

# Newsletter April 2020



## Milk Fat Drop – By Aisling Claffey (Dairy & Grassland Specialist)



ICBF data suggests that milk fat depression is occurring in 40% of Irish herds, most commonly from April to June. There are a number of contributory factors including excess unsaturated fatty acids in the diets (commonly associated with low pre-grazing herbage mass in the second rotation), low rumen pH or the diet may contain too much rapidly fermentable material (high level of meal, low forage fibre in lush second rotation grass).

Increasing the amount of physically effective fibre in the diet can help to

maintain rumen pH and the function of fibre digesting bacteria, therefore reducing the potential for milk fat depression. To help farmers combat this, whilst maximising the utilisation of grass in the diet, we have designed the ideal nut to complement the grazing herd.

Our **Fat Max Dairy** is designed with beet pulp nuts (high energy source of fibre), high levels of maize (more slowly fermentable starch), and straw pellets (physically effective fibre). It also contains our top mineral package for the dairy herd with protected minerals (Copper, selenium and zinc) in preparation for the breeding season, Actiphor which is a natural additive that increases rumen buffering, fibre digestion and protein utilisation which is in plentiful supply in the diet of the dairy cow at grass.

*If milk fat depression is an issue in your herd contact one of our dairy specialists who will be happy to help you!*

## Molybdenum Toxicity Issues in Calves

– By Joe Naughton (Calf Specialist)

At farm level we often hear about Copper deficiency, however this is more of a Molybdenum Toxicity issue especially in calves. Excess Molybdenum in grass acts as an antagonist which stops Copper absorption in the animal.

In the case of calves, they will suffer with a bad diarrhoea within 10 days of turnout and ill thrift will be common throughout the 1st grazing season.

Over the 1st month at grass, calves lose a lot of body condition and a red tinge occurs on their coats which was traditionally associated with Copper deficiency. Where calves are brought back in doors on hay/silage and meal, conditions generally improve straight away. Our experience of Molybdenum Toxicity at farm level is, it is associated with the month of May, certain paddocks within a farm and peat soils especially reclaimed bog that has received lime.

Weaned dairy calves seem to be the most susceptible to Molybdenum Toxicity, where high levels of nitrogen and good grassland management are practiced.

The best form of control is to identify high risk paddocks by carrying out grass mineral



analysis in late April or early May and avoid calves grazing these paddocks. Best to use these high Molybdenum paddocks for silage as this reduces Molybdenum availability

Also, the use of soil aeration and improving soil health can help reduce the level of Molybdenum in soil and therefore reduce the risk in pasture.

The use of **Nugget 4 Way Copper Bucket** can help the issue by supplying 4 different forms of Copper, where the Copper sulphate and carbonate are available within rumen.

Also, we have found at farm level that 2 Cosecure lamb boluses administered 4-5 days before turnout have been very effective as they deliver rumen available Copper unlike most other Copper boluses and injections available.

## New Licence Agreements for purchasing Animal Health Products to come?

– By Aideen Fleury (Animal Health)

It is proposed that from January 2022 Irish Farmers will not be able purchase any anthelmintic products for use in food producing animals unless supplied with a veterinary prescription. This is as result of regulation changes in the EU according to the Irish products regulatory authority (HIPRA). The change proposed means licensed merchants who stock anthelmintic products will be able to stock them but not be permitted to sell them to the farmer without a prescription for that product from a vet. The change is being implemented to combat resistance issues seen in some types of wormers.

**What do the proposed changes mean for farmers?**

1. Further costs for farmers in an already struggling sector.
2. Increased documentation and paperwork to complete.
3. Increased potential for animal welfare issues having to get a prescription for Vet for each dosing period.

The proposed changes also mean that there will be different laws north and south of the border with the North being able to supply anthelmintic products without a prescription.

EU Countries which have already made the change have showed it is ineffective for combatting resistance issues and found it just increases costs for farmers.

**Why Choose Us?**

Here at **J. Grennan & Sons:**

- We can offer a range diagnostic fecal analysis tests with next day results
- We have trained staff with expertise in anthelmintic control that can advise you on a suitable treatment plan for your animals.
- Support and secure Local jobs in rural Ireland and your local communities.

