



## Farm Profitability Project Feature Farmer



This month's feature farm is;

**Tim Twomey, Glensouth Banteer**



HERD SIZE	<b>60</b>
LITRES PER COW/ PER DAY	<b>28.31</b>
FAT%	<b>4.29%</b>
PROTEIN%	<b>3.47%</b>
KG MS/COW	<b>2.26 kg/ms</b>
SCC	<b>120</b>
TBC	<b>25</b>
% HERD CALVED	<b>90%</b>
FEED KG	<b>4kg 16% Dairy Nut + Rumbuff</b>
DATE COWS OUT TO GRASS	<b>28/02/2021</b>
AVERAGE FARM COVER	<b>554 kgs/DM/ha</b>
% FARM GRAZED	<b>45%</b>
% GROUND COVERED WITH SLURRY	<b>80%</b>
% GROUND COVERED WITH FERTILISER	<b>100%</b>

**Tip of the Month;** Back fencing is key when ground is wet it saves grazed ground from being further damaged and allows cows out.

## MILK PRICE

The milk price for February 2021 is 33.0 cent/litre (incl. VAT.) with a 0.5 cent/litre supplementary payment for milk of 3.60% Butterfat and 3.30% Protein.

## Bord Bia

All milk suppliers are reminded that if they do not have their SDAS up to date, their milk cannot be collected by North Cork Creameries.

## The Dairy Edge Podcast



The Dairy Edge is Teagasc's weekly dairy podcast for farmers.

Presented by Emma-Louise Coffey the podcast will cover the latest information, insights and opinion to improve your dairy farm performance.

There are three ways to listen to the podcast:

1. Subscribe on [Apple Podcasts](#)
2. Subscribe on [Spotify](#)
3. Online at Dairy Edge Player

## Hot Water Solutions

Please find brochure of Hot water solutions available and Water Heating solution loans available to milk suppliers at North Cork Creameries.

Any Quires Contact:  
Caroline Hedigan (Kanturk & Cullen) 085 876 3059  
Luke Lynch (NTS & FB) 085 856 3593



## **Spring Grassland Management**

Grazing has begun with a difficult start in 2021 due to difficult grazing conditions. This year grass growth has been close to normal, causing turnout of cows being delayed. PastureBase Ireland has displaced average farm covers close to 800kgDM/ha, where slurry application took place in mid-January, there has been a good response in grass growth.

### **Grass in March**

While things -have not gone to plan this February, it is important to get grass into the diet of Dairy Cows as much as possible in March. The primary reasons;

- Increased Milk Price
- Increase Milk Yield
- Lower the cost of Milk Production
- Grow more grass and increase grass quality in subsequent rotations.

Despite the weather challenges that appear at this time of year, every farmer must try to get cows out grazing simply because it is good for cows, good for the farmer and good for the grass plant. Everyday cows are at grass will increase profit, reduce costs and enable the farm to grow more grass.

Each additional day of grazing in February by the calved proportion of the herd for the average milk supplier will increase farm profit by over €100 per day, through improved milk constituents and lower feed costs.

### **Grazing**

As long as ground conditions are adequate underfoot – grazing can take place night and day. When conditions are difficult then practices have to be put in place to keep grass in the diet of the cow without causing serious damage to land. These include;

- Grazing for a few hours after each milking
- Using different entry and exit points to the paddock
- Grazing low covers of grass in difficult grazing conditions
- Using grazing techniques that minimize damage to land

## **Milk Quality**

### **What are milk solids?**

Milk solids refer to the amount of protein and fat in a quantity of milk.

### **How to Calculate Milk Solids**

Solids = Litres X 1.03 X Butter Fat/Protein ÷ 100

= kg for Butter Fat and Protein

### **Working Example Milk Solids Calculation Per Cow**

$29 \times 4.29 \div 100 = 1.28$  (Protein)

$29 \times 3.19 \div 100 = .95$  (Fat)

$= 1.28 + .95 = 2.23$  kg/MS

Milk Solids over 2 is very good result for this time of year!!!

