

BEEF

August 2024

Suckler Beef Welfare Scheme

EDITED BY
CATHERINE EGAN,
CATTLE SPECIALIST



The new Scheme will support the meal feeding of suckler calves.

The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue TD, has announced that a new beef scheme with a budget of €20m will open for applications in early August. The 2024 Beef Welfare Scheme (BWS) will support farmers in meal feeding suckler calves before and after weaning, and in vaccinating against clostridial diseases and calf pneumonia. Calves eligible for the Scheme are those born to eligible suckler cows in the period from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.



**BWS SUPPORTS
MEAL FEEDING**

4 weeks

PRE WEANING AND

2 weeks

POST WEANING.

While the meal feeding action (€35 per animal) is mandatory for Scheme participants, farmers must indicate that they are selecting the optional vaccination action (€15 per animal) at application stage if they wish to be considered for payment under this action. Farmers can then decide during the implementation phase, where appropriate and in consultation with their veterinary surgeon, which disease

they wish to target depending on the health status of their herds. Participants can apply for payment for both actions where both were completed before the weanlings were sold. In cases where calves were not vaccinated, they will not qualify for the €15, but the farmer remains eligible for the meal feeding payment of €35 per animal. Applications can be made online through www.agfood.ie.

August management tips

As we move towards autumn, there are a number of tasks that need to be completed before the winter housing period.

1. Scanning of suckler cows

Bulls should have been removed from most spring-calving herds by mid July, with scanning happening four weeks later. This year, more than ever, it is very important to

pick out empty cows and target to sell live or slaughter before the winter begins to help reduce winter forage requirements and also help build grass for the rest of the autumn.

2. Lime applications

Lime remains the cheapest fertiliser available on farms. Applying lime this autumn gives increased grass growth and improved fertiliser efficiency next year. Refer to your most recent set of soil tests and apply as soon as possible.

3. Build grass covers

Second cuts should be wrapped up by early August at the latest, with the last of surplus bales taken by mid August. Generally, rotation length should be extended from August 10. The focus of this period is to gradually build pregrazing herbage mass, targeting covers of 2,000-2,300kg DM/ha in mid September.



Second cuts should be finished by early August.

TEAGASC ADVISORY NEWSLETTER

BEEF

4. Weighing actions

Cows and calves must be weighed for the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Programme (SCEP), with weights uploaded on the Irish Cattle Breeding Federation (ICBF) website within seven days (no later than November 1). Farmers should also take the opportunity to weigh forward stores at grass. Store cattle, particularly heifers and early-maturing breeds, may be at the stage of laying down fat at the tail head and could be finished off grass with a small amount of concentrates before housing.

5. Dosing and faecal egg testing

Only treat cattle for stomach worms when you know there is a need to treat them. Taking fresh dung samples from suckler weanlings and getting a faecal egg count (FEC) test done is an ideal way to tell whether or not they need to be treated. Once you have established that you have a worm burden on your farm, you can then decide which product to use. Failure to treat worm burdens in either calves or one- to two-year-old stock can have a major effect on thrive.

Dates for the diary



Join us on Tuesday, August 27, at 6.30pm for a Grassland Farmer of the Year farm walk on the farm of the Drystock Category winner, Billy Gilmore, at Cortoon, Tuam, Co. Galway, H54 AP28. All welcome.



DairyBeef 500 participant Aidan Maguire, of Navan, Co. Meath, C15W4C2, will host a farm walk on Thursday, September 5, at 6.00pm. All welcome.

Further details are available on www.teagasc.ie.





Anaerobic digestion

DR CIARA BEAUSANG of Teagasc Grange has an update on the Teagasc anaerobic digestion research programme.

Teagasc Grange is the site of a pilot anaerobic digestion (AD) plant, which will use agricultural feedstocks, including grass silage and cattle slurry, to produce renewable energy. AD is a process that results in the production of biogas, which consists of approximately 60% methane and 40% carbon dioxide. Biogas can be upgraded to biomethane by removing carbon dioxide. Biomethane can displace fossil fuels in many sectors that are difficult to decarbonise.

The Teagasc AD research programme was featured at the recent Beef 2024 Open Day.



RESEARCH UPDATE

The New Holland T6 Methane Power is the world's first 100% methane-powered tractor.

As part of Beef 2024, a biomethane-powered tractor was on display at Grange. The New Holland T6 Methane Power is the world's first 100% methane-powered tractor, and has the same levels of power and torque as its diesel equivalent. When the Teagasc AD plant is at full production, we will look at the potential of using a biomethane tractor on farm at Grange.



Take care with machinery

August is harvest month, which brings an increase in machinery movement on farms and public roads. Moving machines are dangerous, particularly to bystanders. Being struck by a machine can cause severe injury and death. Entanglement in a machine moving part also leads to horrific injuries. Always keep guards in place. Children are out and about on farms in August, so continued focus on their safety is necessary. To learn more see: https://youtu.be/H5d5_jihcL8?t=6.

HEALTH AND SAFETY