in 6 weeks. The cost is €8.22 per cow per 1% increase in 6 week calving rate. In a 100 cow herd increasing the 6 week in calf rate from 58% to 90% will be worth +26,400 per year. Shalloo et al. (2014). Your choice of feed will play a crucial role in achieving this.

There are a number of technologies in Postcalver GOLD that will help optimise fertility.

Optimise immunity with Bioplex® and Sel-Plex® minerals

As can be seen in the graph below grass is low in a number of important minerals including Zinc and Selenium. These minerals play an important role in conception and maintenance of pregnancy.

Research showing deficiency of minerals in Irish grass silage



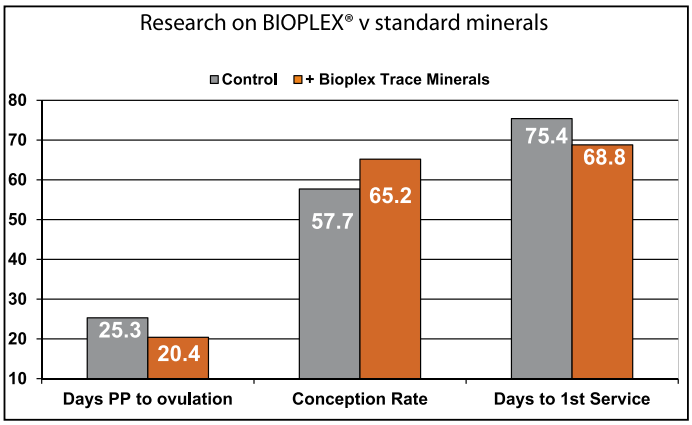
Reference: Teagasc

Therefore it is important that cows are supplemented with these minerals. The form they are supplemented with is also important. Traditionally cows have been supplemented with inorganic minerals which have been mined from the ground and have minimal availability with a large percentage of these passing straight through the cow.

Postcalver GOLD contains Bioplex® and Sel-Plex® minerals. These are organic and therefore a more available form of these minerals and are better absorbed by the cow. Below we can see research from University College Dublin where cows were fed Bioplex® and Sel-Plex® minerals.

DON'T COMPROMISE ON COW FERTILITY BY FEEDING POSTCALVER GOLD

Research on BIOPLEX® v standard minerals



O'Donnell, Boland & O'Callaghan, UCD (1995)

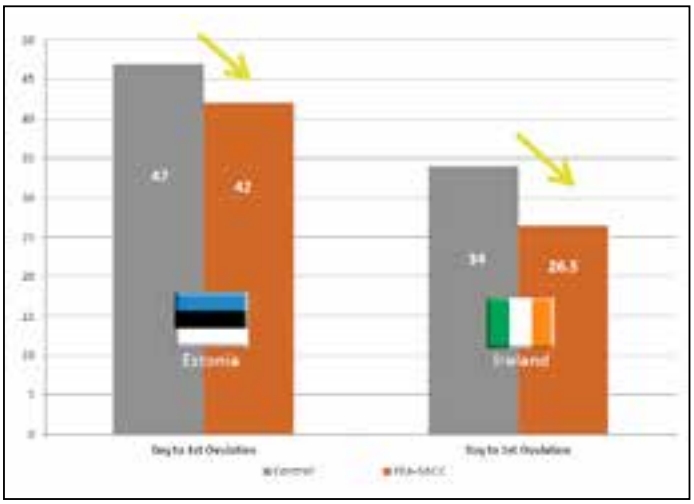
Minimise body condition score loss with YEA-SACC®

Early lactation is a time when a cow's diet is constantly changing. During this period we want her rumen to be as stable as possible so she will use feed efficiently. Yea-Sacc® works by removing oxygen and excess acid from the rumen keeping the environment stable. It also stimulates the bacteria in the rumen to work harder to extract energy from the feed (both grass and concentrates). As the cow's rumen is working more efficiently this means she is less likely to mobilise her own body fat and she will maintain her body condition score.

Trial work carried out at UCD Lyons Estate on the early lactation herd showed that cows fed Yea-Sacc® went back in calf 7 days earlier than those that did not receive Yea-Sacc®. It is important to note that this trial was carried out at grass.

Research has shown how Yea-Sacc® has improved fertility parameters:

5-7 days less open



Tartu, Estonia, Kaske, Kasmus, 2007

University College Dublin, Ireland, Mulligan, 2007

Dramatic reduction:

Up to 7 less open days. 7/34 days = 20% improvement in key fertility measure!

Cows fed Yea-Sacc® mobilised less body fat indicating that the cow was extracting more energy from feed to meet her requirements and was better able to maintain her condition.

KEY POINT: Build cow immunity and minimise body condition score loss by feeding Postcalver GOLD.

Biotin Now Available In Post Calver Gold Range

Addition of Biotin to a dairy cow diet leads to:

1. **Less lameness**
2. **An improved health status**
3. **Increased milk yield**

NOW AVAILABLE IN POST CALVER GOLD

innovation

Lameness:

Poor fertility, mastitis and lameness are some of the biggest cost on dairy farms. Every lame cow costs you on between €280-300.

Published research has shown that feeding c.20mg Biotin per day had positive effects on:

- White line separation,
- Digital and Inter-digital Dermatitis,
- Healing of Sole Ulcer
- Lameness in Seasonally Calved Dairy Cows

Estimate Cost of a Single Case of Lameness

	€/Case
Treatment Cost	55
Loss of Production (c.500ltrs @0.15c/lt margin)	75
Culling (10% of lameness = culling)	100
Reduced Fertility	50
	280-300

LESS LAMENESS

Biotin on milk yield:

Published research has shown that feeding c.20mg Biotin per day increased milk production by between 1.3-1.6 ltrs per day. These trials also reported higher intakes (c.0.87kg).

It should be noted that the cows in these trials were high producing cows producing on average 34.4 litres milk.

The question of whether the same milk response is available in lower producing cows on grass based diets is more difficult to answer.

Colman Purcell, Dairygold nutritionists believes that the biggest responses are to be got in the most intensive feeding situations with the higher producing cows, but that a ROI is delivered with much lower responses.

At our current milk price, an increase in c.0.1 ltrs of milk will cover the cost of the Biotin inclusion. This ROI does not include the costs saving from the reduced herd lameness.

Biotin on herd fertility:

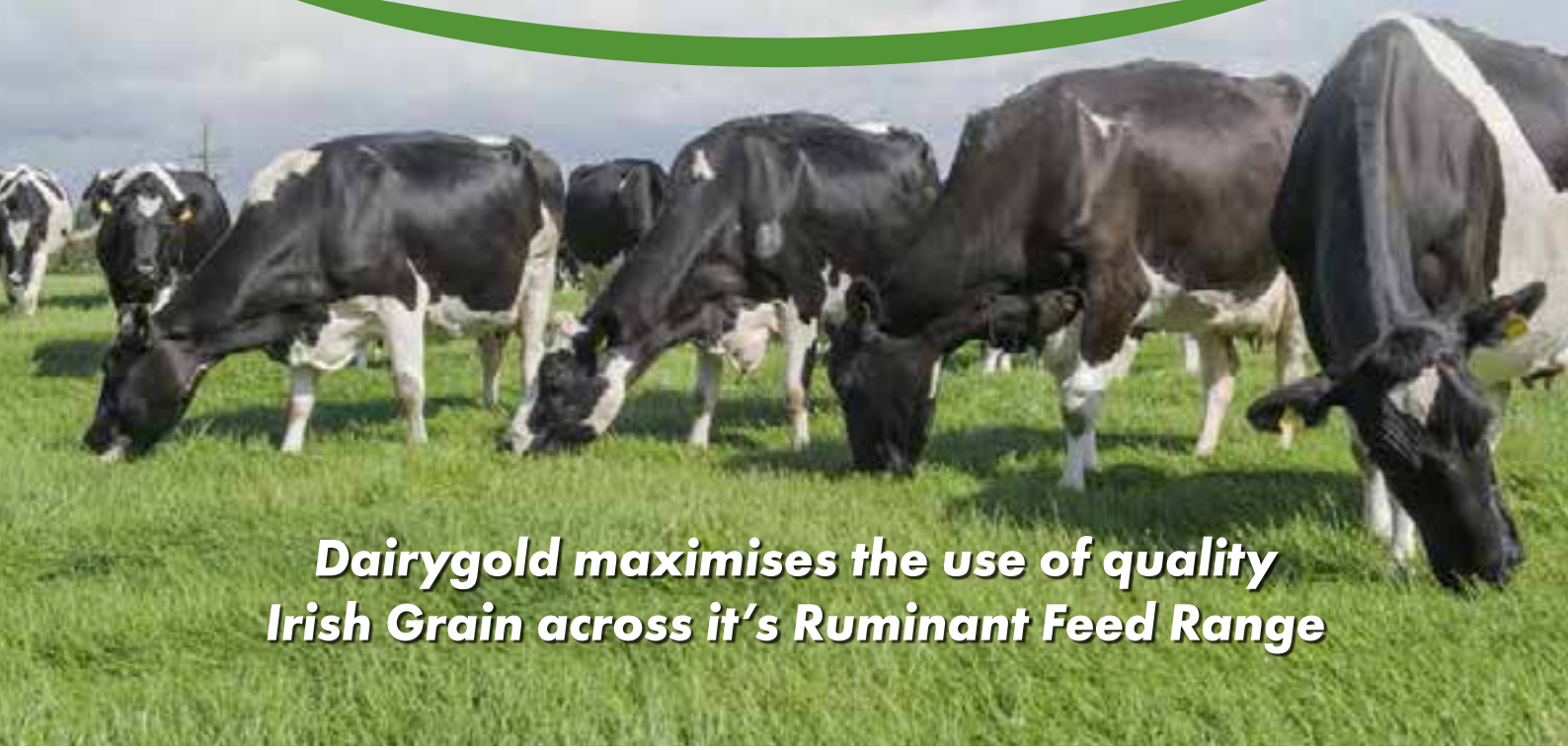
Colman concluded that "it would be reasonable in my opinion to expect that any improvements in hoof health and locomotive score would have positive knock-on effects on fertility. However the issue of demonstrating this connection in trial work could prove difficult."

Please contact inside sales or your local ASM for more information.

POSTCALVER GOLD

Now contains Biotin

- High energy feed containing Category One ingredients with Maize as the No. One ingredient
- Contains high levels of Phosphorus and Magnesium
- Contains BIOPLEX® Zinc, Copper and Manganese and SEL-PLEX® organic selenium from Alltech® to support the immune system and improve fertility parameters
- Contains high levels of Vitamin E
- Contains high levels of Vitamin D to prevent milk fever post calving
- Contains YEA-SACC® live yeast to improve digestibility, feed efficiency, increase production and improve fertility performance
- High quality source of energy and protein
- Available in 14% , 16%, 18% and 20% protein cubes



Dairygold maximises the use of quality Irish Grain across it's Ruminant Feed Range

Supported by Alltech®

Contact your Area Sales Manager, Inside Sales or Lombardstown Mill on 022 47275 to order. www.agritrading.ie

dairygold
Golden Valleys, Growing Naturally

There are numerous reasons why it pays you to reseed including:

Reseeding can repay you for the cost of reseeding within 18 months to two years and you can expect swards reseeded in 2017 to last 8 -10+ years on your farm if correctly managed.

High PRG swards allow 8% higher milk output per hectare compared to old permanent pasture.

Swards with a low content of Perennial Ryegrass (PRG) are reducing your profit by €300/ha (€120/acre) due to reduced dry matter (DM) production alone.

Old permanent pasture is inefficient i.e. you are losing 25% of the response to your Nitrogen fertiliser applications. On top of this, your old pastures have reduced digestibility and intake potential.

RESEEDING 2017

3 CRITICAL STEPS to successful reseeding

1

Soil Fertility:
pH 6.2-6.5,
Index 3 for
Phosphorus (P)
and Potassium (K)

2

Correct establishment: View best practise recommendations online at **http://www.agritrading.ie/Reseeding-Best-Practice**

3

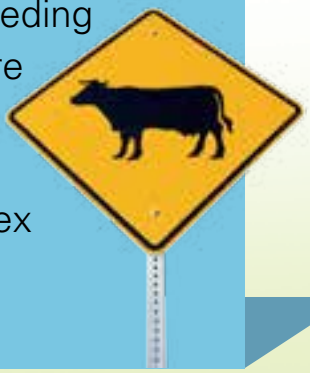
Long term management: More frequent grazings, grazing tightly, avoiding poaching etc.

The Pasture Profit Index (PPI)

The Pasture Profit Index, quantifies the economic (€) value of each key grass trait and based on a variety's trial performance assigns a value to each variety for each key trait. An overall total economic merit value is published for each variety. In addition, the performance of each variety within each trait is contained in the sub-index.

KEY POINT:

The Pasture Profit Index works in a similar way to the Economic Breeding Index (EBI). There is an overall total economic merit value and sub-index for each key trait.



For more information on the index and to discuss the best performing varieties please contact your local ASM or inside sales.

RESEEDING 2017

The key traits within an Irish grass based production system are:

1. Seasonal DM yield

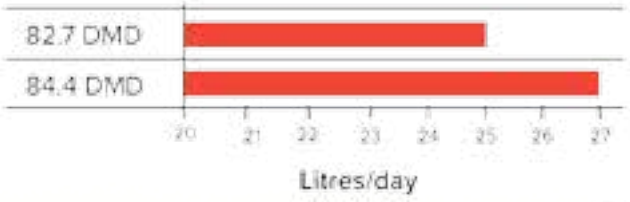
- Spring - highest value.
  PPI difference between the highest and lowest variety is €98/ha per year.

- Autumn - high value
  PPI difference between the highest and lowest variety is €54/ha per year.
- Summer - lowest value (plentiful grass supply at this time of the year).

2. Quality

Particular emphasis on mid-season quality.

A cow producing 25L/day on a 82.7 DMD sward (average of recommend list varieties) has the potential to produce 27L/day on a 84.4 DMD sward (highest variety on PPI).



3. Persistency

Less persistent varieties need to be reseeded more often. PPI difference between the highest and lowest variety is €28/ha per year.

