



www.tipperary-coop.ie



# Newsletter

In this newsletter we will be covering the following topics:

- Management Tips
- Reseeding
- Making Quality Silage to Buffer Feed Animals
- Sire Advice
- Making Quality Silage
- Fertiliser Recommendations for April and May

## MANAGEMENT TIPS

Compiled by Martin Kavanagh, MVB Cert DHH

There are a number of issues still causing problems on farms. Many farms have cows still to calve. The problems that are being reported are:

- Milk fever
- Displaced abomasums
- Scour outbreaks in older calves
- No Lepto vaccine!

### Milk fever

Milk Fever has been a plague on some farms and the normal increase in magnesium feeding precalving has not fixed all problems. Generally, adding 30-40 grams of Cal Mag or 80-100 grams of Magnesium flakes (Magnesium Chloride) per cow for 2-3 weeks before calving has sorted the issue. Increasingly, cows straight after calving are fed only 2 kgs of a basic dairy ration and are going to grazing fast, and the amount of calcium in the ration will not satisfy their needs. If cows are going down 12-24 hours after calving you must add Calcium to the diet of the cows AFTER calving; 100 grams of ground limestone. Calcium boluses help if given 12-24 hours before calving and repeated after calving but they are expensive and difficult to give. Dry cows grazing are difficult to manage; use hi-magnesium licks or feed 0.5 kg of barley and add the dry cow minerals.

### Displaced Abomasums

Some farms have experienced a number of cows with displaced stomachs. Once more than 2 cows out of a hundred have displacements, fresh cow feeding has to be reviewed. It is often a disease of overfat dry cows that calve in experience ketosis and a greater risk of displacement. More commonly it affects cows that fail to eat enough forages after calving as a result of lack of feed space, very poor quality silage, overcrowding, too much parlour feed or being put to grass too quickly after calving and not getting enough rumen fill. Solutions are based around getting cow body condition right before calving and providing a cow with enough feed and access to feed in the first week after calving.

So, fresh cows need an area where they have a bed to lie on each, feed space for every cow and the best of forage. They should not go to grass until they have filled their stomachs properly over one or two days inside and best if they stay in for 3-4 days. If they go out, they must come in at night even in good weather to ensure enough forage intake.

### Scour outbreaks in older calves

There have been a number of scour outbreaks in calves older than 2 weeks. These outbreaks run through the shed. When the faeces is tested, rotavirus is commonly found. Remember that normal calves will shed rotavirus and it is not always contagious particularly in calves over 2 weeks of age. The more common causes of these self-limiting scours are a build up of bacteria in the



At a recent function at the Abbey CBS Tipperary: Tadhg Hayes receives the Award sponsored by Tipperary Co-Op, for receiving the highest marks in the Agricultural Science Leaving Certificate class. Pictured from left are; John Kiely, Principal, Abbey CBS; John Daly, CEO Tipperary Co-Op; Tadhg Hayes; William Ryan, Chairman Tipperary Co-Op and Michael O'Dwyer, Ag. Science teacher.



sheds, cold stress or inconsistency in the feeding. The calves will respond well to extra feeds of electrolytes during the day; 2 litres minimum in addition to their normal milk feeds. Your vet will decide if antibiotic treatment is necessary. The most important thing you can do is clean the feeding equipment and change the beds. There are more severe causes of scour in older calves that will be poorly responsive to ordinary treatment with electrolytes; salmonella and coccidiosis are severe and often life threatening conditions that need veterinary intervention. If older calves have bloody scours, high temperatures and are significantly off their feed you need help to treat them.

Calves going to grass are at risk of acute COCCIDIOSIS. Wait 7-14 days before dosing for coccidia after turnout or wait for the first sign of loose dung. Anti-Coccidial doses do not have longevity of action and need to be given during the pre-patent period of the parasite – so you must wait until the calves are picking it up from the ground. It is always a fine balance – seek your vet's advice.

## No Leptospirosis Vaccine

Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease resulting in abortion, decreased fertility and milk drop in cattle.

Leptospirosis is a zoonosis - it can cause disease in humans. Farmers / farm-workers, abattoir workers and vets are the main risk groups. The disease in man is usually acquired from contact with the urine, afterbirths or the aborted foetus of an infected animal or with contaminated water. Clinical signs of the disease are flu-like, with headaches and fever, occasionally progressing to meningitis.

