

Newsletter JUNE 2020



Maintaining Milk Solids at Grass!

By Aisling Claffey (Dairy & Grassland Specialist)

Recent drought-like conditions on farm have made grassland management challenging, with low growth rates contributing to lower pre-grazing covers. High DM % in swards have resulted in high levels of dry matter intake and milk production over the past month, but variation in pre-grazing covers can lead to inconsistency in milk solids production. Many farmers are reporting fluctuations in milk fats as cows graze low covers, with high levels of nitrogen and low levels of stem, resulting in high levels of polyunsaturated fatty acids in the sward.

However, as we enter the month of June the plant enters the reproductive phase with increasing levels of stem in the sward. Managing sward quality during this period is critical to maintaining milk protein levels. If

growth rates have recovered on your farm, maintain a cover/LU between 160-180 kg DM/ha, and remove surplus paddocks as baled silage where possible, alternating the paddocks cut in each rotation. Remember that every 4 bales of silage removed from a paddock requires 1000 gallons of good cattle slurry to replace nutrient offtake. Pre-mowing of paddocks should be avoided at all costs as it removes the cow's ability to select more digestible material from the sward, resulting in a drop in milk yield and milk protein.

Breeding has been going well across the country with strong heats observed with the dry weather. Minerals also have an important role to play in cow fertility and phosphorous is one of the key elements associated with cow fertility. An application of 25-4-0 or 23-10-

0+S in June will boost P levels in the grass at a critical time for the embryo!

All our dairy nuts contain our Hi-Phos mineral package, with our top dairy nuts, such as Elite Breeder 14, containing our Fertility Boost mineral package with protected minerals to help support your dairy cow at such a critical stage in lactation!



New Early Graze Calf Nuts

By Conor Condon (Rumen Nutritionist)

On many farms, calves get varying degrees of scour when they go to grass. This can cause serious damage to their overall health & long term thrive, particularly in younger calves. Calves get these summer scours for a variety of reasons including, molybdenum toxicity, coccidiosis, wet grazing conditions, stress, worm infestation etc. Very often, the root cause of the scouring is a combination of several of factors, rather than one.

That said, **Acidosis** is often the primary reason for this scouring. Calves tend to get turned out on the best pastures, where they have access to plentiful supplies highly digestible, low fibre grass.

We have introduced **Nugget Early Graze Calf Nut** to our calf feed range. This nut has been specially formulated to contain low starch and high fibre content to complement the growing calf to make the best use of a grass-based diet.

This grass-based diet is very different to the concentrate + straw or hay-based diet the calf was most likely reared on while indoors.

This lush grass breaks down much faster in the rumen than hay /straw-based diets and this can lead to a rapid build- up of acid (Acidosis) leading to the digestive upset and scour we see.

	Early Graze Calf Nut	Super Grow Calf Nut
UFL (As Fed)	.96	.96
Cr. Protein	17%	17%
Cr. Fibre	13%	7%
Starch	14%	24%
*Grennan Super Calf Mineral Package	Included	Included
Live Yeast (Actisaf)	Included	Included
Rumen Buffers	Higher Levels	Normal Levels
Price €	Same Price	
Bag	Same Bag	

Grass Management Service



At J. Grennan and Sons we constantly strive to offer top quality knowledge and support to our farmers. With increasingly challenging conditions this summer on farm due to unseasonal drought we want to remind you that our team is there to support you. With this in mind, our new Dairy Specialist, Aisling Claffey, is available to offer on farm advice particularly in the following areas:

- Monitoring grass availability.
- Managing grass quality.
- Supplementary feed options at grass.

Aisling has been measuring and managing grass on her home farm for several years and recently completed a PhD in dairy cow production and grassland management in Teagasc, Moorepark. If you are interested in availing of this expertise, please contact Aisling on 0860317483

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Feeding Concentrates at Grass

By Brian Delaney (Beef Specialist)

Getting a good finish on beef cattle requires starch for fat deposition. This is the reason why it always pays to feed concentrates at grass as the difference in kill out and grade between a finished and unfinished beef animal can be quite large. When choosing a concentrate to feed at grass, the key is to choose a nut or ration which compliments grass rather than replaces it. Nugget Super Bull Nuts or Hi Maize Beef Ration are designed specifically to achieve this by;

- Being properly balanced with quality sources of digestible fibre to maximise the digestion rate of summer grass.
- The inclusion of buffers and yeasts to enhance rumen efficiency and increase feed intake. This is the key in getting cattle to a better finish in a shorter timeframe.
- Using a blend of bypass and rumen degradable starch for maximum thrive without comprising the efficiency of the rumen with acidosis.

Guideline feeding rates are 0.5kg concentrate per 100kg liveweight along with plenty of good quality grass for 6-8 weeks. Increase supplementation rate to 1.0kg/100 kg liveweight where grass supplies are tight.



Coccidiosis – The Hidden Enemy

By Aideen Fleury & Shane Gonoude (Animal Health Specialists)

Coccidia are single celled oocysts which are relatively common in the farm environment. Once ingested, these parasites pass through the digestive system to the small intestine where they invade the cells that absorb nutrients. While there, they also multiply rapidly causing extensive damage to the lining of the small intestine. They are then shed in feces and go on to infect other calves.

Coccidia are commonly found in calves from as young as one month old up to almost a year old. Clinical signs include:

- Bloody Diarrhoea
- Straining
- Dehydration
- Fever

All calves showing signs of dehydration should receive **Nugget Pectolyte** to replace lost fluids.

However, a recent study by AHI (Animal Health Ireland). Showed that only 4% of animals infected with coccidiosis displayed clinical signs. In the same study, in all animals infected growth rates were reduced by 19%.

Diagnosis can be made by bringing a fecal sample to any J. Grennan & Sons branch to be sent for lab analysis. Results generally are back within 24 hours. We can then advise you with a treatment plan to suit your animals.

Steps you can take to minimize risk at pasture

- Set aside clean pastures for young animals (where possible)
- Practice co-grazing if possible as coccidia are host specific.
- Avoid fields with direct access to watercourses.
- Avoid poaching around troughs and creep feeders.

Coxx-Kure (Toltrazuril) -is highly effective in prevention and treatment of diarrhoea caused by coccidia. It acts on intracellular developmental stages of coccidia and reduces oocyst production. Available in 250 ml & 1 lt packs at all J. Grennan & Sons branches.



Fertiliser Hints for this June

By Hilda Dooley (Crop Specialist)

- Sulphur - In the dry weather that we have been having, plants self-regulate to ensure an increased uptake of Sulphur (S), which in turn increases drought tolerance. So, the importance of including Sulphur to your summer fertiliser regime, for both silage and grazing ground, cannot be overstated.
- Slurry - When spreading slurry at this time of year, apply with low emissions equipment if possible and remember to leave a week before applying bag fertiliser.
- 2nd cut - After silage or bales, and where no slurry has been spread or where P and K indices are low, use a compound fertiliser to replace the Ps and Ks that have been removed. Some new options include 17-3-15 +5S or 18-3-14 +3S.

Brassica Crops – A Few Figures

By Paul Mooney (Crop Agronomist)

Options:

	Kale	Redstart	Rape
Optimum sowing date	May-June	July	August
Achievable yield (DM t/ac)	4.4	2.8	2
Roundup (lt/ac)	2lt	2lt	2
Seed Rate (kg/ac broadcast)	2-3	3-4	3-4
Cost/ac after cereals	-	162	123
Cost/ac after grass	206	165	129
Cost/t DM after cereals	-	58	62
Cost/t DM after grass	50	59	65