Arrabawn
Together we grow

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NEWSLETTER

Bright years ahead for Arrabawn as record investment in 2019 future proofs organisation

Arrabawn's investment in the future was copper-fastened in 2019 with a record capital spend that sets it up to cater for growth from suppliers over the next ten years.

The co-op's 2019 accounts show that the amount of milk processed through its two processing plants – Nenagh, Co. Tipperary and Kilconnell, Co. Galway - reached an all-time high of over 422 million litres, an 8% increase on 2018.

However, with the record €50 million programme of investment over the past three years by and large completed in 2019, Arrabawn is now well set for future growth ahead, CEO Conor Ryan stated.

The annual accounts show that capital expenditure was at its highest in the history of the organisation at a record €19.6 million as the co-op committed the vast bulk of spend on its new casein and effluent plant during 2019. It is expected that the organisation will return to more normalised capital expenditure levels on completion of the casein and effluent plants this year.

The investment, Mr Ryan said, is a vote of confidence in the future of the organisation and also resulted in 12 new hires being recruited.

Turnover for the year was at €265.5 million in 2019, just down by 2% on the record turnover achieved in 2018. The marginal turnover reduction was brought about in the main by reduced sales of feeds, which hit record levels in 2018 due to the exceptional weather conditions. Operating profit in 2019 was at €1.04 million, while EBIDTA was €7.5 million.

"2019 was a very important year for the organisation and will be seen as such in the years ahead when the work we did last year will have facilitated a significant increase in our milk processing capabilities. This significant capital investment programme was achieved on time and on budget" he said.

"This investment substantially changes our business model from a manufacturing ingredients business as we now have the ability to process more of our milk into higher value-added products, which will deliver a better return for the organisation and its members and suppliers. This is now a world-class facility, capable of the highest global customer expectations. It will future proof our operations and has already resulted in a lot of interest all over the globe in our range of products."

Arrabawn Chairman Edward Carr said: "The record investment over the past year illustrates Arrabawn's ambition on behalf of members. The investment is good news for our suppliers as it will allow them to continue to expand over the coming years."

"They will be able to do that in the knowledge that we have the capacity to take increased volumes but also the ability to process these volumes into higher value-added products, which will deliver an additional return for our suppliers. Whereas before we would not have been able to meet these supply increases, we now have plenty of head room and look forward to capitalising on that in the future for the co-op and its members."

Chlorine Free - June already!

We're halfway to being totally chlorine free by year end.

Most tanks are now chlorine free so we have to switch to chlorine free parlours/plants now.

Ornua, The Irish Dairy Board, is insisting that all dairy farms will be chlorine free by the end of 2020. This will have a major effect on the sales of Irish Dairy Products overseas.

Current 'chlorine users 'should switch to Chlorine-Free as soon as possible. There are a lot of people very happy with the new 'Chlorine Free' regime.

Soon it will not be possible to purchase Chlorine based products, so the quicker we convert the better!

If you have any concerns or queries regarding the move to Chlorine Free cleaning systems talk to your Arrabawn Milk Advisor or contact your local Arrabawn branch for more information.

NEWS

Milk Quality Advisor: Checklist for June & July

- A milk drop of less than 2.5% from week to week.
- SCC less than 150,000.
- TBC less than 15,000.
- A post grazing height of 4cm.
- Grazing quality grass - covers of 1600kgs DM/Ha. (in normal conditions)
- 75% of your cows incalf after 42 days.
- All heifers must be incalf.
- Using high EBI, short gestation bulls.
- Using short gestation beef bulls towards the end of breeding.
- Incalf heifers weighing 350-380kgs.

Summer teat spraying is essential

Teat spraying/dipping is one of the most effective ways in which we can maintain a low level of somatic cell count (SCC) in the herd. Some farms are still halting the practice during the summer in an attempt to save time and money but are they just increasing infection rate and losing out in the long run?

Cows are most susceptible to picking up an infection in the half hour after milking so for most herds this means the cow is unprotected for two half hour intervals every day that she is milking. There are millions of bacteria present on the teat skin after milking of which staphylococcus (staph) account for 49% of these. If you don't teat spray after milking there is a greater chance of these staph bacteria entering the teat canal and causing an infection further up in the udder.

Post milking teat spraying will reduce mastitis levels in the herd by 50% therefore we should not stop mid-season as it will just build up infection levels until you have a bigger problem in the autumn. This will in turn take up more of your time, and treatment of the problem will cost more than the teat spray that was saved during the summer. The use of teat sprays/dips will also improve the skin condition of teats and aid healing and blood flow in the teat ends.

