

Monitor farm meeting (3)

Agenda



- Cattle update since last meeting.
- Clover update and field operations.
- Plate metering.
- Decisions to be made before next meeting
- Farm visit to another Monitor farm
- Election of chairperson

Livestock update



- Bulls moved up to 10 kg per day since March
- Total meal cost since March will be approx 1 tonne @ £168
- Started slaughtering in May 2010
- Average weights so far 414 kg, 50% U3, 25% E3 25% E2 .
- One bull cut 10p/ kg being to heavy
- Gross receipts per Bull = £1070



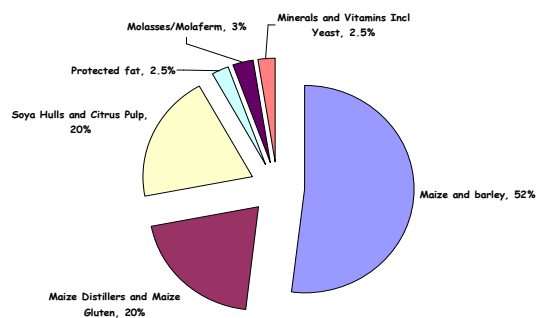
Bull ration 13% protein 13.6 MJ Energy

- Bulls difficult to finish + age limits = need higher energy
- Introduced max-fat /megalac to diet to increase energy content no compromise on fibre – 2 sources
- Ration cost £168 per tonne collected



Bull ration

Beef blend



Measures of efficiency



- Calving index / interval
- 200 Day calf weight vs Cow weight
- Benchmarking

Calving index



- 2005 calving index was 417 days
- 2009 calving index was 357 days
- Saving of 60 days per cow @ 2.50 day = £150 per cow or **£10500** for the herd

200 day weaning weight vs Cow weight



- Adjusted 200 day weight = 247 kg
- Average cow weight = 596 kg
- Efficiency = 42 %
- Target = 50 %

Benchmarking 2008/9



	MONITOR FARM	AVERAGE	TOP 25%
OUTPUT	711	783	914
VARIABLE COSTS (Meal, Grass, vet)	235	359	354
FIXED COSTS (Machinery running costs, Depreciation, property repairs)	341	422	310
NET MARGIN (Excluding labour, concrete and finance).	135	2	250
NET PROFIT after family labour	-234	-515	-219

Calf Performance weaning to Turnout 7/4/10



	HEIFERS Birth to weaning	HEIFERS Turnout	HEIFERS Birth to turnout
AVERAGE WEIGHT	274 kg	360 kg	
AVERAGE AGE	8 MONTHS	14 MONTHS	
HEAVIEST IN GROUP	364 kg	446 kg	
AVERAGE D.L.W.G.	0.95 kg	0.5 kg	0.74

Calf Performance 29th Oct 2009



	BULLS	HEIFERS
AVERAGE WEIGHT	308 kg	274 kg
AVERAGE AGE	8 MONTHS	8 MONTHS
HEAVIEST IN GROUP	396 kg	364 kg
AVERAGE D.L.W.G.	1.07 kg	0.95 kg

Teagasc 'On farm' Weight gains weanlings 2007-2008

(733 weanlings on 17 farms)



Gain achieved (Kg/day)	Groups (%)	Average daily gain (kg/day)	Silage DMD (g/kg)	Total meal fed
Above 0.5	47	0.67	714	160
0.25-0.49	28	0.39	725	140
Less than 0.25	25	0.04	724	80

Target winter gain



- 0.5 Kg in a weanling is ideal but difficult to achieve.
- Survey by Grange (Teagasc) in 2007-2008 show these weight gains difficult to achieve despite very good silage.
- Problems could include overcrowding, not enough feed space, treated as scavengers!!!!
- Solution seems to be to feed meal heavy before weaning to Christmas

Grazing gain – Grazing management



- Early born calves seemed to have a higher weight gain in 1st year – cause ???
- Average weight gain 1 kg per day
- Average weight gain over winter 0.5 kg

How much to graze and cut



Stocking rates must always be highest in Spring to:

1. Release more land for 1st cut silage
2. Ensure grass is eaten off tightly so as to prevent it from running to stem.

Impact of Spring grazing intensity on late summer grass quality



	Spring	Mid-August	
		Tightly grazed in Spring	Under-grazed in spring
Leaf content (%)	70	65	45
Stem, dead material (%)	30	35	60

Typical daily grass growth rates(kg DM/ha/ day)



<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>
3-5	5-10	10-15	20-50	90-100	50-80
<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
50-70	50-60	25-45	12-25	10	5



50% of yearly grass growth has taken place by late May – Mid June



Fine tuning the grazing - plate meter

- Measures grass dry matter as opposed to grass height.
- Better system as it takes account of sward density
- Useful when calculating daily/weekly grass growth.
- Rotation targets Early season 12-15 days
Late season 30 days



The targets

SPRING	Pre grazing Kg DM/ha	Post grazing Kg DM/ha	Available Kg DM/ha
Beef	3000	1600	1400
Sheep	2100	1600	500
AUTUMN			
Beef	3500	1600	1900
Grazing lambs	2200	1700	500



The targets

- Steers/Heifers eat 2.5% of bodyweight
- 400 kg animal eats 10 kg of Dry matter per day
- Suckler cow eats 17 kg of dry matter

- If paddock entry in Spring is at or above 3300Kg it should be considered for round baling.

Plate metering – River field



- Current cover (going in)= 2200kg DM/ha
- Residual (left behind) = 1600kg DM/ha
- Dry matter available/hectare = 600 kg DM/ha
- Area in field = 2.83 hectares
- Total DM available in field (600 X 2.83) = 1698

Stock requirement

- 400 kg heifers eat 2.5% of bodyweight = 10kg of DM
- Daily requirement =20 animals in group = 200 kg
- $1698/200 = 8$ days grass

Field operations



- Fertiliser 20-10-10 applied to all cutting fields
- Red clover field received 1 additional bag of nitrogen in early May due to lack of cover.

- Grazing fields got slurry only – cold weather hampering clover production

Herbicide spraying



- Allistell applied to cornerfield to control chickweed and check docks
- Red clover field sprayed with MCPA / DICAMBA against docks as it will be possibly reseeded/overseeded later this year.

Decisions that have been made



- Back hill 50-75 kg per acre of 20-10-10 to help feed the perennial ryegrass to go on ASAP
- Sprayed the red clover field with non safe clover spray to target a wide range of weeds

Group decisions to be made



- When to reseed/overseed the red clover field. Does it need another treatment with spray.
- What to do with the river field, spray clover safe –non clover safe, clover reestablishment
- Additional herbicides what about docks in corner field clover safe or not clover safe.
- Reseeding the hill – when and how.
- Date of visit to other Monitor farm