

**CHRISTMAS ORDERS** Please ensure you order sufficient product to see you through the busy Christmas period and into the New Year as there will be a restricted delivery service over the Christmas period. Thank you.

## €20M SHEEP IMPROVEMENT SCHEME NOW OPEN FOR APPLICATIONS

By *Damien Conboy* – (B. Agr. Sc.) – 086 0317483

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue, has announced the launch of the new Sheep Improvement Scheme and the accompanying online application facility. The measure has been introduced with the aim of building on the progress made under Ireland's Sheep Welfare Scheme. Payment under the scheme will be at a rate of €12 per eligible breeding ewe, which is an increase from the €10 per eligible breeding ewe under the former sheep welfare measure. Specific support will be made available for a range of measures. These include lameness control; parasite control (faecal egg testing); and mineral supplementation for ewes post-mating.

We are glad to confirm that both our **4 Way Sheep** and our **Top Flock** range of buckets are eligible for use under this scheme. Minimum feeding levels will apply as usual, so you will need appropriate invoices to support your application.

The new **Crystalyx 'Extra High Energy'** feed block that we have just started stocking is also eligible for the new Sheep Improvement Scheme. Extensive farm use in Ireland has confirmed that these feed blocks can significantly and economically improve flock performance. Independent trial work carried out at Newcastle University has shown that **Crystalyx** increases the rate of forage digestion by rumen bacteria (by up to 10%). In turn, this stimulates forage intakes due to a reduced gut fill effect, increasing grass intake rather than replacing it.

Luke Morgan, from Caltech **Crystalyx**, further explained:

"**Crystalyx** also increases forage digestibility so animals actually get more energy out of what they eat. The Extra High Energy buckets provide all the minerals, trace elements and vitamins needed to balance grass and forage, which is essential for optimum animal performance and health."

He concluded.

"Flock owners will use the '**Extra High Energy**' buckets prior to breeding, in the run-up to lambing and, again, after the ewes have gone out to the fields with their newborn lambs. It's all about improving performance from grazed grass and forage."

**Crystalyx Extra High Energy feed buckets are now available at all J Grennan and Sons' outlets.**



## Season's Greetings.

As we come to the end of another year, on behalf of my family and work colleagues, I would like to thank you for your most valued business and support throughout a difficult 2022. It's very important for all of us in Grennan's to remember that our business is only as good as the support we receive from you, our very valued customer.

We look forward to your continued, valued support throughout 2023 as we make our best efforts to provide you with a continuously improving service. If you have any thoughts or suggestions on how we can improve our service to you in the future, contact any staff member or email - [suggestions@grennans.ie](mailto:suggestions@grennans.ie). **On behalf of all at Grennan's we wish you and your family a most enjoyable Christmas and a happy, healthy & prosperous 2023. Best wishes and thanks again for your support.**

*Mark Grennan*

# 5 KEY AREAS OF FOCUS TO MAXIMIZE PROFITABILITY ON BEEF FARMS IN 2023

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

## 1. Prioritize animal health

Any disease on the farm will directly affect animal performance. Previous farm history can be used to determine what prevention strategies to implement, such as:

- Vaccinations against infectious diseases
- Footbaths for lameness
- Faecal sampling to allow appropriate dosing for parasites
- Feed additives such as yeasts, buffers, and Actifor.
- **Grennan's LungBooster, Gut Guard & Immuno ranges.**

## 2. Grassland management

Fencing and good grazing infrastructure is essential for grazing in a rotation and achieving low graze-outs. This drives grass utilization and allows you to carry more stock on the same area. If ground conditions allow, early grazing of silage ground will remove winter residuals, increasing the likelihood of making superior-quality silage next summer. This will help to maximize production at a lower cost during the winter. The use of soil testing to address soil fertility and the inclusion of clover into swards are crucial in getting a good return from grassland.

## 3. Reproductive performance

Carrying a cow that is not producing a calf is a huge drain on profitability. After scanning, target any cows not in calf for fattening. When selecting cows for breeding, fertility should be the first consideration. A.I. bulls should be considered to increase the genetic merit of your herd.

## 4. Keep records for analysis

You cannot improve what you do not measure. Key measurement areas include calves per cow per year, age to weaning, weight at weaning, average daily gain, carcass weight and age, grass grown per paddock, rates of fertiliser & slurry applications versus target nutrients from soil test.

## 5. Utilize modern technologies

Getting a better return from what you have on the farm will help increase profitability. Try using:

- **Grennan's Slurry Boost** inoculant will improve the value of your slurry. Used along with low emission spreading equipment, it will increase grass growth.
- **PowerStart** will improve preservation, palatability, and overall return from your silage.
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# MANAGING LICE OVER WINTER TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE

By Shane Gonoude - (B. Agr. Sc., M. Sc.) - Ph: 087 6466707

Lice are an important parasite which should not be overlooked when treating parasites at housing.

