



Arrabawn/Teagasc Signpost Programme



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The Signpost programme is a collaborative campaign set up to lead climate action with specific focus on reducing emissions, improving water quality, improving biodiversity, and reducing costs to create more sustainable farm enterprises.

In line with government policy, agriculture has been set targets to reduce its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 25% and its Ammonia emissions by 1% by 2030. Teagasc have developed a 12 Step guide for farmers, outlining the measures that have the greatest impact in reducing emissions at farm level. The measures have a cost benefit for farmers and aid in improving efficiency at farm level. There is a 12 Step guide available for dairy, beef, sheep and tillage farmers.

Teagasc and Arrabawn have worked together to establish three Signpost demonstration farms that are pointing the way in reducing emissions. The participating farmers are Conor Camon in Co. Offaly, Ned Kelly in Co. Tipperary, and Conor and Vincent O'Brien in Co. Galway. These farms have adopted the 12 Steps, have made progress in reducing emissions and maintained if not improved profitability on their farms. In the next phase of the programme, these farms will establish carbon sequestration measurement, which in time can be taken into account by the EPA in the national (GHG) inventory.

Agriculture will only achieve the required reduction in emissions if there is widespread uptake of these 12 Steps by farmers. Some of the measures are decisions that can be made today such as, applying lime where required, switching to protected urea as a nitrogen source and using low emission slurry spreading, while others may take some planning such as improving animal health, improving milk solids and incorporating clover. Either way accelerated action is required if agriculture is to meet its targets.

Teagasc in conjunction with ICBF and Board Bia have recently launched a Signpost Advisory Programme. This is a free programme available to all farmers nationwide and aims to help establish farm specific measures to reduce emissions, improve water quality and improve biodiversity. A key aspect of the programme is that a baseline emission figure can be generated for each farm. Farmers can then pick farm specific measures that will reduce the emission figure of their farm and in turn contribute to an overall reduction in emissions from agriculture. It is important that all farmers know what they have to do to reduce their emissions and the Signpost Advisory Programme is key in achieving this.

To sign up for this free programme you can register on the Teagasc website or by contacting your local Teagasc office.

Extending the Grazing Season

Extended Grazing is the best way to get maximum grass utilisation that both benefit economically and environmentally. Years of trial work within Teagasc have recognised that an extended grazing season has proven to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Years of trial work within Teagasc have recognised that an extended grazing season has proven to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Research has recognised that a 10-day increase in grazing season, reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 1.7%. Maintaining cows on grass rewards environmentally and economically as grass is the cheapest feed while being the most nutritious/easily digested food for a cow. Weather dependency is a huge variable that dictates extended grazing therefore it is important to create a plan i.e.

- getting rotation length back to >35 days,
- selecting the driest paddocks and be strict on closing out paddocks.

Additionally, a target is to aim to have approximately 60-65% of paddocks

closed off by the first week in November. Teagasc have outlined that for every extra day grazing in the extended grazing period it is worth ~ €1.80/cow/day. Bearing this in mind, with inflated input costs following the simple basics of an autumn grazing plan can financially benefit family farm when done correctly. Slurry storage capacity is also directly affected by extended grazing as the longer cows stay on grass the less pressure will be applied on slurry storage. This reduces any extra ammonia emissions and other greenhouse gases being stored.

Environmental benefits of extended grazing:

- **Reduced concentrate feed production:** Extended grazing decreases the demand for intensive concentrate feed production, which is often associated with high emissions due to machinery use, fertilizers, and transportation.
- **Carbon sequestration:** Pasture plants (grass) can absorb and store carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, acting as a carbon sink and offsetting emissions from the herd.
- **Decreased manure emissions:** As cows graze outdoors, their manure is naturally distributed across the grazing platform, reducing concentrated slurry storage and methane emissions.
- **Less energy use:** By utilizing natural forage instead of relying on mechanised feeding systems (i.e., concentrated feed), the energy consumption associated with concentrate feed processing and transportation is lowered.

Where are you on the 12 Steps to reduce Gaseous Emissions on YOUR FARM?

