



## Tyone Store - Official Opening

On Friday 10th February, the new Arrabawn Store at Tyone Nenagh was officially opened, in front of a large crowd, by Tipperary Senior Hurling Manager Michael Ryan and current Miss Ireland Niamh Kennedy.

Addressing the crowd, Michael Ryan complimented Arrabawn on making such an investment in such a flagship infrastructure which will enhance the approach to the town of Nenagh. He was in no doubt that the Store will be good for the town of Nenagh and the surrounding area.

Michael Ryan also referred to the Co-Op movement and its importance to the farming community - farming being such an important part of life in the community. He ended by saying that after a very difficult 2016 the outlook for 2017 is more promising.

The new store, which extends over 10,000sq ft plus Garden Centre, stocks

- **an extended range of Agri products**
- **new Paint Department, Interior and Exterior**
- **New Husqvarna Lawnmowers, Chainsaws, Cultivators and Strimmers**
- **Wide range garden accessories, fertilisers, weedkillers and plants**
- **Extended range of clothing and footwear**
- **Key cutting service**
- **Pet care products**

Galway, Limerick and Clare supporters examining the Minor and Senior All Ireland Hurling Cups at the official opening of the new Arrabawn Store at Tyone Nenagh: L to R: Martin Callanan Board Member, Jimmy Murphy former CEO Arrabawn Co-Op, Patrick Meskill former chairman, Sean Monahan Chairman Arrabawn Co-Op and Jerry Clifford former General Manager Dan O'Connor Feeds, Limerick.



Tipperary Senior Hurling Manager Michael Ryan and current Miss Ireland Niamh Kennedy performing the Official Opening of the new Arrabawn Store at Tyone Nenagh – watched by Arrabawn Co-Op CEO Conor Ryan, Alan Kelly TD, Eamonn Power Agri Manager and Tom Harrington.



### Bord Bia – SDAS

As advised previously certification under this Scheme is essential to achieve the top price for your milk. Up to now we have shown a bonus on your milk account if you were a member of the scheme, to reflect with more emphasis the loss a person is incurring by not being certified, we are from January 1st including the bonus in the base milk price and farms not certified will have a penalty of 1 cent per litre applied, this will be shown clearly on the milk statement. The loss for the month and the accumulated loss as the year progress will demonstrate the urgency with which you need to address this matter.

Also as we advised previously this penalty is likely to increase quickly and significantly so we again urge that you proceed with obtaining certification.

### Fixed Milk Price

Recently you have received a letter from us with details of a fixed milk price option which you can avail of if you choose. Our reasons for making such a scheme available is to offer some security to supplier on price in response to the volatility we have seen in recent years.

The scheme is optional, it is your choice to avail of it or not. The price offered is 30.6 cent incl VAT based on 3.6% Fat and 3.3% Pro. The price applies for 3 years, you are offered the opportunity to fix 10% of last years volume, if all suppliers do not avail of the offer any unused milk will be redistributed to those who request it.

The closing date for applications is Feb 20th so if you wish to avail of this offer please return your application form immediately.

## TIP OF THE MONTH -

### If in doubt, leave it out!

Early lactation is a high risk time for bulk tank residues, particularly antibiotics, as many of the cows calving down will have been treated with dry cow antibiotic several weeks earlier. Milk contaminated with any residue of antibiotic must never enter the bulk tank.

Check again what dry cow you used, when you gave it to the animal and how long that milk needs to be withheld, if you are concerned about an animal have her milk tested before letting it into the bulk tank.

## Looking after the Cow this Spring

At calving time, many changes are occurring in the cow's system – her body is changing from being pregnant to getting ready to produce a huge quantity of milk, her bones must mobilise calcium to supply the calcium in her milk and her liver must go into overdrive to supply oxygen and nutrients to all her bodily functions (including the production of milk protein). Her body is like that of an athlete going from a standing start to running a 100 metre sprint.

As a result, the care of a cow around calving is critical as any stress to her will affect her well-being, her milk quality and her fertility.

Firstly we will look at **feed intake**. Feed (dry matter intake) must increase dramatically after calving in order to avoid excessive loss in body condition. Some loss in body condition is normal after calving, up to 1 kg per day, but too much of a loss will put the cow under pressure leading to ketosis and infertility. The modern cow has been bred to quickly produce her maximum amount of milk, irrespective of whether she is adequately fed or not. The high yielding cow will obviously require more feed than the average cow and if her feed intake is not adequate she will start using her own body reserves. If this continues over a period, harmful by-products (breath smells like 'shoe-polish') will build up in the cows system and she will become extremely ill (Ketosis and she could die), often taking the full season to recover and very difficult to get in calf. So the priority must be to get the cow onto an adequate level of high energy feed. She should be eating 20kg dry matter within a few weeks of calving. This could mean a concentrate feed level of up to 9 kg or 10kg for high yielders. Feeding a high energy concentrate will help realise the cow's potential for milk protein. In years where milk-quota was an issue, farmers often restrict feed with a view to restricting milk yield. This resulted in cows losing body condition and producing milk with very low milk protein.