4. Silage (1st and 2nd cut)

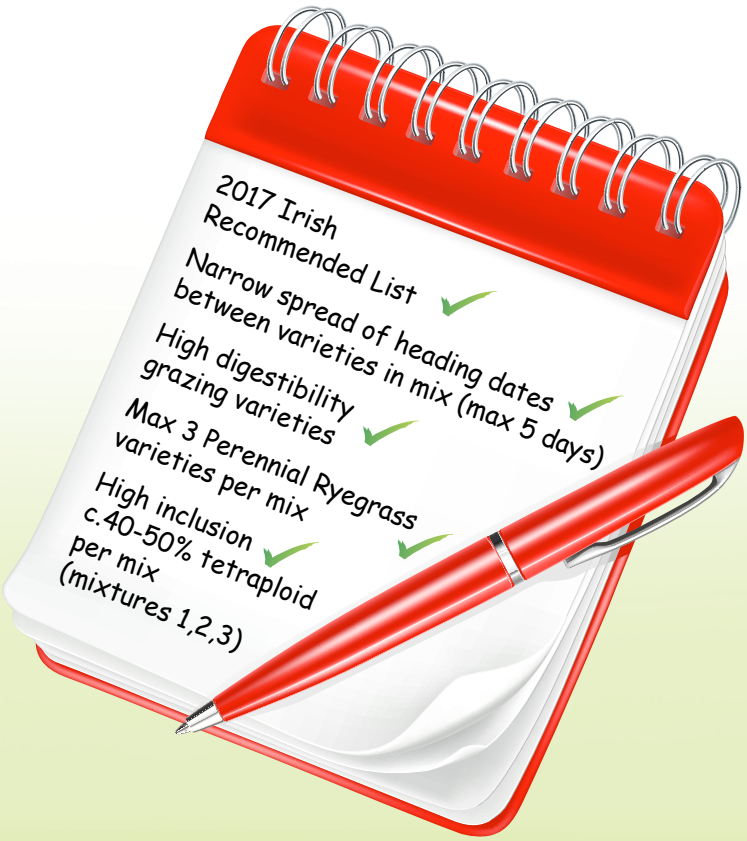
Silage yield.

KEY POINT: The Pasture Profit Index works in a similar way to the Economic Breeding Index (EBI). There is an overall total economic merit value and sub-index for each key trait.

What variety/mixture should I use?

This depends on the end use (grazing or silage mixture or combination) and your soil type. Teagasc recommend the use of mixtures on farm as they can overcome individual varieties weaknesses (no variety has all desired traits). The latest research from Teagasc Moorepark has shown that mixture performance can be predicted from the performance of their monoculture components. Therefore make sure you choose mixtures that contain the best varieties for your requirements.

Dairygold 2017 Mixtures meet the latest Teagasc Moorepark recommendations



RESEEDING 2017

Mixture No 1 High Clover Grazing (Also available without clover)

A high tetraploid (astonenergy) and clover mix. Taking advantage of astonenergys exceptional palatability, quality, seasonal growth with proven pasturebase on-farm performance.

Variety	Heading Date
Drumbo	07 June
Majestic	02 June
Astroenergy	02 June
Crusader	
Chieftain	

Total PPI	€105
Spring	€5
Summer	€34
Autumn	€36
Quality	€36

% Tetraploid	48%

Mixture No 2 Two Cut Silage (Also available with clover)

A mixture designed specifically for silage (two or more cuts) with an appropriate silage heading date, exceptional spring growth for high first cut yields, no clover and durable varieties to ensure a long lasting sward.

Variety	Heading Date
Soloman	21 May
Rosetta	24 May
Fintona	22 May

Total PPI	€159
Spring	€70
Summer	€33
Autumn	€41
Silage	€18
Persistency	€0
% Tetraploid	40%

Mixture No 3 Dairygold Extend (Also available without clover)

Excellent spring and autumn growth combined with exceptional quality for a palatable sward. This mixture is for intensive grazing situations where extending grazing, is a priority. Also suitable for one cut silage systems.

Variety	Heading Date
AberGain	05 June
AberChoice	09 June
Drumbo	07 June
Clover	

Total PPI	€149
Spring	€14
Summer	€42
Autumn	€40
Quality	€58

% Tetraploid	41%

Mixture No 4 Heavy Soils

This mixture has been specifically formulated for heavier soils. Specially designed to create a good dense base to the sward with high ground scoring varieties which will ensure a persistent sward in challenging soils. The Heavy Soils Mix also delivers good seasonal growth and high quality varieties. Lower levels of tetraploid will give a dense sward that will perform in difficult conditions.

Total PPI	Total PPI	Ground Score
Drumbo	07 June	6.5
Clarnrye	06 June	7
Kintyre	07 June	6
Clover		

Total PPI	€99
Spring	€14
Summer	€36
Autumn	€33
Quality	€26

% Tetraploid	27%

THE VALUE OF GOOD QUALITY SILAGE

MILKING three hundred zero grazed cows, three times a day, the Pepper family of Dromore, Co. Down are a by word for efficient use of forage.

Derek and his son Neal estimate that zero grazing allows them to get up to 20% extra milk output per acre and suits a high producing Holstein herd like theirs working with a fragmented farm holding.

As so often in Northern Ireland the area adjacent to the farmyard simply could not support a traditionally grazed herd of this size. Nor by any stretch of the imagination reach the same levels of cost effective output per cow or per acre.

Thus their huge emphasis on producing consistently high quality silage that 'feeds out well.'

KEY POINT: Grass silage of this quality can support 22 ltrs of milk

Over 3,000 tonne of grass and maize silage is made each year using the Volac Ecosyl range of additives.

"We started growing maize silage in 1991 to make high energy silage for our higher yielding cows and over the years Ecosyl additives have proved invaluable," commented Derek Pepper.

"We did try other additives on both maize and grass silage, but always came back to the proven product, Ecosyl. It is easy to apply, gives us invaluable consistency in our silages and stability on open clamp faces.

"By opting for zero grazing we aim to ensure that not a blade of grass goes to waste and with Ecosyl applied that grass comes out of the clamp as quality silage. Top quality silage is about half the cost of concentrates and drops the cost of bought in feedstuffs dramatically."

The Pepper family always keep a close eye on forage quality analysis.

GRASS SILAGE 2016		
Dry Matter	**39.4**	**%**
Protein	**18.8**	**%**
D Value	**75.8**	**%**
DMD	**84**	**%**
UFL	**1.06**	
pH	**4.3**	
NH3 % of T N	**1.7**	**%**
Lactic Acid	**69.8**	**g/kg**

Typical figures for first cut silage are Dry Matter 39.4 to 43.7 and for protein 18.5 to 18.8. ME figures ranging from 11.4 to 12.1 and those for intake from 120.5 to 128.

THE VALUE OF GOOD QUALITY SILAGE

MAIZE SILAGE 2016		
Dry Matter	**37.1**	**%**
D Value	**75.2**	**%**
Starch	**31.5**	**%**
ME	**11.9**	

Maize silage, also made with Eco-corn, had 37.1DM, a 75.2 D Value, 11.9ME with 31.5 starch plus an intake figure of 114.4 making this 'rocket fuel' for Holsteins.

Since buying their farm in 1955 three generations of the Pepper family have taken the business forward by working with progressive suppliers of services and inputs.

KEY POINT:

The Peppers would say that "No matter how good the breeding policy successfully producing milk depends on having reliable silage quality. With Ecosyl there are no unwelcome surprises opening a clamp. This additive plays a key role in keeping cows health, content and performing.

"The way our Utopian Herd performs on silage made with Ecosyl, even in far from favourable summers, bears out the experience of producers nationwide."

MAIZE SILAGE

By Diarmuid O'Riordan

Forage Maize Growing 2017

KEY POINT: You must target good yield and quality. To achieve this; choose a good site, plastic cover where appropriate, the most suitable variety for your site, and follow best practise crop nutrition and weed control recommendations.

SITE

Your choice of site is critical to giving you an economic return to growing maize (growing maize on margin sites is high risk). Choose a sheltered south facing field (warmest on farm) with light to medium soil type and good drainage as maize will not tolerate compaction. Site altitudes should not exceed 100m.

PLASTIC

Plastic cover helps to deliver consistent yield and quality and crops under plastic are also likely to mature earlier meaning earlier harvesting which can also be important. Plastic is likely to consistently deliver an economic return as sites become more marginal. Dairygold recommends Samco pinhole plastic cover as it is tried and trusted to perform.