## “What the farmers say”



“We have been feeding Elite lamb pellets to both our pedigree and commercial lambs for many years now. As a pedigree breeder, achieving good size for breeding is very important to us. This goal can only be achieved by a combination of good management, good breeding and good feeding. We are very happy with Nugget Elite Lamb Pellets.”

Liam & David Coen, Hollymount, Co. Mayo – Lehinch Texel Flock

## Keeping Young Lambs Healthy to Optimise Lamb Thrive

– By Damien Conboy (Sheep Specialist)

Coccidiosis is one of the main challenges young lambs will face from approximately 4 weeks of age onwards. Once ingested, the *Coccidia* oocysts invade the gut cells and multiply dramatically with the following results:

- *Coccidia* multiply inside the lining of the gut and emerge by bursting through the cell walls. This causes significant damage to the cell lining the ileum, caecum and colon and results in diarrhoea which may contain mucus or blood. It can also be accompanied by straining, pain, weight loss and possibly the death of the lamb.
- Even in animals that show no obvious clinical signs, **sub-clinical** *Coccidiosis* disease can lead to poor weight gain as the gut has a reduced ability to absorb nutrients from food. However, the knock-on effects of **sub-clinical** disease, such as poor growth rates, may be apparent in older lambs. It has been shown that coccidial oocyst output is highly correlated with reduced weight gains.

### How to prevent, contain and cure the disease if it arises on farm.

Products available for prevention and treatment of coccidiosis in sheep include: **Vecoxan**, **Chanox**, **Bovicox**, etc. Young calves are also susceptible to this disease and we would recommend treatment with **Coxx-Kure** in these cases.

## General Rules for Spring Cereal Nutrition

– By Hilda Dooley (Crop Specialist)

- Always base fertiliser plans on most up to date soil samples.
- Be careful after Ley, locked up Nitrogen is becoming available to the crop, even more so in 2nd crops after Ley – adjust fertiliser N accordingly.
  - a. If ploughing ley, the old root structure can essentially act as a scaffold, holding the fresh soil aloft. It is very important to roll these soils well to avoid excessive drying, which can lead to poor germinations and lower yields.
- At sowing, get all your P’s and majority of K’s into the soil and close to the seed.
- Even though oats are known to have a high requirement for potassium – barley and wheat also need 70-80 units/ac. Where straw was not removed from the previous crop, there is a reduction in K requirement
- Apply between 20-40 units/ac of sulphur to most cereal crops,



particularly on lighter soils and/or continuous tillage.

- Take the nutritional value of FYM and slurry into consideration, approximate value of
  - a. Slurry = 1 bag 5-6-35 per 1000 gal of good quality slurry.
  - b. FYM = 1 bag of 3-2-10 per tonne, but this varies on how well it is composted.
- Good seed bed preparation/consolidation will ensure better uptake of nutrients at establishment time – make sure to roll post sowing.



## Grass Seeds

– By Paul Mooney (Crop Specialist)

### Benefits of Reseeding:

- Cost recovered within 2 years.
- 8% more milk production.
- 15-20% more productive swards.
- Better response to fertilizer.
- Increased grass production in the shoulders of year.
  - > (An increase of 10% more grazed grass per cow equates to a saving of at least 2.5cent/litre.)

Our  grass seed mixtures

### deliver the highest ranked varieties on the PPI List.

The difference between the top variety on PPI list and the lowest is €145 per hectare per year. Over the max 10 year lifetime of the sward, this will equal to €1450/hectare

See listed below, our Grass seed mixtures, please rate these mixes on the PPI list which you can find on the Teagasc website.

 Grass mixes	Mix Composition
<b>Sweet Tooth</b> - The best grazing mixture available in Ireland	5.5kg Abergain 3kg Aberchoice 2.5kg Drumbo 1kg Clover
<b>Goldtooth</b> - Specifically formulated to deliver a high yielding cut of silage followed by intensive grazing	2kg Briant 2.5kg Dunluce 3kg Drumbo 3.5kg Aberchoice 1kg Clover
<b>Two cut silage</b> - Formulated to deliver longevity and consistent quality. Designed to deliver outstanding yields of silage.	2.5kg Aberclyde 2kg Dunluce 4kg Abergreen 3kg Aberwolf
<b>Heavy/Peaty Mix</b> - Designed for wet and reclaimed land. Renowned for its persistency and resistance to poaching.	2kg Ballintoy 4.5kg Abergreen 4.5kg Drumbo 1kg Clover