



Winter Bonus Revised

Next February we will pay 2c/litre bonus on all milk, this replaces the old scheme which applied for the months of December, January and February conditional on a person having a minimum of 4% of their supply of the previous year in the month.

This scheme is aimed at encouraging earlier calving and as a reward for compact calving. We advised you by text of this change so hopefully you will be able to maximise your supply next February to avail.

Arrabawn Co-Op

Annual General Meeting

The 17th AGM of Arrabawn Co-Operative Society Ltd.

will be held at the **Abbey Court Hotel, Nenagh**
on **Thursday 25th May 2017 at 11.30am**

All Shareholders are invited to attend.



DEVELOPMENT FARM WALK
CHARLIE WHIRISKEY, KILTULLAGH,
ATHENRY
19th May 11-1pm



Thermoduric Bacteria

Thermoduric bacteria are a significant group of bacteria which exist mainly as bacteria spores, they are heat resistant and survive Pasteurisation causing quality problems in products on the market. They can also grow in chill temperatures causing souring and dramatically reduce the shelf life of milk. In milk powders or concentrates the spore can germinate causing unacceptable levels of bacteria such as *Bacillus Cereus* in finished product with subsequent commercial losses.

Thermoduric Standard:

Thermoduric bacteria are reported on the text message as thd and a standard of <1000 will apply. Thermoduric counts in excess of 500 indicate issues with hygiene standards in the milking equipment or with the cleanliness of the cow and teats before milking. We have a very sophisticated machine for measuring thermoduric bacteria and this separates the thermoduric into fast growing and slowing growing bacteria which will aid problem solving. The slow growers are linked with the milking equipment and handling while the fast growers are associated with the Farm environment. We will only report the total count but we can advise you directly on the type of thermoduric bacteria growing to assist in reducing the count to acceptable levels.

Sources & control of thermoduric bacteria:

It is impossible to exclude thermoduric completely from the milk and the challenge is to keep the numbers entering raw milk at a minimum.

Thermoduric can be particularly troublesome in late summer /autumn and during periods when animals are housed in poor hygiene conditions. Thermoduric bacteria are widespread in the farm environment and present in silage, faeces, bedding and soil. Cows sitting on bedding material or lying in pastures can very easily get their teats contaminated thus cows should be clean for milking, teats should be clean and dry and an approved pre dip should be used. Contamination from teat surface will further contaminate milking machine clusters, pipe lines and the bulk tank. If cleaning is poor scale and residues can build up and thermoduric bacteria will grow in these areas so ensure all milk residues are removed and regular de scaling is done. All rubber-ware should be in good condition as cracked rubber is a perfect breeding ground for bacteria. Thorough cleaning of all surfaces in contact with milk is an absolute requirement and it is critical to maintain good hygiene at all stages of the process.

**For any further information or advice on
any subjects or products mentioned in
this newsletter**

Please ring 087 6697010

E: farmsupport@arrabawn.ie

Check out our website: www.arrabawn.ie

NEWS

Fresh Grass and Low Milk Protein

When good growth follows a period of grass shortage, there is the danger of cows eating too much highly digestible, low fibre grass. Too much highly digestible grass can lead to sub acute rumen acidosis (SARA) especially if there is insufficient fibre in the diet to generate adequate saliva through good cud chewing. This acidosis can affect the rumen bacteria leading to a drop in energy absorption by the cow, with a subsequent drop in milk quality and milk yield. Often this shows up as low milk protein. Making a small amount of clean straw available to the cows may help to keep the rumen functioning properly, but this may not suit everybody and feeding a buffer / concentrate to regulate the rumen pH may be more practical.

Also, there is the issue of very high nitrogen grass leading to high levels of Urea in milk (MUN). Despite the fact that nitrogen fertiliser was applied in good time, there was very little growth due to poor growing conditions. With the arrival of milder weather all this nitrogen has been activated with very rapid grass growth - leading to grass with very high nitrogen levels. This nitrogen is normally utilised by rumen bacteria in reproduction and digestion of the cows diet. However, if the cows rumen bacteria are short of energy, either due to acidosis or low energy in the diet, then the surplus nitrogen is absorbed into the blood as blood urea and will be detected in the milk as Milk Urea Nitrogen (MUN). A high MUN reading can be an indicator that the cows diet is low in energy (starch) and the rumen bacteria just don't have the energy to utilise the nitrogen - solution, increase concentrate feeding until grass increases in fibre and surplus nitrogen level drop.