So, if vaccine is limited, then the critical animals to vaccinate are animals coming new to the herd i.e. the maiden heifers. Prioritise the vaccine in this group and get the 2 shots in pre-breeding, 4 weeks apart.

During this period when booster vaccination of the main herd is not possible, avoid buying in breeding stock as it is a risk for both the bought-in animal and the main herd. Buying bulls with unknown lepto status can be a risk. Talk to your vet about antibiotic treatment of bought in stock to reduce the risk of them shedding lepto on your farm. This is probably the most sensible option when the status of bought-ins is unknown.

In general, herds that have been vaccinating for many years are at low risk of ending up with an infertility issue due to lepto.

To restart the vaccine, the main herd will need 2 shots 4 weeks apart if they are more than 12 months from their last booster. Discuss this with your vet as the companies may differ in advice depending on the vaccine.

## BREEDING SEASON

April 1st is 'magic day' for breeding. It is time to get the herd ready. A breeding management plan is available from the Co-op advisory. The goal is to get the highest submission rate possible of eligible cows in the first 3 weeks of the breeding season. This is down to the work you do now in the management of body condition, heat detection pre-breeding, mineral supplementation and disease control. The following are some of the main points:

1. Get the routine vaccinations done
2. Get tail-painting so you can pick up the non-bullers. Clip the tailheads so it is easier to detect.
3. Bolus your stock by the 1st of April if using this system to provide trace elements at grass. Remember boluses only cover trace elements; Copper, Selenium, Cobalt, Iodine. Boluses are very useful in heifers where there is no supplement being used.
4. Vasectomise bulls now so they are ready– fit the harness now also so it has stretched and adapted to the bull and he is used to it. Handle them every second day and feed them a little in a crush so they are used to having the harness taken on and off when filling with paint.
5. If purchasing a bull, get them as soon as you can so they are adapted to your farm and feed. Ideally isolate and vaccinate. Test for diseases, such as IBR, if not vaccinating for this and isolate for 28 days. Check their feet for Mortellaro. It is always advisable to get the bull's 'soundness' checked and obtain a Veterinary Certificate. Remember 25% of bulls are sub-fertile. In modern herds where bulling activity is intense, and also, where bulls have to mop up small numbers of cows in large herds, make sure that you have plenty of bull power. One mature bull to 20-30 empty cows. Young bulls first season; one to 10-15 empty females. Always inseminate for ten days after bulls have been introduced to allow bulls to settle.





# SIRE ADVICE



## What is Sire Advice?

Sire Advice is an breeding support application available to all Dairy HerdPlus users. This application allows the user to maximise their herd EBI and improve and reduce variation between milk and fertility. This in turn will result in breeding a more balanced dairy female.

## Why use Sire Advice?

Sire Advice is a great tool for maximizing genetic gain in the herd by enabling the user to make more informed breeding decisions. Inbreeding is automatically avoided when using Sire Advice. Once the user is happy with their suggested matings, these sire selections are transferred to AI technician handhelds and printed on Breeding Charts for DIY AI farmers.

Herd Size (Incl. Heifers)	Recommended minimum number of Bulls	Herd Size (Incl. Heifers)	Recommended minimum number of Bulls
0-50	7	200-250	11
50-100	7	250-300	12
100-150	8	300-350	13
150-200	10	350-400	14

**Please note:** It is recommended to use a team of bulls relevant to the herd size (including heifers). This increases the reliability of the team of bulls and reduces risk.

## 5 STEPS TO SIRE ADVICE

1. Choose your females (mark cows for culling, contract, beef mating or crossbreeding to exclude from the main run)
2. Select a team of bulls based on your own breeding objectives
3. Decide on straw usage
4. Review suggested pairings
5. Save to AI Handheld/Breeding Chart



For more information on how to run Sire Advice please log-in to your HerdPlus account and go to "Applications" and "Sire Advice". Here you will find a Sire Advice Help Document. Alternatively, you can call the HerdPlus office on 023 8820452 and a HerdPlus representative will talk you through the entire process.

