# Teagasc Dairy Beef Research Programme

**Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford**

## Update: November 2020

November has been somewhat drier (37.5 ml less rainfall) and warmer (mean temperature 1.8°C higher) than November 2019. Unfortunately, due to poor ground conditions the last of the lime that was due to be spread on the farm did not get spread after closing, so this will be spread when conditions pick up in the spring time. The remaining commercial weanlings were housed the first week of November. Since housing, the calves have improved enormously, and the heifers and bullocks are performing very well. 84 heifers were killed the last week of November.

| | November 2020 |
|---|---|
| *Total rainfall (ml)* | 123.2 |
| *Mean temperature (°C)* | 9.1 |
| *Mean soil temperature (°C)* | 8.6 |

### Animal Performance:

#### *Yearlings (21-month-old)*

***Bullocks***

- The steers are being fed *ad lib* silage only indoors.
- They were dosed for fluke (Endofluke) and worms (Ivermec Classic injectable) on the 9th November and weighed 499 kg on average.

***Table 1. Steer weight and ADG, 9th November 2020***

| | Live weight (kg) | ADG second winter (kg/day) |
|---|---|---|
| **High** | 497 | 0.92 |
| **Medium** | 504 | 1.08 |
| **Low** | 499 | 1.00 |


***Heifers***

- The heifers were increased to 4 kg on the 2nd November and then to 5 kg on the 4th November.
- The heifers have been gaining ~1.18 kg/day since they were housed on the 22nd October.

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- The heifers were weighed on the 16th November and 24th November (average 520 kg) – 84 heifers were drafted out for slaughter as these were killed on the 26th and 30th November, and 1st December. They averaged 262 kg CW (Max 317 kg, min 208 kg), 3+ fat and O+ conformation scores. They were 643 days of age (21 months) on average.
- 16 heifers remain, the majority of these will be killed before Christmas.

***Table 2. Heifer weight and ADG, 24th November 2020***

| | Live weight (kg) | ADG second winter (kg/day) |
|---|---|---|
| **High** | 519 | 1.42 |
| **Medium** | 517 | 1.11 |
| **Low** | 524 | 1.00 |

***Table 3. Heifer slaughter results, 26th Nov – 1st Dec 2020, according to breed***

| | No. heifers | CW | CW/day of age | LW | KO % | Conf | Fat | Age (days) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AAX | 34 | 264 | 0.41 | 531 | 50 | 5.5 (O=/O+) | 9.2 (3+) | 643 |
| HEX | 23 | 266 | 0.41 | 541 | 49 | 5.8 (O+) | 9.6 (4-) | 652 |
| LMX | 23 | 258 | 0.41 | 521 | 50 | 6.3 (O+) | 7.2 (3-) | 634 |
| AUX | 4 | 251 | 0.39 | 493 | 51 | 5.75 (O+) | 8.3 (3=) | 645 |

***Table 4. Heifer slaughter results, 26th Nov – 1st Dec 2020, according to stocking rate***

| | No. heifers | CW | LW | KO % | Conf | Fat | Age (days) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| High | 28 | 262 | 532 | 49 | 5.7 (O+) | 8.9 (3+) | 644 |
| Med | 24 | 261 | 523 | 50 | 5.7 (O+) | 9.0 (3+) | 645 |
| Low | 29 | 264 | 529 | 50 | 6.1 (O+) | 8.3 (3=) | 642 |

Overall the conformation results so far for the heifers killed are better than the heifers killed in 2019 (Table 3 vs Table 5); fat scores and carcass weight per day of age are similar for both years.

***Table 5. Heifer slaughter results 2019***

| | CW | CW/day of age | KO% | Conf. | Fat | Age (days) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AAX | 261 | 0.41 | 48 | 4.5 (O-/O=) | 9.5 (3+/4-) | 646 |
| HEX | 259 | 0.41 | 48 | 4.9 (O=) | 9.6 (3+/4-) | 634 |
| LMX | 264 | 0.41 | 50 | 6.1 (O+) | 8.0 (3=) | 640 |

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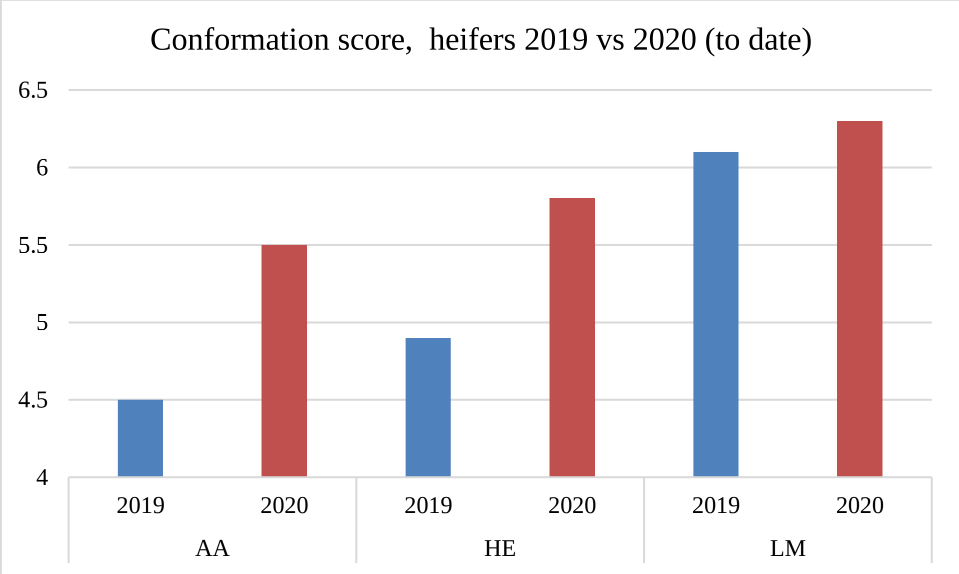


### *Spring 2020 calves*

- The majority of the calves have been moved over the beef unit to the new slatted shed. These were weighed on the 4th November and averaged 182 kg. They will be weighed again mid-December.
- ~60 calves will stay on Kildavin farm on straw for the winter period, these were weighed on the 20th November and averaged 140 kg. The majority of these are late (late March/April born) calves.
- The calves were all sampled the first week of December for worms, fluke and coccidiosis (as they were dosed in September when housed with Albex) and all groups came back clean (0 epg), bar one which had 50 epg. These will be sampled again late December/early January and, if neccesary, will be dosed.
- The calves are being fed *ad lib* silage alongside 2.2 kg of 16% beef grower ration.

### Grassland Management

- Silage pits and bales were sampled in November and sent to FBA laboratories – there was some variation between samples taken at the front and back of the silage pits for first and second cut (front of pits >70 DMD, back of pits <70 DMD), but the averaged results are summarised as follows;

***Table 6. Silage results, dry matter (DM) and dry matter digestibility (DMD)***

| | DM% | DMD |
|---|---|---|
| Surplus bales | 46.8 | 72.0 |
| First cut (pit) | 25.3 | 70.6 |
| Second cut (pit) | 28.8 | 68.3 |
| Third cut (pit) | 20.9 | 69.5 |

- Additionally, all three pits and the majority of the bales came back low in selenium following mineral analysis with FBA labs. Samples have been sent into the laboratory in Johnstown Castle to confirm these results, and if these also come back low the bullocks (who are not being fed any concentrate) will be supplemented with selenium powder through the diet feeder.