Cows under stress around calving are prone to various syndromes, any one of which is life threatening, time consuming, inconvenient and costing up to €200 to resolve.

**1. Retained placenta, slow calving Milk fever** – related to the cows ability to mobilise her bodily calcium. Feeding a low or zero calcium pre-calver mineral will help reduce the risk.

Often cows which have received a course of pre calving mineral become victims of the above – the muscle tone of the cows uterus is not fit enough to eject the calf and contract enough to eject the afterbirth. This is a serious source of infection which could have an effect on the cows ability to conceive during the subsequent breeding season, as bacteria in the uterine tract have a spermicidal effect, especially after a difficult calving or twins. This could be due to the high level of potash (K) in the silage/grass. If this situation becomes regular early in the calving season the cows should be given an extra supplement - feed the cow with 250grm **Transition Cow Mineral** for 4-5 days before and after calving – this helps her cope with the transition from being 'dry' to producing large amounts of calcium-rich milk. Get advice.

**2. Mastitis** – control must start with the teat seal at drying off. Most cases occur in the first 10 days of lactation. Up to 50% quarters infected in the dry period. Heifers most susceptible. Feeding a mineral supplement high in organic zinc and Vit E has a dramatic effect on the ability of the cow to resist mastitis, up to 50% reduction. Also dusting the cubicle floor with limestone flour limits the risk from bacteria in the bedding. Organic zinc will also help improve hoof quality in reducing lameness.

**3. Weak calves** – dead or weak calves at birth could be related to the cows iodine status. High iodine content in the pre calver mineral, for a few weeks before birth, should help. Iodine can also influence heat detection during the breeding season.

#### Action Plan:

- pre-calver mineral
- anionic supplement (Transition Cow)
- cubicle lime
- hygienic conditions around calving
- high energy concentrate
- correct feed level

## Spring Cereal Seed

Arrabawn Co-op requires large quantities of quality feeding barley. The Co-op wants to procure this barley from its own catchment area. Anyone wishing to grow barley for the co-op should contact their local branch. This year, the range of barley varieties include:-

\* **Paustian** \* **Planet** \* **Mickle** \* **Irina**

Arrabawn Co-op also supplies wheat and oat seed. The full range of support products, herbicides, pesticides, fungicides and technical support are available.

For further information contact your local branch of Arrabawn Co-Op.

## Somatic Cell Count - have you a system?

A cow with a somatic cell count of 400,000 will produce 10% less milk and will cost the farmer € 330!

Therefore it is important to get into a system of preventing high SCC from the start.

- Wear gloves when milking – reduces the spread of mastitis causing bacteria.
- Pre and post dip with Deosan Teatfoam or UdderGuard (wipe udders if dirty, before dipping)
- Dip all clusters with Deosan Activ until all cows are calved.

Enquire at Arrabawn Branch for correct procedure - or contact Tom Starr (087 669 7010)

## Calf Scour Remedy

Calf scour can be a real inconvenience at a busy time of year - isolating the calf, mixing the electrolyte solution, dosing the calf and then repeating the process!

**Arrabawn Co-Op** has developed a quick-fix to controlling calf scour - **Arralyte+**

- Compact electrolyte preparation
- Convenient syringe, inserted into the mouth / back of tongue
- One syringe per dose, repeat if necessary
- No mixing - but milk or water should be available to the calf.
- Fast – no messing, can be carried in your pocket!

Ask about Arralyte+ at your local branch of Arrabawn Co-Op or contact Tom Starr (087 669 7010)

Arrabawn



## Arralyte+

CALF ELECTROLYTE

### No Mixing | Fast | Convenient

Arralyte is a dietetic feedingstuff which may be used in cases of risk, during periods of, or recovery from digestive disturbance (diarrhoea / nutritional scour).

## TRACE PACK®

TRANSITION COW

Specifically formulated for cows susceptible to calving difficulties

- Retained afterbirth and slow calvings
- Subclinical milk fever associated difficulties





**Feed 7 days precalving**

# Arrabawn

www.arrabawn.ie  
email: info@arrabawn.ie  
Tel: 087 669 7010

NATIONWIDE DELIVERY AVAILABLE



## Enjoying the official opening at Tyone Store



### Refrigerated Bulk Milk Tank Contracts

Details on this year's cooler contracts are included with this month's statement. Those who were on contract last year are automatically included for this year unless we are notified in writing before 28th February 2017.