CROP NUTRITION

Soil testing to determine requirements is strongly recommended. Maize is a hungry crop; ensure you fertilise it well, especially with Phosphorus (P) and Potassium (K). Maize needs a soil pHof 6-7. While slurry is very useful in supplying significant proportions of the P & K requirements, some level of available (artificial) P & K may also be required.

MAIZE NUTRIENT REQUIREMENT KG/HA (UNITS/ACRE)

Soil Fertility (P & K Index)	N	P	K
High (4)	75 (60)	Nil	120 (97)
Moderate (3)	110 (88)	40 (32)	190 (152)
Deficient (2)	140 (112)	50 (40)	225 (180)
Poor (1)	180 (144)	70 (56)	250 (200)

N & P rates as per Nitrates Directive.
Higher yielding crops may require higher levels of nutrients than above, particularly P & K.

MAIZE SILAGE

VARIETIES

Use varieties from the Irish recommended list as they are proven independently under Irish conditions. Match your choice of variety to your site (choosing a slightly earlier maturing variety may mean marginally less yield but will deliver a more reliable maturity, quality and suitable harvest date).

DAIRYGOLD MAIZE VARIETY RECOMMENDATIONS 2017

Site	Site Description	Varieties Under Plastic	Varieties Uncovered
Excellent site	< 50m altitude, South facing Not exposed	Award, Feeditop, LG30211, P7905, P8200*	Ambition, Activate, Severus
Good site	50m to 75m altitude Not too exposed, Good sunshine	Award, Feeditop, LG30211	Ambition, Activate, Severus
Moderate site	75m to 100m altitude	Award, Feeditop, LG30211	Use Plastic
Marginal site	Over 100m altitude or Very exposed, North facing	Do not grow maize	Do not grow maize

* Only on excellent sites, late to ripen

WEED CONTROL

Controlling weeds early is very important for a successful maize crop. Do not skimp on rates under plastic and consider adding a good wetter e.g. Silwet which can significantly improve weed control (particularly in less than ideal conditions) but proper seedbed preparation is vital (fine and firm). A follow-up overspray of an appropriate postemergence product may be necessary if weeds come through (between the rows).

Adopt a zero tolerance to weeds in maize

Weed control in uncovered crops is best done early around the 2-4 leaf stage of the crop but may have to be delayed if the crop is struggling. Including Nutriphite (liquid Phosphite that increases rooting) with the post-emergence weed control spray (plus any required trace elements) is recommended to ensure the crop keeps progressing at this critical stage.

For more detailed recommendations on sowing maize see:
http://www.agritrading.ie/Forage-Maize

MAIZE SILAGE

Dairygold Maize Gold Boost

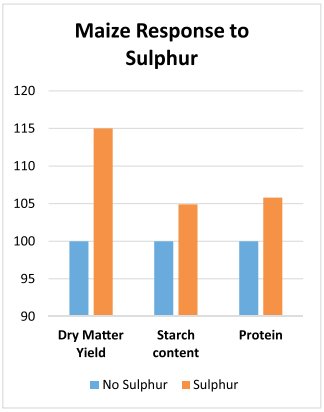
19 – 4 – 19 + 1.3% Sulphur + Wolftrax Zinc

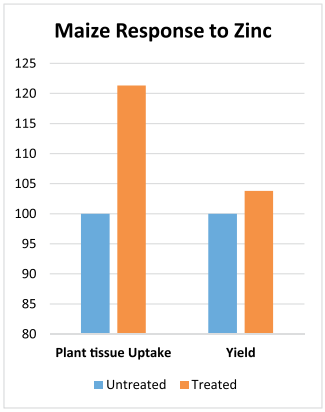
Dairygold Maize boost is specifically formulated to meet maize nutrient requirements in the South West of Ireland. It should be applied at a rate of 8-9 bags/ac and incorporated into the soil prior to sowing.

	Bags to the acre	Nitrogen Index 1	Phosphorus Index 3	Potassium Index 3	Sulphur	Zinc
Crop Requirements		144	32	152	16	Yes
16-4-20	9	144	36	180	0	✘
Maize Gold Boost	8	152	32	152	10.4	✔

Features & Benefits:

- The Nitrogen in Maize Gold Boost is Urea based. As the product will be incorporated into the soil there are no issues or fears with regard ammonia losses.
- Nitrogen from Urea is held longer in the soil and provides a prolonged release thus feeding the crop later into the season.
- Sulphur – Maize Gold Boost supplies much needed Sulphur to the plant that can increase Dry Matter Yield by up to 15%. Sulphur applications can also increase starch levels and protein content





- Wolftrax Zinc – Zinc is the most common trace element deficiency found in Maize grown in the South West of Ireland. Early intervention with zinc coated fertiliser can prevent yield penalties from the outset.

CALF WEANING

By Amie Coonan B.Agr.Sc.
Dairy Area Sales Manager

Calf Weaning Management

Feeding calves high volumes of milk enables them to achieve their early growth potential but can lead to delayed rumen development, which can result in poor growth and feed efficiency in the weeks immediately after weaning from milk.

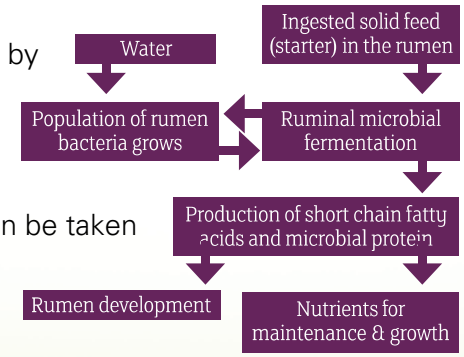
When feeding greater quantities of milk, it is essential that calf management around the critical weaning period is planned with a robust protocol in place.

The Young Calf:

The calf is born with a non-functional rumen and nutrients (milk) are digested in the true stomach (abomasum) and intestines to supply the calf with the energy and protein required for maintenance and growth. Before stopping the milk feed, the rumen must be sufficiently developed at weaning so that it can digest and utilise solid feed, replacing the nutrients previously supplied by milk, giving the calf the energy and protein required to grow.

The Importance of Solid Feed:

Rumen development is largely driven by the fermentation of calf starter by the rumen bacteria.



Calves fed high volumes of milk may eat less solid feed if their hunger is satisfied by the milk feed. Despite this, simple management steps can be taken to encourage solid feed intake to increase to a level equal to or greater than that of a calf fed less milk.

Calf Starter:

Krispi Kaf starter intake during the milk feeding period is essential for rumen development

- Offer very small quantities of Krispi Kaf from day 1
- Offer starter as a coarse feed, with a crude protein content of at least 18%
- Ensure starter is clean, dry & palatable (offer small amounts of fresh feed daily)
- Ensure calves are eating at least 1 kg per day of starter for 3 consecutive days before weaning (i.e. the day milk is removed)

CALF WEANING

Expected Starter Intakes

0-2 weeks	**Minimal**
2-3 weeks	**Start to increase**
5 weeks	**0.5 kg per day**
6-8 weeks	**0.7 to 1 kg per day**
8 weeks	**At least 1 kg per day**

Forage:

Providing chopped straw during the milk feeding period encourages starter intake & aids rumen development

- Offer forage from 1 week of age
- Offer clean, dust free barley straw (not hay)
- Ideally, offer chopped forage (3-4 cm chop) (do not chop too finely)
- Provide clean dust free forage separate from their bedding

Water:

Water must enter the rumen where it is essential for the survival of the rumen bacteria, and it will encourage starter intake. To encourage water to flow into the rumen:

- Offer fresh & clean water from day 1
- Calves require water in addition to their milk feed
- **Calves need to drink 5 litres of water in addition to their milk feed, for each 1kg dry feed consumed**

Remember: milk is a 'feed' which bypasses the rumen and goes directly into the abomasum.