Step	Action needed
12. Incorporate clover	Incorporating 5 kg/ha (2 kg/ac) will replace up to 100 kg/ha (80 units/ac) of chemical N/year
11. Finish cattle earlier	Use Dairy Beef Index (DBI) to produce earlier finishing cattle
10. Reduce age at first calving	Calve heifers at 22 to 26 months and aim for 20% replacement rate
9. Increase milk solids/cow	Milk record, cull poor cows and aim for 305 day lactation
8. Improve dairy herd quality	Use high EBI bulls and increase herd EBI by >€10/year. Use sexed semen to accelerate genetic gain
7. Improve animal health	Create a herd health plan
6. Better grassland management	Weekly farm walk, measure grass and extend grazing season
5. Reduce chemical N by 10kg/ha	Apply lime, incorporate clover and make best use of slurry / FYM
4. Use 100% LESS	Apply slurry in spring / early summer using Low Emission Slurry Spreading Technology (LESS)
3. Build or maintain soil fertility	Continue to use P & K fertilisers such as 18-6:12
2. Apply lime	Identify fields low in pH using soil analysis
1. Use protected urea	Apply protected urea instead of CAN/straight urea

Animal Feeding for the Autumn period

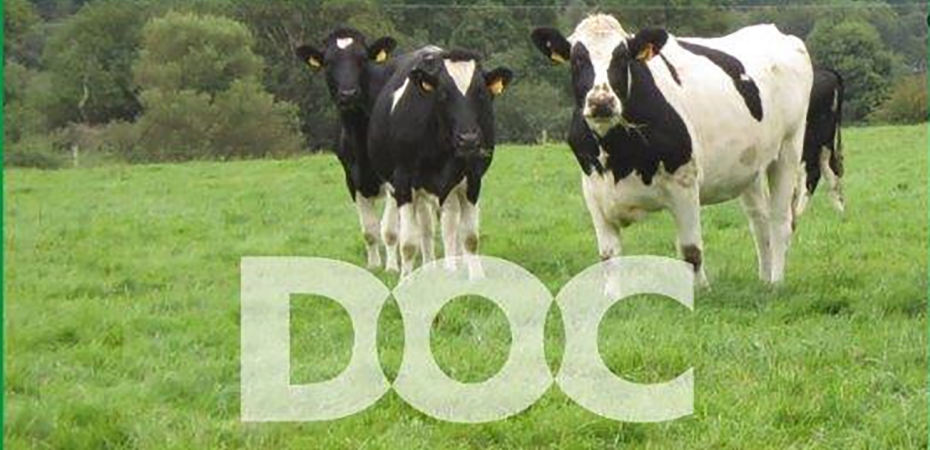
With the days getting shorter and grass growth receding, it is time to think seriously about animal performance. It is no longer acceptable to let animals stand still – they must be growing in order to be available for sale at the earliest opportunity.

- **Weanlings** need to grow good frames to carry a good carcase at 18 – 24 months and replacements need to achieve growth targets in order to survive in the dairy herd. **Sucklermate** is the ideal ration to grow your young animals during this critical period. This cubed ration is made from the finest ingredients and finely balanced and high in protein to get the best out of your growing stock. Frame building should be the aim during the first 12 months. Avoid letting heifers get too fat during this period as it will hinder their performance during the dairy herd.
- **Replacement Heifers** are the future of your herd and need to be treated with care, especially during the first year of life. It is important that they are growing continuously in order to achieve targets for height, weight and condition score at breeding. **Dan O'Connor Feed's 'HeiferMax'** is the most suitable ration for the replacement heifer.
- **Finishing cattle** need high energy, in the right form to put on condition. Too much protein in the overall diet can be a problem, so it is important to choose a ration which will compliment other elements - **INTENSIVE BEEF FINISHER** is formulated to achieve the highest level of performance from a short intensive feeding period.
- **CREEP FEEDING** – Start feeding meal to suckling calves during the month of August . Research has shown gains of up to 1 kg per day and less stress at weanling when weanlings are fed 4 – 8 kg per day. Choose **Sucklermate**, **Greenvale Calf- Rearer**, **Weanling ration** or **HeiferMax** from your local branch of **Arrabawn Co-op** .



