

Teagasc Dairy Beef Research Programme

Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford

Update: August 2020

August came with humid, wet weather and two storms. Because of this, the heifers did not begin meal supplementation until the 31st August for fear of damage being done to paddocks in the wet conditions. DM% was below 12% for over seven days, with average DM for the month at 15%. The cattle and calves performance suffered because of the poor conditions, with ADG reduced in comparison to the previous months. The third cut silage was delayed, and will be cut the first week of September if weather conditions allow.

August 2020	
Total rainfall (ml)	129.5
Mean temperature (°C)	15.7
Mean soil temperature (°C)	16.4

Animal Performance:

Yearlings (19-month-old)

- All yearlings were dosed for worms with Levafas Diamond on the 13th August.
- The yearlings were weighed on the 20th August 2020 and averaged 421 kg.
- The heifers began meal supplementation on the 31st August, beginning on 1.47 kg/head/day of 14% beef finisher. They will be built up to 3 kg over the next 10 days.

Table 1. Yearling weight and ADG

	Heifer		Steer	
	Live weight (kg)	ADG second season (kg/day)	Live weight (kg)	ADG second season (kg/day)
High	421	0.82	413	0.77
Medium	423	0.81	410	0.77
Low	426	0.81	438	0.90



Spring 2020 calves

- The calves' growth rates were reducing with the wet weather, so they were increased to 0.85 kg/day on the 28th August and then to 1.25 kg/day by the 4th September.

Teagasc Dairy Beef Research Programme

Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford

- The calves will be built up to 1.5 kg and remain on this level of meal feeding until housing.
- Following faecal samples, the calves were dosed for worms (Levafas diamond) on the 13th August. They also received their IBR booster vaccination.

Grassland Management

- Third cut silage will be cut as soon as the weather picks up. From the farm cover the last week of August, the silage paddocks are yield ~3000 kg DM/ha.
- Demand reduced on the stocking rate farmlets with the start of meal supplementation to the heifers. Grass growth rate averaged over 50 kg DM/ha/day for the month.
- The last week of August, 65 kg/ha of KAN was spread across the grazing paddocks at 65 kg/ha. For the reseed, 65 kg/ha KAN was spread on the PRG swards. 30 kg/ha KAN was spread on the clover and herb swards.
- The cattle were grazing heavy covers the middle of August, but this changed towards the end of the month when grass began to become tight due to the wet weather and delay in cutting silage.
- The average pre grazing yield for the month was 2455 kg DM/ha, grazing to heights of 4.95 cm.
- Because cattle were grazing through paddocks so quickly with the wet weather, we had to pull out some of the paddocks set aside for silage to graze.

Table 2. Farm cover, 31st August 2020

	Farm cover	Growth/ha	Demand /ha	Grazing area	Silage cut later	Total LU	LU/ha	Days ahead
	Kg DM/ha	Kg DM/ha/day	Kg DM/ha/day	Ha	Ha			
High	1078	41	52	11.68	4.47	50.4	4.32	21
Med	1103	49	50	12.13	5.54	50.4	4.15	22
Low	983	57	48	12.69	6.87	50.4	3.97	20