KEY POINT: Milk is not a source of water for rumen development

Did you know? Pairing or grouping calves early in life encourages solid feed intake & improves weight gain during the milk feeding period.

Weaning Duration:

Gradually weaning calves by reducing the amount of milk fed over 3 weeks before weaning encourages starter intake, stimulates rumen development & improves post weaning digestibility of nutrients.

Once calves have reached 4 weeks of age, this can be achieved by cutting back to one milk feed per day in some rearing systems.

- Feed milk replacer at a maximum of 0.7 kg dry matter per day for 3 weeks before milk is removed (e.g. if calves are to be weaned at 8 weeks, start reducing the milk offered on day 36).

Age:

Weaning calves at 8 weeks of age allows greater solid feed intakes & better rumen and gut development by weaning. For optimal calf growth and feed efficiency both pre and post weaning:

- Calves should not be weaned at less than 6 weeks of age
- Calves should be weaned before they reach 10 weeks of age

CALF WEANING

A calf that is fed more milk, and eats a good amount of solid feed, will have:

- More energy available for growth (from both milk & solid feed)
- A well-developed digestive system - 'primed' for efficient post-weaning growth
- A well-developed rumen (can utilise solid feed for growth)
- No setbacks at weaning (will continue to grow)
- Improved growth rates and feed efficiency pre and post weaning

Stages of rumen development:

1. 0-6 weeks

Milk is bypassing the rumen directly into the abomasum for digestion.

2. 6 weeks

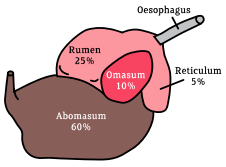
Consumption of solid feed and other factors encourages development of the rumen wall and rumen volume.

3. 12-16 weeks

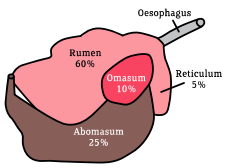
Post weaning the calf has a functional rumen which provides the calf with its nutrient supply.

4. Mature ruminant

The rumen is now fully functional.



Stage 1



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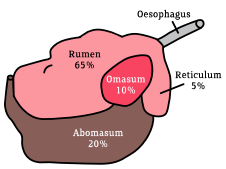

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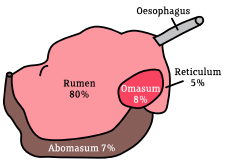


Stage 4

Twice a day CMR feeding- Batch mixing per feed			
No. calves	**Prime Elite 23%/25% Plus (Kg)**	**Water (ltrs)**	**Final Mix (ltrs)**
1	0.375	2.6	3
2	0.75	5.2	6
3	1.125	7.8	9
4	1.5	10.4	12
5	1.9	13	15
6	2.3	15.6	18
7	2.6	18.2	21
8	3.0	20.8	24
9	3.5	23.4	27
10	3.75	26	30
15	5.6	39	45
20	7.5	52	60
30	11.5	78	89
40	15.0	104	119
50	18	130	149
75	28	195	223
100	37.5	260	298

GRASS MATTERS

By JOHN MAHER
Dairy Specialist, Teagasc Moorepark

KEEP ON TOP OF GRASS AT THE START OF THE 2ND ROUND

Farmers have reacted very differently to the challenging weather conditions this spring. Some farmers have a lot of grazing carried out during Feb & March while others have very little grazing completed in March. There is also a huge variation in the amount of nitrogen fertiliser applied. For those who have very little grazing completed by April 1st, the start of the 2nd round of grazing will be difficult to get right. The level of recovery time of the first grazed paddocks is short. Equally grass growth can take off in April.

WHEN TO FINISH FIRST ROUND OF GRAZING

The end of the first round should normally occur in early April. However, there is huge variation in the proportion of farms grazed by St. Patrick's Day. Most farmers are behind on the proportion of the farm grazed. This should be around 60% by mid-march. This would suggest that the first round would end a little later than normal i.e. somewhere in the 2nd week of April. For those who have less than 30% the farm grazed by Patricks day, then April 15th should be targeted. This allows about 45 days from early march to get enough recovery of grass to start the 2nd round.

A decision will have to be made as to when you should start the 2nd round of grazing. You should begin the 2nd round when the grass is **almost** right for grazing i.e. 1100 – 1200kg DM/ha. This level of cover is the right amount to start with and means you are starting the 2nd round of grazing **BEFORE the grass supply EQUALS the herd demand for grass**. If we wait until we have enough grass (supply is greater than demand) grass will get ahead of you and grass quality will suffer. It is better to be a bit tight on grass and feed extra meal for a few days than let grass get ahead.

It is important to walk your farm and keep your eye on the few paddocks that were grazed first this spring. By watching what is happening in terms of growth on these paddocks will determine whether you will speed up or slow down grazing of the paddocks at the end of the first round in the first 2 weeks of April. It is important to note that the farmers who finish the 1st round of grazing earlier are growing more grass on their farm.

For those farmers who carry out pasture measurements, try to target a cover of about 150-160kgDM/cow on the farm at the start of the 2nd round of grazing. The farm cover should not fall below 500kg DM/ha.

Curtins Farm Mid-March (600kg DM/ha): One of

GRASS MATTERS

the 1st paddocks grazed in early Feb. Expected start of the 2nd round of grazing is April 7th.

Expected growth rate for last 2 weeks of March: 14 days X 25 kg/ha/day	**= 350**
Expected growth rate for first week of April: 7 days X 40 kg/ha/day	**= 280**
Total Growth: 600 + 350 +280	**= 1230 kg/ha**
Total grass available on April 7th: 1230 kg/ha	

For those farms who have very little of the farm grazed by early march:

Grass available on March 10th	**= 200**
Expected growth rate for last 3 weeks of March: 20 days X 20kg/ha/day	**= 400**
Expected growth rate for first 2 week of April: 15 days X 40 kg/ha/day	**= 600**
Total Growth: 200 + 400 + 600	**= 1200kg/ha**
Total grass available on April 15th: 1200 kg/ha	

GRAZE OUT WELL

April will be a key month to get paddocks cleaned off well. It has been difficult to clean off paddocks this Spring as well as we would like. Getting paddocks grazed off well during April is vital to ensure high quality grass is available during the latter half of May and the month of June.

FERTILISER

Most dairy farms need to have 60 - 70 units of Nitrogen/ac applied by early April. **The next target is to have 90 - 100 units of fertiliser N/ac applied by May 1st.** Remember that many farms are deficient in P and K so applying compound fertiliser e.g. 18:6:12 needs to be considered. Application of fertiliser P & K will also help damaged pasture recover.

Many dairy farms also respond well to Sulphur (S) application. The target is to have 15 - 20 units/ac of Sulphur applied by late June. This can be achieved by spreading Nitrogen + S type fertiliser or using A.S.N (14 units of S/50kg bag) type fertiliser. If you are going to use Nitrogen + S type fertiliser then you need to start in April as there are only about 5 units of S per 50kg bag.