If anyone installed a new tank in 2016 and were covered by a one year guarantee they must contact their service contractor before 28th February 2017 if they wish to have a cooler contract for 2017.

Farmers should be aware that HCFC gases (i.e. R22) are banned since 2014. Systems that contain R22 or other HCFCs cannot be serviced after that date. Grants are available at the moment for converting to new energy cooling systems. Your Teagasc advisor can supply you with details regarding this. You should check that people working on your system have the right qualifications and that their company is certified. You can check their certification on [www.fgasregistration.ie](http://www.fgasregistration.ie)

### Farm Safety - Calving Time

Farmers need to be extra vigilant at calving time - normally placid cows can become very dangerous as maternal instinct kicks in around calving, both before and immediately after calving - so be prepared and don't take chances!

Cow attacks are now more common than bull attacks, so examine your calving pens to see what protection is provided - gates should be hanging properly from pillars.

If possible, have someone with you when assisting at a calving or moving cows/calves around calving.

When choosing bulls for breeding have an eye at docility values - avoid breeding from aggressive cows.

**Think safety - don't take chances**

For any further information or advice  
on any subjects or products  
mentioned in this newsletter  
please ring 087 6697010  
Email: [farmsupport@arrabawn.ie](mailto:farmsupport@arrabawn.ie)  
Check out our Website: [www.arrabawn.ie](http://www.arrabawn.ie)

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# FERTILISER

## BULK SPREADING

- TOP OF THE RANGE FERTILISER SPREADER (SULKY)
- Fully GPS controlled
- Minimum overlapping
- From 1 bag/acre upwards
- TWO SPREADERS
- 7 TONNE
- 10 TONNE



CONTACT YOUR LOCAL BRANCH OF ARRABAWN CO-OP FOR DETAILS

### FOR SALE

40 British Friesian Freshly Calved Heifers  
From the Mill Farm Herd.

At Birr Mart on Friday 16th March 2017 @ 1pm



## TEAGASC CORNER

### Spring Grass

After a mild dry winter were back to grass. All five development farmers got out to grass on the 8th, 9th and 10th February. The average opening farm cover across the farms was 600kgDM/ha, a bit lower than we would have hoped indicating we didn't build enough grass over the autumn - opening farm cover on the research farms was between 700 and 900kg DM/ha. All the same it is important that we start grazing as soon as possible for 2 reasons – one to stimulate grass growth so we have grass back again in April and second to feed the cow. In the last week of Jan we took grass samples from 3 of the development farms from paddocks that would be first grazed. The covers on these paddocks were between 660 and 750 kgDM/ha. Analysis of the samples showed that the grass had very high percent of crude protein at 28% and high ME at 13 MJ/kg. When we compare it to silage results that averaged 12.5% crude protein and 9.5MJ/kg it is clear that spring grass is a superior product. Why do I run out of grass in April?

The spring rotation planner is well known - we aim to graze 30% of the milking platform by March 1st, 30% by March 15th, 30% by April 1st and the last 10% in the first week of April - but how many of us actually achieve those targets?

What happens if we don't achieve these targets?

For example –

I have a 40ha milking block and milk 100 cows. I usually don't let out the cows by day until 25th February; at this stage 65 of the cows have calved. I let them out night and day from March 10th onwards when 75 cows have calved. My opening average farm cover is 550kgDM/ha. In February and until the 10th March the 65 cows eat 7kg of grass DM per day. At this rate, I achieve the first 30% target growth rate by March 10th – 11th – ten days later than the target. From the 11th of March cows are out day and night and so their grass demand increases. The 75 cows are eating 14kg of grass DM per day. I achieve the second 30% target by March 16th and the third by March 22nd. All the grass that was on the milking platform at the start of grazing has run out by March 24th.

The paddocks grazed when we first let the cows out will have somewhat recovered and grass will be growing again but will there be enough to let the cows back in? The first 30% of paddocks were grazed between Feb 25th and March 10th. The average grass growth rate for the last few days of February is around 6kgDM/day and the average growth rate for March is 20kgDM/day. So best case scenario the grass has a cover of 510kg DM/ha which is still too low to graze.

In the above example I have assumed that virtually no grass growth has occurred on un-grazed paddocks during February and March which is somewhat correct. In order to stimulate grass growth sunlight needs to penetrate the base of the grass plant but this isn't possible on un-grazed

paddocks with heavy covers. Additionally once grass grows beyond the 3 leaf stage it begins to die, so by "saving" these banks of grass we end up losing them.