## MILKFLEX LENDING PRODUCT AVAILABLE TO TIPPERARY CO-OP SUPPLIERS

Tipperary Co-op have engaged with Finance Ireland Agri to make their Milkflex lending product available to Tipperary Co-op suppliers. The funds allow for investment in on-farm productive assets while protecting cashflows from the impact of milk price volatility.

Milkflex funds can be used for a variety of assets e.g. refrigerated bulk tanks, milking parlours, animal housing, farm infrastructure, environmental equipment, herd expansion as well as refinancing existing dairy related debt.

A brochure with details of the product is included with this newsletter. Should you wish to discuss, please contact the Milkflex team initially on 01 6470255. Anne Molohan, Eamon Doorley, Ethnea Glynn or Marta Storey will be available to take your call. After the initial contact Milkflex will arrange a farm visit with one of their Agri Business Managers.

# RESEEDING

## WHY RESEED?

Productive grassland farms must have perennial ryegrass dominated swards. Recent Moorepark research shows that old permanent pastures produce, on average, 3 tonne DM/ha/yr less than perennial ryegrass dominated swards. Old permanent pasture is up to 25% less responsive to available nutrients such as nitrogen than perennial ryegrass dominated swards. Reseeding is a highly cost effective investment. With regular reseeding the grass growth capacity of the farm can be increased substantially and the annual return on investment is large. Please see below the top tips to a successful reseeded sward:

## Tips to Ensure a successful reseeded sward

- Spray off the old sward. If there are perennial weeds such as docks and ragwort present use a glyphosate spray.
- Begin cultivation
- Ensure a low level of thrash in the pre-cultivation sward, particularly for minimum cultivation techniques (graze tight or top or mow tightly). Trash will be buried if ploughing.
- Target a short turnaround time - <60 days.
- Use 14kgs/acre of selected grass seed at sowing.
- Always use the DAFM Recommended List, the AFBI Recommended List (Northern Ireland) and the Pasture Profit Index to identify suitable cultivars. The recommended list evaluates cultivars across years and sites and is the only evidence available of the potential performance of grass cultivars in Ireland.
- Use a post emergence spray early (5-6 weeks post sowing/at the seedling stage of weeds).
- Ensure a firm seed bed, irrespective of reseeding method used.
- Roll to ensure seed to soil contact, even if rolling isn't possible at sowing, roll before first grazing – otherwise loose plants will get pulled at grazing.
- Monitor for pest attack, (slugs, leatherjackets, frit fly and rabbits are the main threats).
- The target soil pH is 6.3 for mineral soils and pH 5.5 for peat soils (Do not apply more than 7.5 t lime/ha (3 t/ac) in a single application).
- P and K must be brought up to soil Index 3.
- N is essential for good grass establishment and growth (Apply 40 kg N/ha (30 units N/ac) when reseeding, 3 Bags/ Acre of 10:10:20 is a popular choice to help establish a grass sward).
- After ploughing permanent pasture for reseeding, paddocks should be soil tested again the following year to ensure that the fertility of the soil brought to the surface by ploughing is correct for grass growth.



## The key traits in a seasonal grass based production system are:

- High seasonal production (spring and autumn)
- High mid-season quality
- Good ground cover or persistency score

When the decision to reseed is made, the next major decision is selecting the most appropriate grass cultivar or cultivars.

## The first thing to consider is the primary target use of the field:

Is it predominantly grazing or is it generally used as a silage paddock?

How much tetraploid should be used? A balance between quality, dry matter productivity and sward density is generally what must be achieved.

Combining diploids and tetraploids in a mixture will create a dense, high quality sward – ensure you select cultivars which express high performance in the key traits. Increasing the proportion of diploids on heavier soils is recommended to create better ground cover.

## MANAGEMENT OF NEW RE-SEEDS

### 0 - 8 Weeks

- Spray weed before grazing.
- Graze when grass is at the 2 leaf stage.
- Ensure you have correct levels of N, P & K spread in this time.
- Apply slug pellets if needed.