Teagasc/Dairygold Demonstration & Focus Farm Performance (10/3/2017)

Milk Yield (l/cow)	26.7
Fat %	4.34
Protein %	3.23
MS Yield (kgMS/cow)	2.1
Grass Growth Kg DM/ha	11
Demand kg DM/ha	25
Average Farm Cover (kg/ha)	1018
% herd calved	80
% of Farm Grazed (St. Patricks Day)	44

FERTILITY & BREEDING

By DOREEN CORRIDAN
MVB MRCVS PhD, Munster Cattle Breeding

2017 BREEDING PROGRAMME CALENDAR

DATE	ACTIONS	COWS	HEIFERS
Monday 3/4/17 **Week - 3 Breeding (3 weeks pre-breeding)**	**Decide mating start date.** Tail paint all cows. Treat Lame Cows. Put low BCS cows on Once a day milk (OAD)	24/4/17 mating is calving on 1/2/18 Record all cows with rubbed paint at each milking.	24/4/17 mating is calving on 1/2/18 Ensure heifers are on a rising plane of nutrition. Supplementary feeding to those under 320Kgs
Monday 10/4/17 **Week - 2 Breeding (2 weeks pre-breeding)**	**Tail paint all cows.**	Record all cows with rubbed paint at milking	
Monday 17/4/17 **Week - 1 Breeding (1 weeks pre-breeding)**	**Tail paint all cows.**	Record all cows with rubbed paint at milking	Rising plane of nutrition. **Familiarize heifers by bringing them into yard daily for feed.** Watch weather forecast for applying **scratch cards**.
Monday 24/4/17 **Week 1 Breeding**	**Mating Start Date** Tail paint all cows.	Tail paint all cows. **Draft cows calved 35 days not seen in heat for synchronization TODAY.** **Synchronization programme detailed below with fixed timed AI is superb.**	**Scratch cards on all heifers.** Ensure rising plane of nutrition for heifers. Bring heifers to the yard daily for drafting for AI and reading the cards.
Friday 28/4/17	Tail paint all cows.		
Monday 1/5/17 **Week 2 Breeding**	1 week breeding complete	**Should have 30% of cows bred that are calved 35 days.**	**Should have 30% heifers bred now. Renew scratch cards missing. If close to 30% of heifers are bred inject remainder with PG. If less than 30% bred investigate reason prior to PG injection**.
Friday 5/5/17	Tail paint all cows.		
Monday 8/5/17 **Week 3 Breeding**	Tail paint all cows.	**Should have 60% of cows bred that are calved 35 day.**	**Should have 90+% heifers bred now.** If not investigate.
Friday 12/5/17	Tail paint all cows.		
Monday 15/5/17 **Week 4 Breeding**	Tail paint all cows.	Tail paint all cows. **Draft cows calved 35 days not seen in heat for synchronization TODAY.** **Synchronization programme detailed below with fixed timed AI is superb.**	

HEAT DETECTION IN DAIRY COWS

Reliance on observation alone will not yield good results; a high proportion of heats will be missed.

VASECTOMISED BULL

A vasectomised bull fitted with a chin ball is the best method of heat detection for heifers and dairy cows after 3 weeks breeding.

KEY POINT: The chinball is as important as the bull, heats will be missed with a bull without a chinball.

Fig. 1 & 2 Chinball padded and well fitted.
Alternatively, a section of the yellow volume washer hose works well.

Have the bull vasectomized min 8 weeks prior to him being required. Your vet can check him to ensure his ejaculates are free of any semen.

Always fit him with a nose ring at vasectomizing as it allows easy application and removal of the chin ball for topping up with paint.

Take good care of the vasectomised bull. Ensure young bulls are well fed. Avoid situations where the vasectomised bull may get hurt e.g. if you have a lot of synchronised cows remove the bull when they are on heat.

Chin ball paint is the only paint that should be used in the chin ball. Prior to filling the chin ball, shake the paint vigorously as it has a heavy oil base alternatively put it in a bucket of warm water. It is important to

Fig 3. The bull needs to be well grown and ideally similar in size or taller than the females to be detected

secure the plug properly after each paint fill to prevent leaking. A fill of the chin ball should last 15-20 heats depending on the bull.

The best chin ball device, is the one shown (Figs.1& 3). It is important, especially in young bulls, to pad the area around the back of the neck (Fig. 1 & 2) and around the nose band to avoid the strap cutting into the bull. Ensure the chin ball is snugly fitted. The leather straps are likely to stretch, adjust them regularly especially in the first month of use.

Put the chin ball on at least one week prior to the breeding season, without paint; this allows the bull to get used to the device and avoids wastage of paint.

Fig.4 Chin Ball marks on the back of the cow in heat

Fig 5. Chinball marks on the cows side - Courting marks - Coming into heat. When marks are on the back she has stood to be mounted.

Watch carefully to make sure that the bull marks the backs of the cows he mates (Figs 4). When the cow is standing and the bull mates her he marks the back of the cow- these marks are the ones to watch for. Other marks will appear on the sides of the cow, these are 'courting marks' and they will alert you to the fact that the cows may be coming on heat- very common in young bulls. One mistake that is often made is inseminating cows on the courting marks. If only 1 or 2 cows are coming on heat, a young bull can court a cow up to 48 hours before she will stand to be mounted, this results in cows being inseminated 24-48 hours earlier than the optimum time.

TAIL PAINT

Fig 6 Emulsion paint can be applied with a brush, glove or roller.

Fig 7 Fils tail paint

Fig 8. Cows tail painted with Fils paint in different colours

Applying Tail Paint:

- Tail paint is applied on a 9 inch by 1 to 2 inch strip on the rump.
- Clip the rump prior to paint application allows. This allows the paint to come off easier on mounting and reduces the amount of paint layered on as the season progresses.
- Apply with a paint brush, paint roller or a glove. Spray on paint is also available. Some people find this convenient and effective.
- As the season moves into the 2nd 3 weeks of the breeding season, if there is a lot of layering of paint change the colour completely. For

example, if you were using blue all along, ignore the blue paint now as it will not come off cleanly. Paint with a different colour for example yellow, and if the yellow is rubbed off the cow is in heat even though the blue is still present

- Tail paint needs to be topped up as often as is necessary; twice a week is sufficient in most cases. In inclement weather, it needs to be topped up more often.
- If cows need to be housed indoors clipping the tails will reduce the amount of dung on the rump area. While indoors use crayons as opposed to the tail paint.

Fig 9. Cows with tail paint removed. Marks typical of cows in heat early in the season with a lot of activity.

Herdowners find fils tell tail paint very effective and convenient to use. Select very bright even a fluorescent colour. You can use these colours to great effect, e.g. if all cows are initially painted yellow, and any cow served is than painted blue, instantly you know the cows painted yellow have not yet been served.

Tail paint is not as effective in maiden heifers as it is in cows. Spray or crayons work better on heifers. Painting a little further down the tail of the maiden heifers help detection.

CRAYONS

Crayons rub off easier than tail paint, making them extremely useful for maiden heifers. Herd owners also find them very convenient to apply. They come in boxes of 12 and in different colours. Prior to use remove the crayons film by rubbing the crayon on a wall.

Fig 13. Rub crayon wall to get rid of dry area

Fig 14. Box of Crayons

Rub on the crayon to the rump in an area 9 inches by 1 inch. For maiden heifers come a little further down the tail. Top up the crayon weekly.

SCRATCH CARDS

Scratch cards are an excellent method of heat detection in both cows and heifers. The newer scratch cards 'estrus detect' are superior to previous scratch cards. They come in a roll of 100 with a can of 'scotch weld glue' (Fig 1).

Applying Scratch Cards:

Fig 1.

- Hair is needed for the glue to stick the scratch card, do not clip the hair.
- On a dry day brush off any loose hair, dirt or dust from the rump area. Spray the area of the rump where the card is to be applied
- Tear off the number of cards from the roll that you need and spray the back of the cards with the glue.
- When the glue is tacky (sticking to your glove) put it on the rump.
- Apply the card to the sprayed area of the rump and rub it in well especially around the edges

When the cow or heifer is on heat, the silver will get scratched off and reveal the colour of the card underneath. The colour revealed can be green, yellow or red depending on the scratch card. With a lot of activity the surface of the card will be white.

Renew the scratch cards as often as necessary usually if properly applied they will last 2-3 weeks. Renew them each time the day after the animal was in heat. You can apply the new card on top of the old one if the old one is still in place.