### **Working Example Total Milk Solids Produced Per Cow**

$5500 \times 1.03 \times 4.29 \div 100 = 243.02$

$5500 \times 1.03 \times 3.19 \div 100 = 180.71$

$= 243.02 + 180.71 = 423.73$

## **Managing Colostrum & Antibiotic Cows**

- Keep freshly calved/Antibiotic cows as a separate group, to main herd – if possible
- Milk after the main herd – reduces risk of antibiotic/colostrum milk entering tank.
- Strip cows daily checking for mastitis until ready for tank.
- Use Bands/Tape/Spray to easily identify Fresh/Antibiotic cows.
- Use whiteboard to record events.



## Breeding Guidelines for Spring 2021

1. Know your herd's strengths and weaknesses.

*Refer to your ICBF Herd EBI Scorecard to help establish what these are*

2. **Select a team of high EBI AI bulls when breeding your dairy herd replacements.**

*For a typical 100 cow dairy herd, a minimum of 8 bulls should be used on your herd, with no more than 15% mating's to any one bull.*

3. **Target high EBI females to breed your next generation of dairy herd replacements.**

*High EBI females are typically maiden heifers, first and second calvers. Lower EBI cows should be bred to beef AI from the start of the breeding season.*

4. **Use the Dairy Beef Index (DBI) to select suitable beef AI sires for your dairy herd.**

*A team of bulls should be selected that suits the various dams in your herd (i.e., maiden heifers, young cows and mature cows) and the number of these that are selected for beef AI.*

5. **Use the ICBF HerdPlus Sire Advice Tool.**

*To help manage your breeding program and simplify the process of sire selection. It will allocate your bulls to cows based on their strengths & weaknesses, as well as manage inbreeding.*

6. **If using sexed semen, only use high EBI sires and ensure that all sexed semen inseminations occur early in the breeding season.**

*Pay careful attention to straw handling and AI procedures, as sexed semen contain fewer sperm, and these sperm are more fragile after the sorting process.*

## Heat Detection

Cows come into heat at all times of the day. On average however they are only on heat for 8 hours with slightly more than half of them standing for 8 hours or less. This makes them really difficult to identify in heat.

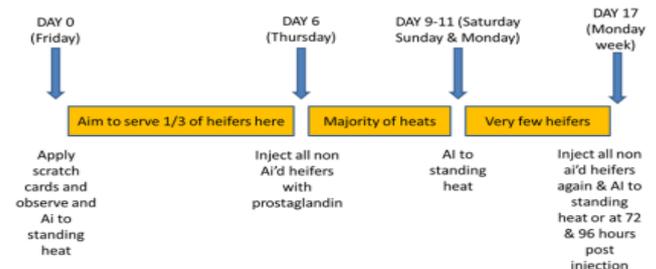
Research has found that late calving cows will be more difficult to spot in heat as they tend to have shorter duration of standing heat and because they come into heat later in the breeding season (when the bulling group will be smaller).

From April 1<sup>st</sup> farmers should be recording cows bulling as preparation for breeding season to be able to identify problem cows that don't seem to be cycling. Under condition cows with a BCS >3 should be milked Once a Day, but still be put through the parlour Twice a Day for concentrates to increase condition for the breeding season

### Methods of heat detection:

- Observing cows 3 times daily (early morning, mid-day and late evening), to identify bulling cows.
- Vasectomized Bulls
- Tail Paint
- Electronic cow monitoring system
- Mount detectors

## Synchronisation



Synchronisation can pay dividends to the farmer who wants to use AI, mainly by facilitating AI to genetically superior bulls, streamlining heat detection or at least focussing it on a key period, shortening the calving spread and hopefully creating an even bunch of calves which can be de-budded, vaccinated, weaned and sold as group.



# News



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