BreederMax dairy concentrate from **Dan O'Connor Feeds** has been designed to deal with high nitrogen grass and sub acute acidosis in cows - it contains **De-odorase** to trap the surplus nitrogen in the diet, to be utilised further down the digestive tract and it also contains a buffer to regulate rumen pH. **BreederMax** is available in 14% Protein for use with very fresh grass and 16% Protein for use with slightly older grass. **BreederMax** has been designed to help the cow go back in calf AND stay incalf! **BreederMax** also contains a range of **Bioplex** fertility minerals plus extra Vitamin and Biotin as an aid to fertility.

For further information contact your local Arrabawn rep or Arrabawn branch or ring 061 414988.



BreederMaX

Next Generation Dairy Fertility Feed

- Highly glucogenic formulation to reduce dairy cow body condition loss.
- Includes De-Odorase® to help reduce the negative impact that high nitrogen spring grasses has on fertility.
- Contains a unique combination of solutions proven to assist immune status; Sel-Plex®, BioPlex® Zinc & Copper, elevated levels of Vitamin E and Biotin.

Dan O'Connor Feeds

Ballysimon Road, Limerick.
T: 061 414 988 F: 061 410 961

Silage - worth minding!

With the typical 80 cow dairy herd requiring approx. 1000 tonnes silage for a 5 month winter, silage making should be taken seriously. It's expensive to produce and losses need to be kept to a minimum - it is very disheartening to see the amount of waste which accumulates under the silage cover and on the sides and shoulders of the silage clamp.

On the waste front - bad silage is a problem - apart from the obvious waste, badly preserved silage is a health hazard, containing really bad bacteria which can seriously affect cows in calf. With the common use of feeder/mixer wagons, much of this waste is 'disposed' of by feeding to livestock - not really the answer!

Minimising this loss - (up to €1000 waste in the average pit!)?

Have good clean grass. Allow time for slurry to be well washed in, avoiding contamination. Observe an adequate period since the last fertiliser application.

Ensile the grass properly, excluding air from the pit through thorough rolling and compaction. Eliminating air from the grass is key to good preservation - allowing the anaerobic bacteria to produce lactic acid from the sugars in the grass, this lactic acid is your silage preservative! Use an effective silage cover. There are differences in silage covers, often influenced by the type of materials used in their manufacture.

Use a good quality silage cover - check the spec! There have been significant developments in the silage cover world with the use of covers made from 'virgin' (not recycled!) material, leading to improved 'oxygen barriers' - which is key to good preservation.

This year **Arrabawn** is stocking the 'improved oxygen barrier' silage covers, from Zeus/Epicrop, which should significantly improve preservation and reduce the amount of waste in the surface layers of the silage pit.

Sprinkle 'SilaSave' on top of the silage before covering. This will mop up any stray oxygen under the cover, minimising that layer of rotten silage under the cover. This layer of rotten silage can often be the source of very harmful bacteria - harmful to stock and the farmer!

Don't be 'cent wise and euro foolish - do the job right!

For further information contact your local branch of Arrabawn Co-op

SilaSave
Usual price €144
NOW 3 FOR €120
Arrabawn
email: info@arrabawn.ie • www.arrabawn.ie
tel: 087 669 7010

THE DOCKBOX

A simple solution to a difficult problem



Provide excellent control of:

- Docks • Major grassland weeds • e.g., nettles, chickweed, thistles, buttercup, dandelions etc...

Pack treats one hectare/For short term control or where weeds are not well established, pack can treat two hectares

Contact your local branch of Arrabawn Co-op for details

CellCheck Tip of the Month

CellCheck Farmer Workshops-sign up today!

Did you know that you could increase your net farm profit by at least 1c/litre by improving mastitis control? Learn how at a CellCheck Farmer Workshop..... This workshop will help you to understand the causes of mastitis and highlight how making simple changes in your everyday milking routine and management can improve and maintain lower SCC levels in your herd. CellCheck Farmer Workshops are delivered by teams of CellCheck-trained service providers, to provide you with the combined expertise of a farm advisor, a vet, a milking machine technician and a co-op milk quality advisor. The workshop is 2.5 hours in duration and is farm-based, with a mixture of classroom style learning, interactive and practical workstations, and group discussion. Group sizes are small to allow plenty of discussion and questions.

CellCheck Farmer Workshops are a component of the Dairy Knowledge Transfer (KT) measures under the new Rural Development Programme. In addition to participation in discussion group meetings, Dairy KT participants will be required to participate in a CellCheck Farmer Workshop if they haven't done so since 01/01/2015.