### Second Grazing Onwards

- Try to graze at 1000-1400 kgs Dm/ha (6-7cm)
- Re spray weeds if necessary

### Autumn

- Keep grazing at 1000-1400 kg DM/ha
- Apply light application of slurry if possible
- Graze off well before first winter (>4cm)

### Second Year

- Ensure adequate nitrogen is spread.
- Monitor P & K status



## Irish Johne's Control Programme

# Purchasing high assurance stock – Be Buyer Aware

**S**ome herd owners may be considering the purchase of replacement stock prior to the breeding season or offering B&B arrangements to other herd owners. All herd owners should consider the risk of introducing Johne's disease on these occasions as the introduction of infected animals is by far the most common means of introducing infection into a herd.

The current recommendation to herd owners to minimise the risk of Johne's entering a herd is to close a herd or limit the overall number of animals they introduce. If introducing new stock is unavoidable, for example purchasing a stock bull or replacement heifers, herd owners should purchase animals from high-assurance herds. These are herds where the likelihood of Johne's infection is low.

### WHAT DOES THE TERM HIGH-ASSURANCE MEAN?

**A high-assurance herd is one where the presence of Johne's disease in the herd is considered to be unlikely.**

High-assurance herds are typically those:

- With limited or no stock introductions for a number of years
- Where whole herd tests are carried out each year to confirm the herd is test negative
- Where effective calving and calf hygiene practices are followed to break the cycle of transmission from cow to calf through contaminated colostrum or milk.

**It is important to remember the term high-assurance indicates a significant reduction in the risk of infection being present in a herd. It does not guarantee the herd is free of infection.**

*A vendor who is registered with the IJCP has made a commitment to control Johne's disease by undertaking to carry out a regular Veterinary Risk Assessment and Management Plan (VRAMP) and whole herd testing.*

## ✓ CHECKLIST FOR PROSPECTIVE PURCHASERS

There are a number of questions that prospective purchasers should consider when deciding which herd to buy from.

### ✓ Is the vendor's herd registered with the Irish Johne's Control Programme?

A vendor who is registered with the IJCP has made a commitment to control Johne's disease by undertaking to carry out a regular Veterinary Risk Assessment and Management Plan (VRAMP) and whole herd testing.

### ✓ How long has the herd been registered with the IJCP and how many negative whole herd tests and VRAMPs have been completed?

The longer a herd has been registered with the IJCP, the greater the number of VRAMPs and whole herd tests that will have been completed. A herdowner with negative whole herd tests over a number of years and that regularly has low VRAMP scores would have a much better understanding of the risks their herd presents and would be well placed to provide this information to a prospective purchaser.

### ✓ Does the vendor run a closed herd, or limit the number of stock they introduce?

The fewer animals introduced to a vendor's herd, the lower the likelihood of infection being present, if the result of whole herd tests are negative.

With the information from these three questions, a prospective purchaser is able to reach an informed decision about any stock offered for sale. However, it is also important that purchasers remember that while 'high-assurance' represents a reduction in the risk of infection being present in a herd, it does not guarantee that the vendor's herd is free of infection.

Ultimately, buying from a high-assurance herd is less risky than buying from a herd which is unable to provide evidence to demonstrate assurance. If a herdowner is unable to provide you with the answers to these questions then think about whether the purchase is worth the risk.

All prospective purchasers should be 'buyer beware'. Make sure you assess the risk before committing to a purchase which could affect your herd's health for years to come.



For more information about the Irish Johne's Control programme and Guidelines for preventing the introduction of Johne's disease into a herd, visit Animal Health Ireland [click here](#).

## FARM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2018-2020

Please see the current data on the focus farms in the Tipperary Co-op/Teagasc Farm Development programme.

	John, Charlotte and John G Crowe	Peter Hughes and Paul Maguire	Glen Tour Farms	Seamus, James and Janice Farrell	T.J. Ryan	Solohead Research Farm
Milk Yield (Litres)	30	30	28	32	29	25
Butterfat %	4.33	4.31	4.51	4.56	4.38	4.55
Protein %	3.28	3.30	3.36	3.26	3.28	3.30
SCC ('000)	66	100	53	88	71	95
Concentrate Fed (kgs/ Days)	4	5	4	4.5	4	1
Calving Start Date	1st Feb	10th Feb	29th Jan	1st Feb	1st Feb	21st Feb
% of the Herd Calved	94	91	86	91	92	96
% of the Farm Grazed	80	95	80	75	50	90
Planned Start Date of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Rotation	10th April	4th April	14th April	13th April	15th April	8th April
Fertiliser Spread to Date (Units/Acre)	70	70	70	50	66	70

# FERTILISER PROGRAMME FOR SILAGE GROUND



Max nitrogen spread for silage should be 100 units/acre (123kgs/ha).