Lice in cattle is typically a seasonal issue, with populations being at their highest during the winter months when cattle are housed. This is because the cold weather is a trigger for hatching, cattle's coats become thicker, conditions become more humid and the closer contact between housed animals enables rapid transfer.

Cattle can become severely irritated, resulting in itching and hair loss. Infested animals often become restless and tend to focus more on their discomfort rather than eating. If the problem is caused by sucking lice, animals can become anaemic. Severe infestations can cause broken skin and give rise to secondary infections. Infested cattle have a generally unthrifty appearance, with rough coats and feed intakes can drop by 10% and more.



## Control

Maintaining cattle on high planes of nutrition is the first step of lice control. Healthy cattle in optimum body condition have more resistance to lice.

All in-contact animals should be treated at the **same time**. Any cattle that are introduced to the shed should be treated before joining a group of already treated animals. Treated animals should be examined 2-3 weeks after the initial treatment. This is to ensure there is no sign of reinfestation by lice that have hatched from eggs since treatment.

A range of synthetic pyrethroids in spot-on or pour-on formulations are available. These include **Spotinor** (deltamethrin) and **Liceban** (cypermethrin), which we stock in all our stores.

These will deal with both biting and sucking lice. Several types of injectable **Macrocytic Lactones** (ML'S) are also available, including ivermectin's, eprinomectin's, moxidectin's and doramectin's. Injectable treatments generally kill sucking lice and give some control of biting lice. Pour on ML'S will deal with both sucking and biting lice. Check the label of lice treatment products for withdrawal periods before administration.

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# PLANNING FOR NEXT SPRING

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

December is the perfect opportunity to reflect on a busy 12 months on farm and all that has been achieved. It is also a great time to consider things that could make life easier next spring so that both people and stock are prepared to hit the ground running!

## Calf health and facilities:

Calves take up a significant amount of time in spring. Now is the time to assess your facilities for improvements that can be made to make it less physically or labour-demanding on yourself!

**Colostrum is key to calf health** - Collect ample containers for refrigeration and freezing of colostrum and get a refractometer to test quality! Collect and feed colostrum in a timely manner to maximise passive transfer of antibodies!

**Cleanliness** – Calving sheds, calf facilities and equipment should be washed and disinfected before calving! Feeding equipment should be cleaned regularly to minimise bacterial growth on surfaces!

**Consistency** - Have you a designated calf rearer to ensure consistency of both milk and milk replacer feeds – this includes timing of feed, quantity, concentration of milk replacer etc.

**Comfort** – Minimising dampness and ensuring clean, dry, draught-free bedding areas for calves will help to maximise thrive! Calves under 3 weeks of age have a much higher lower critical temperature!

## Replacement heifers:

Weigh heifers now if you haven't already done so. Lighter stock need to make up ground if they are behind target by being supplemented with 2-3 kg of **High Energy Beef 16%** or **Heifer Developer 18%** Nuts if on low protein silage. Knowing your silage quality is key to maximising thrive in a cost-effective manner!

## Vaccinations and herd health program:

The dry cow period is an ideal time to provide many routine vaccinations as stock are housed and under little stress, improving vaccine efficacy vs carrying these out in early lactation when many animals are in negative energy balance!

Many of you will have opted to try selective dry cow therapy on a small or large scale – maintain cubicle hygiene and clean calving sheds, particularly in the first 21 days after drying off and as cows start springing!

There is a big focus paid on cow BCS, silage mineral content, dry cow minerals etc to minimise the risk of milk fever and metabolic issues during the transition period. Ensure you give thin cows preferential treatment during the dry-cow period to ensure they get back on target BCS, but also avoid over-fat cows!

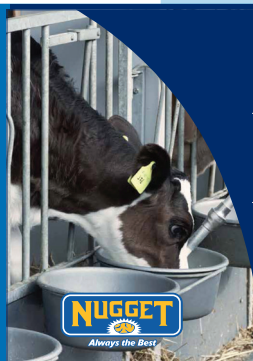
## Super Grow Calf Nuts Followed by Early Graze is a Winning Combination!

### What the Farmers Say:

‘Feeding Grennan’s Super Grow Calf Nuts pays off. Calves like the feed, dungs are healthy and calves perform very well on it. I move the calves over to Grennan’s Early Graze Calf Nuts just before they go out to grass. I feed a bit of straw with these nuts at grass and find that this works well. These two calf nuts combine very well in rearing my calves from week one right through to mid-summer.’ – Adrian Lee, Calf to Beef, Farran, Headford, Co. Galway



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