DAN O'CONNOR
feeds





Are your Replacement Heifers on Target?

If not now is the time to make sure they are with

HeiferMaX NUT

- 20% protein specifically formulated to maximise growth potential and avoid depositing fat in the udder
- Ideal partner for silage based diets
- Contains both digestible and by-pass protein offering unrivalled growth
- Formulated with elevated levels of Phosphorous to help avoid phosphorous deficiency in Heifers which may cause poorer submission and conception rates
- Contains digestible fibre which enhances rumen development

For further information on a heifer rearing programme please contact
Dan O Connor Feeds, Limerick on 061-414988

SEPTEMBER SPECIALS

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and bulbs

**SAVE
15%**



Drink Bowl stainless steel
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**SAVE
15%**



Drink bowl cast iron
black s/s nose plat

**SAVE
15%**



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www.arrabawnhomevalue.ie

Late Lactation Somatic Cell Count

Figures from AHI earlier this year saw the national average bulk tank SCC rise in 2022 from 2021, despite the rise being small it is the 3rd consecutive year it has rose coming in at 183,000 for 2022. Milk processors have a target of 80% of their milk supply to be less than 200,000 by 2025.

Teagasc research shows that:

- 100,000 to 200,000 cells/ml indicates approximately 20% of the herd are infected.
- 200,000 to 300,000 cells/ml indicates approximately 30% of the herd are infected.
- 300,000 to 400,000 cells/ml indicates approximately 40% of the herd are infected.

The goal is to have less than 15% of your herd with a SCC above 200,000 during lactation, this goal changes to having less than 30% of your herd with a SCC above 200,000 at the end of lactation.

Late lactation is a perfect time to review what you want to do with your cows for their next lactation and make decisions in preparation for drying off. During late lactation it is important to make conscious decisions such as:

1. What cows should be dried off early, and when?
2. Which cows need to be culled based off this year's mastitis records?
3. What cows will/will not be suitable for non-antibiotic dry cow treatment?

The first thing to do is to milk record the whole herd, and identify any high SCC cows i.e., SCC > 200,000 cells/ml. While milk recording might be seen as an extra cost, it can be more expensive

not to as turning a blind eye to cows with a high somatic cell count i.e., sub-clinically infected, could prove to be a very costly exercise. These cows are not producing milk to their full potential because infection has damaged some of the mammary tissue, and to make matters worse will remain a constant source of infection in your herd. Without measuring the SCC of each cow individually, there is no way of knowing which cows are infected. Identify cows with SCC above 250,000 and identify the infected quarters in these cows using CMT and then carry out a milk culture/sensitivity test to identify the causative pathogen. High SCC cows should be marked and milked last to minimise disease spread. If it is not possible to run them as a separate herd, hold them back and milk them as the last row. This will prevent them infecting other cows.

Next remove the source of infection. Consider drying high SCC cows off early, to give them the best chance of curing and to reduce the impact on your bulk tank SCC. The last milk recording of the lactation is the best predictor of intra-mammary infections in late lactation. Therefore, it is very important to do a milk recording in late lactation (within 30 days of dry-off) to inform dry cow therapy decisions. Using SCC to detect infection is more accurate in first lactation cows than in second and greater lactation cows. SCC thresholds of 61,000 cells/ml and 101,000 cells/ml are best to detect infection in heifers and older cows, respectively i.e., the SCC threshold for guiding antibiotic therapy at dry off should be different for first lactation and older cows.

Higher milk yield at last milk recording had a significant association with SCC in the following

lactation, in particular when cows are treated with internal teat sealant alone. Cow characteristics and farm management practices are key for the control and prevention of mastitis and play a role in the impact of dry-off treatment on infections and SCC. Strategies such as reducing cows' energy intake, to reduce milk yield in the lead up to dry-off may be beneficial, particularly when using teat sealant alone. Additionally, cleaning cubicles twice per day and using CMT to identify high SCC cows contribute to lower SCC in the following lactation.