With approximately 7,000 dairy farmers expected to participate in the Dairy KT measures, it is anticipated that more than 400 workshops will be held throughout the country over the life of the KT programme. Following the positive feedback and outcomes from workshops held to date, this is a unique opportunity to continue to increase farmer engagement with the CellCheck programme and its resources, and to reap the benefits of better udder health. Your KT facilitator will be in touch to indicate suitable workshop dates. If you are not taking part in a discussion/KT group and wish to discuss SCC issues please contact your Arrabawn milk advisor or ring 087 669 7010.

Grassland Weed Control - 2017

Weeds take up valuable 'grass growing' space in your pasture – they might even be poisonous!

Ragwort – spray 1 lt/ac 2,4-D (D50 or Mortox50) + 1 lt/ac M50 or Agroxone, ideally between November and April, before the plant starts to get bigger. Add a wetting agent, 1lt **Torpedo** OR 1lt **Presto** to every 10 acres for better results.

This spray will also control **Buttercup, Dandelions, Daisies** and **Thistles** as well as some control of seedling docks - works well with Thistles, but **Thistlex** at 1 lt/Ha would be better!

While **Buttercup** in small amounts is not a problem and can be quite an attractive flower - it can be poisonous when eaten in large quantities – this year Buttercup could reach epidemic proportions in pasture, possibly due to lack of grass competition earlier in the growing season. Buttercup has become a large part of many pastures and it may be difficult to restrict intake. Ideally, buttercup should be controlled, by spraying, earlier in the season – but spraying later will certainly reduce the level of competition for later in the grazing season. Spray with **D50 / M50 @ 1lt per acre** each.

Docks – where clover is not important.....

Doxstar Pro – contains brushwood killer to kill roots. Will kill clover. Spray 4 weeks before silage or 1 week before grazing. 1lt twice or 2 lts once in **30 gallons** water per acre.

DockBox – excellent on docks, **1 ha. pack**. Contains Dicamba to kill roots. Will damage clover. Cheaper than **Doxstar**.

Docks – with clover..... Prospect – spray one week pre-cut or pre-graze. Will only kill broadleaved docks. Must be grazed or cut after 7 days.

Eagle – spray one week pre-graze or three weeks pre-cut. Will control both broadleaf and curled dock.

Will require respraying at 1/2 rate about 6 months later to catch resprouts.

Nettles and Briars and Furze

Grazon Pro -----this contains high levels of brushwood killer and the **Grazon Pro** has the advantage of being able to kill thistles also-----this can be an advantage when spraying under electric fences, where briars and thistles can be a problem.

NETTLE BAN, SCRUBKILLER AND BANDOCK – These are well known and convenient and suitable for smaller areas.

Thistlex – excellent control of thistles – 1lt/Ha – kills clover - € 16.5 / ac

For further information contact your local branch of Arrabawn Co-op -087 6697010

Repair Damaged Pasture

Use '**ProNitro**' nutrient coated grass seed to repair damaged patches or to overseed worn out paddocks.

Available in 12kg bags from Tyone Mills or any Arrabawn branch

Farm Safety Promotion

From 1st May to 30th June.

5330226 CHEMICAL CABINET PROMOTION PRICE €249

NORMAL PRICE €299

5220232 MEDICINE CABINET PROMOTION PRICE €169

NORMAL PRICE €195

Please enquire at your local Arrabawn Store

THINK FARM SAFETY

JFC AGRI



JFC Agri
Chemical Storage Cabinets

Arrabawn
Agri-Business



Reseeding 2017

Reseeding is important as a mechanism to increase the perennial ryegrass content in swards. There are several benefits to reseeding and maintain perennial ryegrass dominant pastures:

- Increase seasonal (spring and autumn) and total DM production
- 25% more responsive to fertiliser N compared to old permanent pasture
- Increased feeding quality
- Faster re-growth
- Greater total production and so can increase the carrying capacity of the farm

Reseeding can pay for itself in less than 2 years – no other farm investment gives such a quick return

Timing of reseeding

There are a number of reasons why we should give more consideration to a spring reseed.