Good practice guidelines should be followed when teat spraying or teat dipping. First and foremost, the product you used must be registered, not expired and you must follow the recommendations for use of that product. If you are pre-spraying/dipping cows you must always dry teats before you attach the cluster. You must also ensure you are getting an effective coverage on the teat by using 15ml of product per cow where teat spraying is done and 10ml of product per cow in teat dipping scenarios.

Therefore, it is essential to keep up teat spraying/dipping during the summer months as it is a low-cost preventative measure that greatly reduces the chances of clinical mastitis and reduces milk loss from high SCC animals. The reduction in SCC will also lead to higher return from the cow as you will be less likely to receive penalties and more likely to receive a SCC bonus if you are under 200,000 for each month.

Check your local Arrabawn store for special offers on TeatFoam and TeatCare products.

Are you underdosing your cattle?

Even with the best intentions in the world, we can accidently underestimate the weight of our animals. As well as being a cardinal sin with any medicine, it can be a waste of money and time. Here are some other ways we are under dosing our animals:

- Injecting young calves with a very small volume under the skin. We normally fly along the crush, injecting and moving along, forgetting to rub and seal the site of injection. A small amount of product may leak from this area, resulting in the animal being underdosed. Calves may only be getting 3-4mls each and if 1ml leaks back that could be a 1/3 of their dose wasted.
- Is the dosing gun delivering the right amount of product? Always calibrate your gun with the product you will be using, water is not suitable as it is a different consistency. Use a measuring jug or faecal sample pot with graduations to measure the volume being administered. Often older guns become uncalibrated over time.
- A middle of the road animal should not be picked for getting an average weight. The heaviest animal should always be picked and dose that rate. If the average animal is used half of the animals heavier than them will be underdosed. It's better to slightly over than under dose. All products have very high safety index limits so no worries are associated with overdosing. Only yellow/levamisole's have a slightly lower safety threshold so it would be useful to split these animals into larger and smaller groups.
- There are 10 animals left to do and only 9 doses left in the pack. What do we do? Split the pack between the 10? No, never do this as these 10 animals will all be underdosed and the product will be of no benefit. Pick the best animal from the group and don't give them any. They are the best for a reason, their immunity is strong and working well against the parasites.
- Pour on guns, and some older guns may not fill as quick as you can walk the length of the crush. Some guns may need an extra couple of seconds to fill or require a little pull back.
- Hold the calf's head up to ensure the full amount is swallowed and avoid half being spit out. Ensure the dose is at room temperature, as a cold dose will make the animal cough.

Bull Safety

Between 2010 and 2019 bulls accounted for 18% of livestock related deaths in Ireland.

You can never be too careful around bulls. Heading towards the latter end of the breeding season a stock bull or vasectomised bull will become more active on the farm. It is crucial for everyone's safety that a protocol is in place when handling the bulls and that everyone is aware of it.

- Farmers and Staff are competent in handling bulls
- Good equipment available (drafting gates at milking parlour etc.)
- No children on farm when work involves bulls
- Ensure bull has a nose ring and it is recommended to have a chain also
- Ensure barrier between you and bull at all times
- Phone must be charged, in hand and emergency contacts readily available
- Make sure someone else knows where you are and has a rough estimate when you will be returning
- Never turn your back on the bull
- Respect their space and keep your distance from the side, never in front
- First sign of aggressions, cull immediately (Even if breeding season isn't over).

NEWS

Summer Mastitis- Issues and Controls

- Summer mastitis is an issue we all want to avoid, which most commonly occurs in milking cows, but is also an issue in maiden heifers or dry cull cows. The first sign to watch out for is an animal standing away from the group and walking with stiffness in their hind quarters. The quarter will present as hard, swollen, hot and can be very painful. When stripped the milk is thick, yellow custard material often with a foul smell following.
- Summer mastitis is a serious condition and must not go untreated. In the worst case scenario, it may result in abortion in pregnant cows/ heifers or even death. The health of the calf born the following spring may also be compromised! Accurate and immediate treatment is required. Treatment helps to reduce the pain/illness being suffered by the cow. The quarter is quite often lost, but occasionally they can recover and produce milk again.
- Prevention is key to reduce the number of cases on your farm. First step is to use suitable fly control product. Flies are the main carriers of the disease and need to be controlled. There are some no-milk-withdrawal products on the market such as Eprizero or Bimeprine. These products are poured along the cows back to protect against all flies, while also protecting against roundworm, lungworm, lice, horn flies, warbles and mange mites. The second step includes a suitable dry cow therapy to help control the SCC of that affected quarter.
- For dry cows and heifers, a garlic lick would be more economically viable. The smell of garlic repels the flies but it must not be used in lactating cows as the garlic will taint the milk and will not be accepted by the Co-Op. Avoiding fields which have wet land or a woody area will also help. As you may notice flies like to accumulate in these areas.
- If a clinical case of Mastitis does occur on your farm, make sure you perform a sensitivity test to ensure you are using the right antibiotic for the most successful cure rate. A sterile, clean* milk container is easily available from the milk lorry driver, Rep or local Co-Op store. Ask your lorry driver to drop the sample to the Co-Op lab by leaving a note and the sample out. Your name, Co-Op number, cow number and date is required. We will look after it from there, and get the results back within a week.
- (*Note, <u>do not use SCC tubes with Red Tablet</u>, sensitivity cannot be performed if red tablet is dissolved in milk)