Overall scratch cards work exceptionally well in both cows and heifers especially when they are outdoors. If the animals are dirty indoors you may get a layer of dung on the cards preventing them being scratched. In this scenario, crayons or a vasectomised bull work better.

SYNCHRONISATION

Synchronisation is an excellent way to increase the number of cows or heifers served with minimum heat detection. However it is not substitute for poor management. Cows have to be in good body condition and calved at least 40 days.

Synchronisation Protocol for AI at Fixed Time in Cows and Heifers.

Mon 24th April	**DAY 0**	**PRID or CIDR and GnRH (e.g. 2.5ml Receptal)**	**AM**
Mon 1st May	DAY 7	PG (e.g. 5ml Lutalyase or 2ml Estrumate)	AM
Tues 2nd May	DAY 8	PRID or CIDR out	AM
Wed 3rd April	DAY 9	GnRH (e.g. 2.5ml Receptal)	PM
Thurs 4th April	DAY 10	AI all cows	AM-NOON
5th, 6th, 7th	**Watch carefully for late heats**		

The second GnRH should be timed 36 hours after PRID, or CIDR removal and AI 18 hours after this injection.

PRID, CIDR, GnRH (Receptal, Overelin), PG (Lutalyase, Estrumate, Enzaprost, Cyclix) are all POM medicines.

MAIDEN HEIFERS

Ensure all heifers:

- Meet the minimum target weights outlined above.
- Have a good Body Condition Score (BCS).
- Are on a rising plane of nutrition.
- Have received all their vaccines prior to the breeding season.
- Are in a socially stable group; avoid mixing heifers during the breeding season.

Synchronisation of heifers

Synchronisation is an excellent way of increasing the number of heifers served to A.I. with minimum heat detection. There are many advantages; all the heifers are served within a short period of time, repeats will occur in close proximity – facilitating heat detection. A compact group can be presented for scanning.

The milk testing schedule is as follows:

Disease	1st Test April	2nd Test June	3rd Test August	4th Test November
BVD				
Neospora	Y	Y	Y	Y
IBR				
Leptospirosis	Y	Y	Y	
PI3				
RSV			Y	
Schmallenberg				
Salmonella		Y	Y	
Stomach Worms				
Liver Fluke	Y	Y	Y	Y

Cost Effective Synchronisation Protocol For Heifers

APRIL		Introduce a vasectomised bull or Apply scratch cards or crayons
24th April	Day 1-7	A.I heifers when on heat. Will get 1/3 this week.
Mon 1st May	Day 7-8	Inject all heifers not bred with PG usually 2/3 of them.
2nd - 5th May		A.I heifers when on heat. Majority will be on heat 48-72 hour's post injection. Be extra vigilant at his time.
12th May	Day 18 or 19	Inject all heifers not bred with PG. Should be very Few heifers.
13th - 16th May		A.I. heifers when on heat or 72 and 96 hours post 2nd PG injection.
		Watch for all repeats.

PG: Prostaglandin- *Estrumate, * Lutalyse, *Enzaprost (*POM prescription only medicines)

CHFC MATTERS

By IVOR BRYAN
CHFC Public Relations Officer

ANNUAL BULL SALES

The CHFC are delighted to invite you to our annual Bull Sale. Full Catalogues are available from Bandon Mart and our club Facebook page. We look forward to seeing you there.

CORK HOLSTEIN FRIESIAN CLUB ANNUAL BULL SHOW AND SALE

on Wednesday 5th of April in Bandon Mart Sale at 12 noon

38 Top Bulls • EBI to 242 • Protein to 4.06 • All dams over 3.5% protein, 550kgs solids and confirmation GP82 or better

LOT	Heifer Name	DOB	KGs Milk	%BF	%PR	KGs Solids	Classification	EBI	Breeder
1	Laurelelm Steve	1.9.15	11034	4.45	3.59	888	VG87	58	Rickey Barrett
2	Massrock Showman	18.9.15	7565	3.76	3.52	550	VG87	242	Gerard Lehane
3	Glenrea Star 2	26.9.15	6778	4.60	3.80	569	VG86	149	Martin Kennedy
4	Ahakeera Ella 1466	5.10.15	7575	5.48	3.61	689	VG86	147	Kevin O'Neill
5	Ahakeera Gayle 3	8.10.15	8949	5.03	3.61	773	VG86	80	Kevin O'Neill
11	Kilgarriffe Bowsida 3109	26.11.15	9143	3.64	3.51	654	VG87	90	Richard J Helen
12	Roovesmore Sherlock	13.12.15	8130	3.90	3.59	609	EX90	-1	Donal Murphy
13	Mountfarna Allrounder	1.1.16	7801	4.37	3.76	634	EX92 3E	88	John O'Callaghan
14	Mountfarna Torondo	5.1.16	10008	4.39	3.62	801	EX92 3E	7	John O'Callaghan
15	Ahakeera Lsq Molly	5.1.16	7426	4.20	3.79	594	GP82	72	Kevin O'Neill
21	Findon Levi 2	8.1.16	8464	3.87	3.57	630	VG86	160	Kenneth Jennings
22	Roovesmore Evert	10.1.16	8445	3.83	3.58	626	EX92 3E	26	Donal Murphy
23	Ballydehob Laurance	11.1.16	6820	4.91	3.83	596	VG88	214	Robert Shannon
24	Radney Kaka	12.1.16	8117	4.84	3.84	705	VG87	160	Henry O'Keeffe
25	Ballymartin Basten	13.1.16	7380	5.44	3.73	676	GP82	34	Andrew Cronin
31	Glenrea Lobby 2155	14.1.16	8441	3.69	3.53	610	VG85	107	Martin Kennedy
32	Mylawn Turvy Bill	15.1.16	8157	3.51	3.59	580	VG86	137	Michael Denis Healy
33	Mylawn Matt 2	20.1.16	8272	3.94	3.74	635	VG87	92	Michael Denis Healy
34	Glenrea Mxz 2166	21.1.16	8262	4.76	3.73	701	EX92 3E	154	Martin Kennedy
35	Liskilla Sol 2	22.1.16	7938	3.94	3.50	591	VG89	-11	Leslie Smith
41	Ballymartin Pzi 9	23.1.16	11249	4.13	3.84	896	VG86	86	Andrew Cronin
42	Liskilla Dempsey 2	25.1.16	7982	4.23	3.52	619	VG87	43	Leslie Smith
43	Mylawn Big Matt	25.1.16	6612	4.80	3.80	569	VG85	30	Michael Denis Healy
44	Radney Muller	28.1.16	8770	3.73	3.92	671	EX90 2E	222	Henry O'Keeffe
45	Radney Gotze	28.1.16	9149	4.11	4.02	743	EX90 2E	132	Henry O'Keeffe
49	Gurranes Elmo	29.1.16	7497	4.11	3.89	600	GP83	133	Michael O'Donovan
50	Mountfarna Reliable	29.1.16	10807	4.56	3.75	898	VG88	170	John O'Callaghan
51	Mylawn Kevin	1.2.16	7751	3.92	3.75	595	VG85	129	Michael Denis Healy
52	Glenny Arthur 1484	1.2.16	7474	4.56	3.92	634	VG88	233	Daniel M O'Leary
53	Gurranes Judd	3.2.16	7687	4.08	4.06	626	VG85	132	Michael O'Donovan
54	Glenny Carfest 1490	3.2.16	6625	4.76	3.67	558	GP82	221	Daniel M O'Leary
55	Meeleen Rnc Chas 2274	5.2.16	7027	4.69	3.60	583	GP84	42	Cornelius Cremin
56	Liskilla Dempsey	9.2.16	8356	3.98	3.57	631	GP82	26	Leslie Smith
57	Mountfarna Benny	12.2.16	11348	4.47	3.75	934	EX91 2E	101	John O'Callaghan
58	Meeleen Brian	13.2.16	8410	3.76	3.70	627	GP83	2	Cornelius Cremin
59	Glenny Derry 1517	23.2.16	6913	4.98	3.84	610	VG89	115	Daniel M O'Leary
60	Browney Lwr Hfl	28.2.16	6912	4.73	3.83	592	VG86	230	Thomas J Kearney
61	Glenny Magnet 1536	11.3.16	8323	3.62	4.00	634	EX91 4E	85	Daniel M O'Leary

To keep up to date with the latest happenings in the club please check out the clubs Facebook page.