Soil Index	Phosphorus (P) Units/Acre		Potash (K) Units/Acre	
	First Cut Silage	2nd and 3rd Cut Silage	First Cut Silage	2nd and 3rd Cut Silage
1	20	10	140	56
2	20	10	120	40
3	20	10	90	28
4	0	0	0	0

Only apply index 3 levels of Potash (K) for silage regardless if in index 1 or 2 and then apply the balance over the course of the year otherwise excess amounts of K will be up taken.

If excess amounts of K are available in the silage there is a big risk of milk fever in cows due to it effecting the cows uptake of magnesium.

## How much silage should I be cutting?

To be able to estimate how much silage you will need to cut you will first need to know how many animals you will be keeping

through the Winter period and how long your animals are going to be housed e.g. 5 Months.

Once this has been calculated now you need to know how much are your stock going to need per month.

Type of Animal	Silage (Tonnes/Month)
Dairy Cow	1.6
2 + Year old	1.3
1-2 Year Old	1.3
0-1 Year Old	0.7

For 70 Cows, 14 In calf heifers and 14 weanlings here are the calculations:

Animal Type	No. of Stock	No. of Months	Silage Required	Total Silage= (AxBxC)
Dairy Cow	70	5	1.6	<b>560</b>
In Calf Heifers	14	5	1.3	<b>91</b>
Weanlings	14	5	0.7	<b>49</b>
			<b>Total</b>	<b>700</b>

## MAKING QUALITY SILAGE TO BUFFER FEED

After such a harsh Spring so far, making top quality silage to buffer feed animals when grass supplies are low or it is too wet to graze is paramount. Stocking rates have also increased on many farms and this will in turn increase your feed demand on farm and the most important question on many farmers' mind will be:

### How am I going to feed my cows with the best quality feed whilst also ensuring to be cost efficient?

The core diet on most dairy farms are grass, grass silage and concentrates. Quality grass silage can be as beneficial as grass if cut at the right stage.

Buffer feeding cows at times of grass shortage is common on many farms, so it is vital that we have the best available silage to stock when this occurs.

Silage that is cut at 6 weeks, before it has started to head out will have on average a DMD of 75% and a possible protein of 15%.

This type of silage will only be needed for buffer feeding so it will be only a proportion of your silage (10-15%) or 2 Bales/Cow (70 Cows you will need 140 Bales for buffer feeding only).

### How do you achieve this high quality silage?

- Spread 75 units/acre of nitrogen for this silage
- Aim to have it stopped for 6 weeks (1st-7th April)
- Aim to be cutting this silage from mid May (15th May)
- This type of silage should yield approx 6-8 Bales/Acre (for 70 Cows you will need 7-8 acres in a two cut system or 16 acres in a one cut system)
- Aim to cut this crop after lunch when sugars are high and cut with a conditioner mower (help release sugars)
- Wilt for a minimum of 24hrs
- Bale this crop as you will have less waste feeding out.
- Wrap these bales with a different colour plastic so it will be easier to identify them when feeding out.

## FERTILISER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APRIL

- The aim for fertiliser is have 70 Units/Acre (86Kgs/Ha) of nitrogen out before the start of April.
- Then 30-40 Units/Acre (37-49 Kgs/Ha) of nitrogen for the month of April.

## FERTILISER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAY

Stocking Rate (Cows/Ha)	Kgs/Ha	Units/Acre
<3.5	17	14
3.5-3.75	26	21
3.75-4.0	34	28
4.0-4.25	42	35
>4.25	51	41



# For Quality Grass, It's All About the Mix.

Tipperary Co-Op, we know that quality grass is all about having the right mix for your requirements, your budget and for local conditions. That's why we work with only quality suppliers to bring the best performing varieties together, scientifically formulated to get you top results. For further information contact Paul Fortune 087 2439427 or your local branch.



OUR QUALITY SUPPLIERS



GERMINAL IRELAND



[www.tipperary-coop.ie](http://www.tipperary-coop.ie)

