



Calf Husbandry

- Calves need a warm dry well ventilated house
- Ensure dry deep straw bed while housed
- Calves spend 80% of their time lying down

From a disease perspective:

- Avoid calves sharing cow airspace if possible
- Try group calves before they are 2 weeks old
- Have no more than 2-week age difference in calf pens
- 10 – 15 calves per group – no overcrowding (28 ft² /calf)

Early Nutrition of Calves

Successful rearing of your calves requires proper colostrum management (see above) and unrestricted access to:

- Clean water (in addition to milk/milk replacer fed)
- Fresh, palatable starter concentrate (preferably coarse)

North Cork Coarse Calf Starter is formulated specifically to provide a palatable coarse feed to give calves the ideal start on dry feeding which will help the rumen develop and increase the surface area for absorption of feed which will drive liveweight gain in calves.

It is also advisable to have fresh, good quality straw available. Hay is not ideal as it can reduce starter concentrate intake. Water and starter concentrate intake are vital for development of the rumen. A well-developed rumen (left below-calf fed milk and starter concentrate) will aid earlier weaning and less growth setbacks after weaning (right below-calf fed milk and hay)

To avoid growth checks after weaning, calves should not be weaned until they are consistently consuming 1Kg of starter ration per head per day. In restricted systems this will usually occur when calves are about eight weeks of age. In ad-lib systems it is not recommended to initiate weaning until calves are 12 weeks of age. Weaning should be a gradual process completed over 7-10 days.

Wet Weather Grazing Skills/Tips

1. **Cow** – ready to graze, she must not be full of silage going out, meal is of little consequence, but silage is detrimental to the appetite of the grazing cow. If poor weather continues allocate for 3 hours and allow cows to stand off or return to sheds after. This is being repeated (very successfully) after evening milking in many Duhallow farms.
2. **Infrastructure** – gaps, roads, spurs, wire
3. **The Man** – get out a walk the farm. It's not usually as bad as you think, and it allows you to make good decisions about where to send cows.
4. **Paddocks** – pick square rather than long, target drier areas, fence out of wet corners
5. **Grass** – where little or no amount is already grazed, you must go after the low covers of grass first. This allows you to get through lots of acres, thereby ensure a bigger area available for round 2. Also it trains cows better to graze.

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Milk Supply & Price

The milk price for February is 31.00 cent per litre (incl. Vat.) for milk of 3.60% Butterfat and 3.30% Protein.

Please find Milk Grading Booklet enclosed with statement.

***Take note of the EU Milk Quality Rejection Standards**

Grazing 1st Round

Grazing and grazing conditions have been a struggle so far on most farms across Duhallow this spring. However there has been tremendous progress made in the last 10 or 12 days particularly. THIS NEEDS TO CONTINUE. The following are the reasons why:

- **Milk proteins dropping**, this will inevitably happen when cows get to the stage of lactation they are now at (i.e. high proportion of herd calved 6 weeks plus). A diet of mainly silage plus ration cannot sustain the energy required to generate decent milk constituents. No matter what kind of ration is put into the diet, it just won't make up the energy gap.
- **Yield, energy requirement and Body Condition**, Cows are now inevitably starting to increase yields up to 25 litres plus. A quick sum of the energy required for this yield and just to maintain body condition is:

| | |
|----------------------|-------------|
| 25 litres * 0.43 UFL | = 10.75 UFL |
| Maintenance | = 5.00 UFL |
| Total | 15.75 UFL |

Energy provided in typical silage diet:

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| Silage 11 Kg DM | *0.72 UFL | = 7.92 UFL |
| Meal 6 Kg DM | *0.95 UFL | = 5.70 UFL |
| | | 13.62 UFL |

This is a deficit of over 2 UFL/day, which will result in a loss of Body condition of more than half a condition score. This level of loss is too high and will result in very poor results in the first round of breeding.

- **Grass Supply in second round.** First round grazing is setting up the farm to supply enough grass from mid - April onwards, from both a quality and quantity point of view. Make a plan a for your farm that is going to get you finished first round before April 20th in all cases, that means even where you have nothing grazed, YOU MUST GET OUT THERE NOW! If you have a lot grazed already (within last 10 days) this date can be adjusted back to April 13th.

Nitrogen

The target for April 1st is to have 70 units N applied per acre. 3 scenarios exist on the farms I am seeing. I will outline each one and the strategy required from now on. Farmers say to me: "I have very little grazed and I have loads of grass, I can hold off with the spreader a while". Remember you are spreading to provide grass for the next round.

1. **No fertiliser out** – Is it in the yard even?? I am hoping yes is the answer. These need at least 46 units out immediately. The easiest and most reliable here is a bag of Urea. Spread all of the farm. If needs be skip wet paddocks/wet areas. Top up to 70 units by April 20th.
2. **23 to 30 units spread** – Top up before April 1st to reach 70 units (or close to it). Depending upon allowances for P, I would recommend 2 bags of 18:6:12 +S.
3. **On target** – your next target is 100 units by May 1st. if you haven't spread much P & K, get out some in the form of 18:6:12 next. All grazing ground responds very well to Sulphur so target to get 15 units out by mid-June.

AI Bull Selection

The aim is breeding the most profitable cow for you system. In an A+B-C payment for milk, that is the cow that can deliver a high volume of milk solids with good constituents and calve down every 365 days. Use the following EBI criteria:

- Fertility Sub index: €160 plus
- Protein: + 10 Kg & 0.10%
- Fat: +15Kg & 0.15%
- Health: Positive
- Bulls for heifers calving difficult less than 1.8%- these must be proven bulls.

Using these criteria will throw up a sufficient selection of bull across all companies and also will bring a very good rate of genetic progress across all supplier farms. However you need to start planning and ordering now. A word of warning is that a TEAM OF AT LEAST 6 BULLS should be used evenly across the herd.



MILKSHAKE®

Supporting Growth & Health
For Calves Fed Cows Milk & Milk Replacer

***PROVEN**
15%
EXTRA WEIGHT
GAIN

- Increased calf growth rates of 15%
*(Teagasc Moorepark Ireland Trials)
- Digestive enzyme activity
- Reduction of Nutritional diarrhoea
- Higher whole milk Intakes

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MILKSHAKE® Feeding Instructions
We believe MILKSHAKE® to be the best product of its kind on the market. We want you to obtain the best results, you will do so by following these instructions.

MILKSHAKE® Feeding Instructions for Cows Milk and Milk Replacer:

FOR COWS MILK:
For dispersion in cow's milk, add 15g (1 scoop) MILKSHAKE to 500ml of water then add this to 4.5 litres of milk. These measures should prevent milk from curdling. If milk curdles it is safe to feed to calves. In fact milk curdles in the calf's stomach shortly after feeding and is an important part of the normal digestion process.

FOR MILK REPLACER:
For use with milkreplacer in bucket systems or cold add-lb systems add 15g of MILKSHAKE (1 scoop) to 5 litres of milkreplacer.

7.5kg Bucket MILKSHAKE = 2280 Litres (500 Gallons) Milk

For further information and other stockists in your area please contact our technical sales manager
Sam Sweetnam - 086 0437153 - Cork, Limerick, Kerry



Milk Guard

15g per calf per day 1 Drum, 5kg = 333 Feeds

- With both Whole Milk & Milk Replacers
- Bucket Fed or through Automatic Feeders

Naturally Supporting:

- ✓ Boosting Gut Health & Growth
- ✓ Boosting Immunity
- ✗ Digestive Disturbances
- ✓ The Reduction of Nutritional Diarrhoea

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For further information and stockists in your area please contact our technical sales managers
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We are stockists of both of these products.