Animal Health Ireland BULLETIN

CRYPTOSPORIDIOSIS

With large numbers of calves on the ground, shed space at a premium and farmers at their busiest, calf scour caused by Cryptosporidium parvum can become an issue. Cryptosporidium parvum is a microscopic parasite which causes scour by damaging the gut lining. The parasite is transmitted via the "faecal-oral route"; infected calves pass the parasite eggs in their dung and these are ingested by other calves. Dung building up in calf pens, contaminated equipment, trailers or the clothes and boots of visitors to the calf shed can all contribute to the spread of the parasite.

Diagnosis

It is not possible to distinguish cryptosporidiosis from other forms of calf scour by the type of scour or clinical signs.

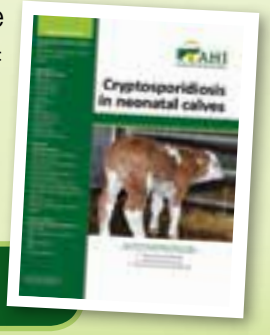
- Submit faecal samples (in sterile containers) from untreated, scouring calves in the early stages of a disease outbreak to your veterinary practitioner or laboratory.
- Take dead calves to a veterinary laboratory for post-mortem.

Halofuginone lactate

Talk to your vet about using halofuginone lactate. This prescription-only medicine can be used preventively in new-born calves at risk of cryptosporidiois and calves in-contact with infected calves. Scouring calves diagnosed with cryptosporidiosis may also be treated with halofuginone lactate, where it can reduce the severity of disease if administered within 24 hours of the onset of scour.

Disease control measures

Prevention and control measures for cryptosporidiosis should focus on hygiene. In the calf shed, provide adequate bedding and replace this regularly, ensure strict hygiene with feeding equipment and raise feed and water troughs off the floor by 0.75m. Wash hands and change clothes and footwear after handling sick calves. Thoroughly clean and disinfect calf pens where sick calves have been housed with a disinfectant effective against Cryptosporidium parvum.



Animal Health Ireland, 4-5 The Archways, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim
Phone 071 9671928 • Email admin@animalhealthireland.ie • www.animalhealthireland.ie

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Animal Health Ireland
NOTES

DON'T DELAY, GET STARTED TODAY!

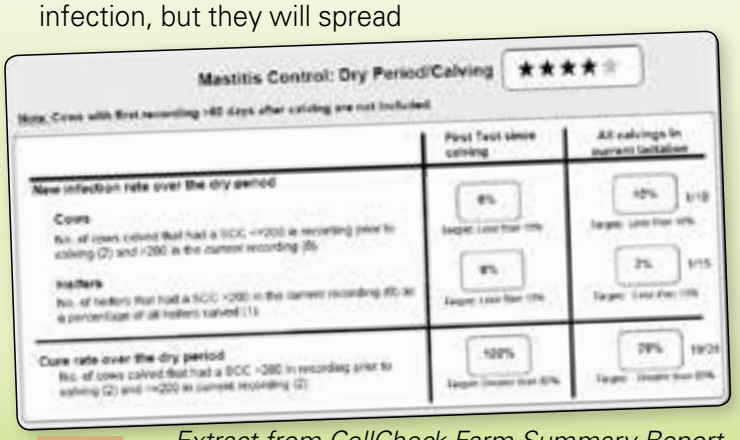
Many farmers will wait until most, or even all of the herd has calved before doing the first milk recording of the season……don't wait! The sooner you start to milk record, the sooner you will identify infected cows that may not have any clinical signs. Early lactation mastitis is a high risk and dealing promptly with new infections will give you the best chance of curing them, and protecting the rest of the herd.

Early milk recording will also give you invaluable information on the success of your dry cow treatment, and management of your dry cows and in-calf heifers. The CellCheck Farm Summary Report looks specifically at mastitis control during the dry period and at calving, but it can only do this for cows that have a milk recording within 60 days of calving. So to get maximum value from your milk recording, if you haven't already done a milk recording this season, get started now!

CELLCHECK FARM SUMMARY REPORT:

- ☑ Looks at cows and heifers separately, so you can see any problems in different ages of animals calving.
- ☑ Shows how many animals have picked up a new infection either over the dry period or at calving.
- ☑ Calculates the percentage of cows cured over the dry period.
- ☑ Gives both a short-term picture, as well as a running total for mastitis control over the entire dry period/calving period to date.

You may think sometimes that milk recording is a luxury that you can't afford ……in fact, you can't afford not to! It allows you to react quickly to cows with high SCC-these cows may have no visible signs of infection, but they will spread infection within your herd, raise your bulk tank SCC and are losing you money. It is also the best tool you have to establish which cows are the most productive in terms of fat, protein and milk yields, and are 'paying their way'. So don't delay, get started today! Contact:


Mastitis Control: Dry Period/Calving ★★★★☆

Note: Cows with first recording >60 days after calving are not included.

	First Test since calving	All calvings in current lactation
New infection rate over the dry period		
Cows	8%	10% 1/10
Heifers	8%	2% 1/15
Cure rate over the dry period	100%	29% 10/21

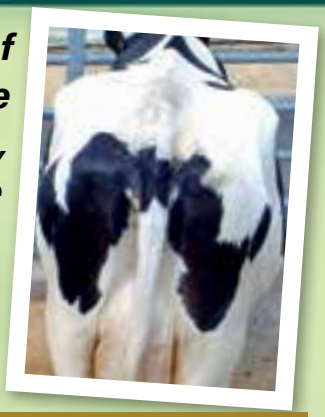
Extract from CellCheck Farm Summary Report.

- Munster Cattle Breeding Group (023) 43228
- Progressive Genetics (01) 4502142
- Tipperary Co-op (062) 33111

Further information on milk recording is available in Guideline 23 of the CellCheck Farm Guidelines for Mastitis Control.

Lactating Cow Nutrition & Breeding Workshop 2017

in association with munster cattle breeding group & Alltech®



Dairygold will run a number of workshops during the month of April in conjunction with Alltech and Munster A.I. There will be two workshops. The first workshop will be with Elaine Fenton, Technical Advisor from Alltech who will be along to provide information on early lactation nutrition and a nutrition plan tailored to your herd for this spring. Munster A.I. will also be running one to one meetings to discuss your breeding programme for 2017.

Booking is required for the Munster A.I. meeting. For your nutrition plan call in on the day.

Please contact 022 43228 to book in

All workshops run from 10am - 4pm

DATE	LOCATION
Wed 5th April	Mogeely Co-Op Branch
Thurs 6th April	Killumney Co-Op Branch
Fri 7th April	Cahir Co-Op Branch
Mon 10th April	Lombardstown Co-Op Branch
Tues 11th April	Raheen Co-Op Branch
Thurs 13th April	Clondrohid Co-Op Branch

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Thursday:	Mitchelstown & New Inn
Friday:	East Cork, Carrigaline & Ballinhassig

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