Start Milk Recording Now!

<u>Reasons to start in June:</u> There may be extra help around the farm currently (due to Covid-19), silage season is almost complete, and breeding is slowing down. These factors could allow you to have extra time to start and learn the Milk Recording Process. It's never too late, even two or three recordings before drying off can help you make the right decisions for next year.

Please see the following article from **Progressive Genetics** for even more reasons to start.....

Due to Covid-19, a decision was made to temporarily suspend Manual milk recording across the country in mid-March. Due to a change in the Progressive Genetics milk recording protocol, we can now offer a full Manual and EDIY milk recording service. Please visit our website or talk to your local milk recorder to know more about the protocols put in place for the safety of our recorders and milk recording customers.

Is it too late to milk record in 2020?

It is never too late to start milk recording, especially with the change in antibiotic usage coming down the tracks. From 2022, dairy farmers will no longer be allowed to use blanket dry-cow treatment across all cows in their herd without evidence that they require them. For this reason, milk recording will need to become common practice on dairy farms. It very important to start milk recording to build a picture of your herd's cell count status prior to this change in policy as it will allow you make decisions regarding a change to management practice, culling decisions and even breeding decisions on your farm to help you become more successful with selective-dry cow therapy (SDCT).

Why Milk Record in 2020?

- *Milk Recording is the only way to accurately identify cow performance on your farm.*
- *Reduce your SCC and increase profits*
  - *Reducing SCC from 200,000 to 120,000 increases profit per cow by €85, resulting in an increase of €8,500 for 100 cows. More milk is produced from low SCC cows, it will lead to reduced culling in the herd and allow cows to stay in the herd for longer.*
- *Breeding Decisions*
  - *Breed your replacements from your most profitable cows*
- *Disease testing*
- *Increase your surplus stock value*
- *Reduce antibiotic usage*
- *Pregnancy testing*
- *Department of Agriculture Dairy Valuations*
  - *Insurance policy against TB breakdown*

Your milk recording records are a very effective way to pick under-performing cows for culling. A new tool developed by the Irish Cattle Breeding Federation (ICBF) – which is only available to farmers who milk record – called 'cows own worth' (COW), ranks cows based on their expected profit potential for their lifetime.

Tips for milk recording in 2020:

- *It's never too late to start milk recording*
- *Record throughout the season at regular intervals of 60 days, or sooner if bulk tank SCC is rising*
- *Ideally record close to dry off – if drying off over an extended period (October 15 to December 15), this can necessitate two recordings*
- *Ensure cows are easily identifiable i.e. freeze branded*

In recent weeks Progressive Genetics have launched their new coloured milk recording reports for spring calving herds. The aim of the new reports is to indicate the performance and profitability of your herd clearly, and in doing so, save you considerable time. We believe this new approach on your herd's performance will ensure you can make the most profitable decisions for your farm.

The reports are divided into two distinct areas:

1. *Production performance*
2. *SCC profile*

They are also colour coded with cows grouped based on a traffic light system:

1. *Green is for 'desirable'*
2. *Orange indicates 'needs to be monitored'*
3. *Red indicates 'needs to be addressed'*

These new reports along with the Black and white milk recording reports are all available on the ICBF website. You can now also receive your milk recording reports by email. Please update your email address on the ICBF website to avail of this service. As a milk recording customer, you can view your milk recording results for free using our AgriNet HerdApp. Anyone interested in finding out more contact: Ann-Maree 087-1998805

If you're interested in starting milk recording with Progressive Genetics or would like more details on milk recording then please contact us on ***046-9540606***

Providing enough quality water is essential for good livestock husbandry and welfare

Understanding livestock watering needs, is paramount to designing a good livestock watering system. Dairy cows in milk, require 100-120 litres of water per day. When grass dry matter is high, in milk cows may have to drink over 80% of their water requirement (the balance may be met from forage). Cows will drink 30-50% of their water requirement within 1 hour of milking and so the following are critical considerations:

