

Newsletter OCTOBER 2020



The Final Grazing Rotation – Getting Set Up For Next Spring!

By Aisling Claffey – (B.Agr.Sc., Ph.D.) – 086 0317483

The final grazing rotation is critical for getting the farm set up for grazing next spring. The decisions we make in the coming weeks will help to determine grass availability on the farm in early 2021!

On many farms, grass covers are low for the time of year and supplementation will be required in the coming weeks to maximise days at grass. Good quality baled silage will help to maintain milk production, particularly on low dry matter grass. In some cases where body condition score has slipped in recent weeks due to the volume of low dry matter grass on farm, a good quality nut such as **Mega Milk 16** or **Cow Care 16** is essential to maintain energy intake and build condition in the run up to the dry cow period.

The final rotation should have commenced in recent days, particularly those with a high demand for grass in early spring and those with heavier soils.

A minimum of 60% of the farm should be grazed by the 31st October, with a target of 70-80% recommended for those with heavy soils or a high demand in spring.

Those farming heavier soils should aim to graze a combination of wet and dry paddocks in early to mid-October to ensure that there is grass available on drier ground at turnout and to ensure grass can be utilised off heavier paddocks before closing whilst minimising damage to the sward.

On many farms a strip wire and back fences will be needed throughout the final round. Where ground conditions allow, utilise this period to build potash levels on silage ground or apply lime to paddocks that require it!

Our technical team can provide you with soil fertility plans based on soil analysis results to maximise production from grass in 2021!

Wonder Thrive Calf Milk Replacer

By Joe Naughton - (B.Agr.Sc) – Ph 086 1452586

Consider using Wonder Thrive Calf Milk Replacer (CMR) for your Autumn born calves. Unlike whole milk, Wonder Thrive CMR has a consistent composition, avoiding digestive upsets in calves. For many farms, feeding whole milk means feeding waste milk which contains pathogens such as E. Coli, Salmonella as well as possible transmission of Johne's disease. Wonder Thrive CMR is Johne's free and pathogen free. The bacteria content of waste milk increases dramatically if milk is left at room temperature or above. Milk collected during morning milking may not be fed until afternoon which poses a serious threat to calf health/ immunity. Wonder Thrive CMR contains Calcium Formate which preserves the milk replacer and inhibits pathogen development. Antibiotic residues in waste milk have shown to contribute to resistance. Whole

milk is low in some vitamins and trace minerals such as selenium and copper. Low levels of vitamins and minerals have been shown to impair immunity in calves. Wonder Thrive CMR has a full complement of vitamins and minerals to ensure maximum thrive and to boost immunity.

Wonder Thrive is also available with LungBooster. This is a completely natural additive for maintenance of a healthy respiratory and digestive system as well as added protection against pneumonia, *Cryptosporidium* and coccidiosis. The use of Wonder Thrive Calf Milk Replacer makes both financial and nutritional sense.



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The 1, 2, 3 of Autumn Soil Fertility

By Hilda Dooley - (B.Sc. M.Sc. Ph.D.)
Ph: 086 6074729

1. Pull out your most recent soil analysis or organise soil sampling with us.
2. On low pH soils, if not already done and if weather permits, arrange to get lime spread. Correcting pH status will make other nutrients more available, and work towards improving soil health.
3. On low potassium (K) soils (typically silage ground) – build K levels NOW, or anytime in the next few months, by applying straight 50% K. Applying too much K in the spring could lead to high amounts of K in your silage, potentially leading to Milk fever issues later on.

For advice, contact your local representative or call Hilda.



Winter Housing & Dosing Protocol

By Aideen Fleury - (B.Sc.VN.RVN) – Ph: 057 9133585

Fresh air flow and the absence of draughts is very important in preventing housed animals getting pneumonia and chills during the colder months. Adequate feed space and grouping animals according to weight is also vitally important. Clean water should always be available, and troughs checked daily.

The correct level of concentrate supplementation can ONLY be determined based on accurate forage analysis. Talk to us today about getting your forage analysed, it could help you save thousands over the winter period!

Vaccination is an important consideration in any pre-housing health plan. There is such a wide range of vaccines out there, it is difficult to know which best suits your farm. Any of our animal health specialist can help you with this, without any obligation on your part. A fluke/worm dose and lice treatment would be considered standard practice at housing on most farms. Where many

farmers fall down is they neglect to follow up with the second worm/lice treatment a few weeks after housing. That repeat dose can often make a huge difference to thrive.

Faecal egg count (FEC) based on a single pooled sample from each batch of cattle are usually very informative, and in our experience, can save a lot of time and money. They will also highlight resistance issues and enable you to develop more effective/targeted dosing programmes. Faecal Egg Counts are one of the many analytical services that we offer.

Remember – the best decisions are always based on accurate information.



Winter Finishing Diets

By Brian Delaney - (B.Agr.Sc) – Ph: 086 0449592

As finishing cattle start to enter sheds, the most important components of their diet will be ingredients which will promote optimum health and maximise feed efficiency. These elements along with excellent raw materials are key considerations when we are formulating a balanced beef concentrate feed such as **Nugget Super Bull Nut** or **Hi-Maize Beef Ration**. Buffers and yeasts are used to maximise gain by avoiding metabolic disorders such as acidosis, and also enhance feed conversion through better rumen efficiency.

We also have a range of beef balancers. These include;

- **Barley Balancer:** which is based on quality protein sources and good digestible fibre ingredients.

- **Beet & Maize Balancer:** which contains High-Phos minerals and high-quality proteins.

- **Bull Grow or Bull Finisher Balancer:** which has high levels of maize to maximise carcass finish. These balancers are designed carefully to compliment home produced feeds and balance the total diet to maximise performance of your finishing cattle.

Our nutritionists are always happy to help in making sure your cattle diet adheres to critical parameters such as maximising starch and sugars, maintaining proper protein balance for fibre digestion, and ensuring minimum fibre levels for good rumen function.



TO OUR GRAIN GROWERS...

We would like to acknowledge the extremely difficult year you have had.

Despite disappointing yields, once again, you have managed to deliver excellent quality grain across our weighbridges. We are very conscious of the positive impact this has on the nutritional value of our feeds. While we place a massive emphasis on selecting high grain quality varieties and providing the best crop agronomy service, ultimately it comes down to your skill and dedicated effort to reach those standards every year. **Thank you.**



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Richard and George Lowe, milking 120 Holsteins & Jerseys. Co Limerick.