- Days are getting longer and temperatures are improving – both will help give the new reseed the best start.
- Quicker turnaround time from spraying the old sward to grazing the new sward.
- Increased opportunity to complete a post-emergence weed spray
- Allows several grazings of the new reseed before autumn closing

Choose the Arrabawn Grazing / Silage mixture

- **Top varieties**
- **Late heading** – easy to manage, compact heading date
- **High PPI rating**
- **Long season** – early spring growth / late autumn growth

Contact your local Arrabawn Branch

Manage grass to maintain milk yield

As most cows have achieved peak milk yield in recent weeks it is important to prevent fall off in milk after peak. Yield is expected to drop by 2.5% per week (10% per month) from now on. If yields are dropping at a greater rate we need to find out why. They're three main reasons why yields drop: under feeding, ill health and feeding poor quality grass. At this time of year underfeeding is unlikely, if fact in a lot of cases we don't graze tight enough. We need to graze out paddocks to 3.5-4cm otherwise we hamper quality for subsequent rotations. Poor herd health can also hamper yield so keep an eye on mineral levels, parasite control and disease status within the herd. The most common cause of increased drop off in milk is due to the feeding of poor quality grass. At this time of the year grass can quickly go stemmy and strong. Stemmy grass has less sugars and more fibre than leafy grass. When cows are fed stemmy grass expect the protein and yield to fall and the fat to increase. To avoid feeding stemmy grass paddocks with covers above 1600kgDM/ha should not be grazed. Instead they should be taken out as bales. For the same reason cows should never be allowed to graze headlands after silage is cut. The ideal pre-grazing cover for cows is 1,400 regardless of stocking rate. This is grown in a 16 to 21 day rotation at this time of the year. Grazing low covers, less than 1,200 will reduce cow intake. Grazing heavy covers, greater than 1,600, will reduce energy intake. Grazing 1,400 is ideal from three perspectives:-

1. Provides for optimum growth in the paddock
2. Ensures maximum quality for the cow i.e. three digestible leaves
3. Allows for excellent cleanout of the paddock

When the pre-grazing cover is above target the paddock should be cut and baled within 1-2 days of its due grazing date. These bales can be fed in the shoulders of the year when grass is tight and are better quality than pit silage and cheaper than meal (10-12c/kgDM for surplus bales vs 25-30c/kgDM for meal). If you have difficulty estimating farm covers or would like help with grassland management contact Aine on 087-0963869.

Fertiliser Advice

Most farms require 30-40 units of N per acre (stocking rate >3.75) in May and 20-30 units of N in June. Obey nitrate limits and prioritise nitrogen for milking platform. Silage ground (after the first cut) will need 70-80 units/acre



An example of a cover that's gone too strong for grazing.

if being closed again for a second cut and 30-40 units/acre if being grazed. Slurry should be spread 5-7 days after cutting and will provide about 15 units of nitrogen/2,500 gallons spread. Many soils are deficient in sulphur and 20 units/acre should be spread over the summer.

Grass is tight on most of the development farms this week. In some cases meal feeding was increased and silage ground opened to recover deficits. Ideally cover/cow should never fall below 140kg, but at this time of year hopefully growth will pick up once a bit of rain comes. Currently grass growth is averaging out across the country at about 55kgDM/day however where drought has been experienced this has fallen to between 30-40kg/day. Assess your own situation by doing a grass walk and try to maintain pre grazing covers to 1400kgDM/day.

A Farm Walk will take place on Charlie Whiskey's farm on Friday the 19th May. Since joining the programme Charlie has focused on improving grassland management and breeding and small changes in both areas has led to considerable savings within the farm gate. All of which will be discussed on the day. Additionally James O'Loughlin, coordinator of the heavy soils programme will be present to discuss land development and John Fitzpatrick from Earls engineering alongside Pat Clarke Teagasc will discuss farm yard development. The event starts at 11am and will be signposted from Kiltullagh and Athenry.

Development Farm Update

		J. Dowd	C. Whiskey	Kennedys	Coles	Molamphys
Milk	Number of cows	96	100	160	114	107
	Fat %	3.90	3.86	3.95	4.07	3.91
	Protein %	3.53	3.29	3.45	3.47	3.40
	Litres/cow	28.6	25.6	25.4	23.8	25.1
	kgMS/cow	2.18	1.89	1.94	1.80	1.89
Grassland	Milking platform SR	3	3.46	4.21	4.45	4.3
	Average farm cover	615	429	506	703	473
	Cover/cow	179	124	120	158	110
	Herd Demand	52	48	59	71	56
	Meal kg	4	4	4	2	5
Breeding	6 wk calving rate 2017	73%	69%	81%	82%	88%
	Mating start date – cows	24/4	5/5	28/4	23/4	26/4
	Number of cows left to calve at MSD	1	3	0	3	0
	Mating start date - heifers	25/4	1/5	28/4	1/5	26/4
	Synchronisation used on heifers	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
	% cows bred by 10 th May	64	27	54	70	55

Milk data based on collections from the 3rd to the 9th May. Grass measured 8th - 10th May.