- Accessibility
- Flow Rate
- Trough Capacity

In drought conditions capacity requirements almost double. Data from the summer of 2018 shows water consumption at 120 L per cow per day. Water makes up;

- 80% of the animals blood
- 87% of milk produced

Water regulates body temperature and is vital for organ functions such as digestion, waste removal and the absorption of nutrients. The daily water requirement of livestock varies significantly, with size, growth stage and output level all having a strong influence. The table below shows the requirements for a milking cow based on her level of production. Consumption rates can be affected by dietary, environmental and management factors.

	Level of milk production (kg)	Water requirement (L/ day)	Typical water requirement (L/day)
Milking Cow	14	68-83	115
	22	87-102	115
	36	114-136	115
Calves (0-4mts)		5-13	9
Dairy Heifers (4-24mts)		14.5 - 36	25

Stay connected with us!!

Check out our **website** for weekly farming updates. Find us **Arrabawn.ie**

Connect with us on social media on our twitter outlets **@arrabawncoop** and **@milk4profit** for regular farming updates and promotional offers.

We are also on Facebook at Arrabawn Co Op.

Fodder Budget 2020

Calculating requirements on the farm:
Start by estimating the amount of fodder required for a 'typical' winter (dependant on location/rainfall levels/soil type) and for the expected numbers of various stock to be carried through the indoor period. In addition, it is recommended to estimate the quantity of additional feed (buffer feed) needed, while also assessing/building the fodder reserve available on the farm. Factors to consider include; overall farm stocking rate, soil type, grass growth potential on the farm and average annual rainfall levels for the region. A useful figure to have at hand is 400 kg DM or two bales of silage per cow in reserve, in addition to typical winter requirements. The table below summarises typical winter fodder requirements/animal.

	A	B	C	
	Monthly Requirements (T/animal/ month)	**No. of stock**	**Feeding period (months)**	**Total (AxBxC)**
Dairy Cow	1.6			
Suckler Cow	1.4			
0-1 yr old	0.7			
1-2 yr old	1.3			
2+ yr old	1.3			

Measuring a silage pit:

In Metres: Length x Width x Avg. Height / 1.4 = Tonnes of FW

In Feet: Length x Width x Avg. Height / 50 = Tonnes of FW

Measuring bales:

No. of bales x 700kg (normal) or 800kg (well packed

Arrabawn

TECH TALK

Benefits of sodium in fertiliser

The prolonged warm, dry spell is creating challenges in growing grass and managing livestock. Sodium fertiliser can help alleviate the impact of drought in both grass and livestock.

Challenges for grazing during drought	How sodium helps
Uptake of potassium increases to alleviate drought stress – high potassium can increase the risk of hypomagnesaemia	Sodium can help to alleviate drought stress and regulate K:Mg and K:Na ratios to reduce the risk of hypomagnesaemia
Pica – recent observations of livestock licking stones and roads can be an indicator of sodium deficiency	Sodium is readily taken up by grass to reduce deficiency and the risk of pica
Grass is less digestible as it matures into the fibrous, stemmy stage which reduces palatability and DM intake	Sodium increases the % of live herbage, digestibility and sugars which increase palatability and DM intake
Supplementation with concentrates to off-set reduced DM intake can increase the risk of acidosis	Sodium helps buffer rumen pH and reduces the risk of acidosis

Should I apply fertiliser during drought?

- Met Éireann data indicates the Soil Moisture Deficit (SMD) varies from 40–80mm across Ireland; >50mm SMD will limit grass growth
- Where grass is green there is scope to apply fertiliser and see a growth response
- Heavy overnight dews can deposit 0.5mm moisture which is sufficient to start dissolving fertiliser granules as the picture of a saucer of fertiliser left overnight in a grass cover of 1,300kg DM/ha shows

What sort of fertiliser should I apply and how much at a time?

- Nitrates (CAN) give the fastest response in dry conditions (25-30kg/ha)
- Sulphur is essential to maximise N uptake and protein formation (5-6kg/ha)
- Sodium will help alleviate drought stress in both grass and livestock (5-6kg/ha)

PRODUCT	ANALYSIS
SWEETGRASS® (Gouldings)	**23% Nitrogen + 2% Sulphur + 5% Sodium + 1.2% Magnesium**

For further information or advice on any subjects or products mentioned in this newsletter
Please ring 087 6697010 Email: farmsupport@arrabawn.ie • Check out our Website: www.arrabawn.ie