In the above example I started grazing too late and then towards the middle of March I "steam rolled" through grass. As a result from the 24th March onwards I am forced to feed silage and concentrate until covers come back to 1100-1200kgDM/ha.

What happens if we do achieve these targets?

I have 30% of my milking platform grazed by 1st March. Now grazed the paddocks recover and begin to grow again. On average 84kgDM/ha will be grown on these paddocks in February; 620kgDM/ha in March and 400kgDM/ha in the first 10 days of April (average growth rates in April are 40kgDM/day). By the 10th of April the paddocks first grazed have an average farm cover of 1104kgDM/ha (average growth rates in April are 40kgDM/day) and can be grazed when the first rotation finishes. By grazing paddocks earlier (early February), we have given the sward more days to recover and grow. As a result by the time we have finished the first rotation there is enough grass in the paddock to start the second rotation. Also by "rationing" grass throughout the first rotation we have been able to keep grass in the diet of the cows most days -weather permitting – throughout the first rotation. It is better to have some proportion of grass in the diet of cows most days than to go from a diet of mostly grass to a diet of silage when grass runs out. Feeding a diet of mostly silage towards the end of the first rotation (late March/early April) has a detrimental effect on milk yield and protein and consequently cows are unlikely to reach their peak milk yield potential. By sticking to the targets we don't run out of grass and give our cows the best chance at achieving their peak milk yield potential. So this spring we must make more of an effort to achieve the spring grazing targets. Below are the guidelines to follow:

1. Follow grazing targets as closely as possible. Graze the specified area by the relevant date. If you graze too much area too soon pass you will run out of grass. Likewise if graze too little (especially at the start) you will run out of grass.
2. If you do not have enough grass on the area to be grazed feed meal and silage to meet herd demand.
3. Keep post grazing height to 3.5cm. Above that reduce supplementation, below that increase supplementation.
4. Graze light covers first (700-1000kgDM/ha), cows will not be able for heavy covers after calving.
5. Practice on-off grazing to prevent poaching damage. Cows must be hungry going out to graze and put back in 3 hours later.
6. Use cow tracks and back fences to prevent poaching.
7. If not already done spread slurry on paddocks with low covers and 23 units of urea/acre on remaining ground. Spread a further 46 units of urea/acre on the milking platform in early March.

### Profit monitor analysis of development farmers

This year's profit monitors are in. The table below highlights some of the costs for the development farmers on a cent per litre basis. The last column is the target for each cost.

#### Concentrate:

Concentrate costs varied a lot on the five farms ranging from 2.5 to 5.2c/L. Charlie Whiskey is the only liquid supplier in the programme and so we would expect his feed costs to be higher than the others. At 5.5 c/L for 2016, he reduced his feed costs by 0.6c/L on the previous year which equates to a saving of €3250. In the past year John Dowd has also reduced his feed bill by 0.65c/L. In a tough year these savings cannot be underestimated.

#### Fertiliser:

Fertiliser costs varied from 2 to 2.6c/L across farms. In many profit monitors we see fertiliser costs come in well below the target cost of 2.5c/L. This year discussion groups in Galway had an average fertiliser cost of 2.2c/L. This can sometimes indicate that not enough fertiliser (particularly compound fertiliser) is being used on farms. Cutting corners on fertiliser costs is a false economy as it will impact farm profitability in the long term – depleted P and K in the soil, reduced grass growth, poor quality grass and silage, more reliance on supplementation especially on higher stocked farms.

#### Machinery costs:

In the table below machinery costs include machinery running, contractor and machinery lease costs. Collectively these costs should be less than 3.5c/L. On balance the contractor costs should be high if there are low machinery running costs and vice versa, if there are high machinery costs on the farm the contracting costs should be lower. When both costs are high we must investigate why and set goals to reduce those costs in the future.

#### Common costs:

Common costs are all the fixed and variable costs minus land rent costs, hired labour and leases. Keeping common costs below 14c/L helps to keep the farm robust against milk price volatility. When a farm has high common costs it is more vulnerable to fluctuations in milk price.

cent/litre	J.Dowd	C.Whiskey	Molamphys	Coles	Kennedys	Target
Concentrate	4.9	5.5	3.6	2.85	2.5	3 to 4
Fertiliser	2.6	2.18	2	2.41	2.1	2.5
Machinery costs	3.3	3.8	2.1	1.7	3	3 to 3.5
Common costs	19.9	20.5	15.3	15.16	14.3	13 to 14