Decisions need to be made around persistently infected cows as they are reservoirs for bacteria and are spreading the infection to uninfected cows. Develop a culling list of cows which have had recurring high SCC and mastitis problems and are unlikely to cure – take age, previous SCC and no. of clinical cases into account. Consider culling cows that have had high SCC for two consecutive lactations, despite antibiotic dry cow therapy. Do not use antibiotic Dry Cow Therapy on cows which you are going to cull immediately. If you treat cows and subsequently decide to cull them, check the meat withholding period before sending to the factory.

Finally, once-a-day milking should ONLY be considered for herds with a SCC less than 200,000 cells/mL. Once-a-day milking can lead to an increase in individual cow SCC, making it necessary to dry off high SCC cows early.

One alternative to milk recording is to use the California Mastitis Test (CMT) on the whole herd but don't forget to record all the results!

If you are interested in signing up to milk record, please contact your milk quality advisor.

Are you interested in a free mastitis consult?

Following the positive feedback from farmers that have participated in CellCheck Dry Cow Consults, the CellCheck team have been developing a consult to help farmers that are having difficulty in managing mastitis and SCC levels on their farm. 2022 saw the introduction of a new TASA-funded in-lactation consult called 'Cell Count Solutions', as a pilot programme. We are happy to announce that further funding has been secured, enabling a national roll out of this consult. As mastitis is a multifactorial problem it benefits from a multidisciplinary approach. This new consult is an opportunity to commence the process of mastitis problem-solving using a multidisciplinary team. It is also important to remember that there is no quick fix to resolving mastitis issues and this consult is a first step in ongoing multi-disciplinary engagement and support.

Although the TASA-funded consult is veterinary-led, a key objective of the consult is to identify other on-farm service providers, such as farm advisors, milk quality advisors and milking machine technicians with whom the farmer already has a relationship and to kick-start a collaborative approach to addressing mastitis. There are no eligibility criteria for farms to participate in this consult - it is targeted at herds with an SCC above 200,000 cells/mL and/or are struggling



to manage mastitis in their herds.

Farmers can register through the AHI website and select their preferred, trained veterinary practitioner. They will also have the option to identify and connect the additional service providers (milk quality advisor, farm advisor, milking machine technician etc.), who will be supplied with a copy of the actions agreed during the initial consult, so they can provide ongoing support to the farmer.

The goals of the consult are to work with you the herdowner, to:

- Initially assess the herd mastitis situation, based on available information and data and propose some early remedial actions.
- Identify and understand the economic opportunity and potential from improving mastitis control on-farm.

- Identify and agree mastitis-related goals.
- Develop a detailed plan, for both further investigation and monitoring of the herd's mastitis situation.

To register for this free consult, click on the link <https://portal.animalhealthireland.ie/CKKTASAHLCFR/>

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Vogelsang Ireland Celebrates its 10th Anniversary

Unveiling Innovative Slurry Management Tech at the National Ploughing Championships

The National Ploughing Championships have always been a special occasion for Irish farmers and farming enthusiasts and this year, Vogelsang Ireland is making it even more memorable. As they proudly celebrate their 10th anniversary, Vogelsang is set to attract visitors to their stand 241 (Row 14, Block 1) with their latest innovations in slurry management technology and anniversary activities.

A Decade of Dedication

For ten years, Vogelsang Ireland has been at the forefront of revolutionising the Irish farming landscape. From creating a new separation design with the XSplit separator to inventing the trailing shoe, they are committed to delivering high-quality, powerful machines for economical and reliable slurry management. Now, at the National Ploughing Championships, they're ready to showcase their innovations.

Meet the Stars: XSplit and UniSpread

The highlight of Vogelsang Ireland's booth is undoubtedly the XSplit separator and UniSpread LESS applicator. These ingenious pieces of machinery have redefined slurry management, making it more efficient and environmentally friendly.

Farmers and contractors can see these game-changing technology at their stand 241 and learn how

they can transform their own farming operations.

Continuous Workshops: ExaCut Precision Distributor Maintenance

Vogelsang Ireland understands the importance of easy maintenance, which is why they are conducting continuous workshops on the ExaCut precision distributor. Farmers, contractors, and users can gain valuable insights into maintaining and performing preventative maintenance. It's an opportunity to extend the lifespan of your equipment and ensure optimal performance.

Exciting Anniversary Festivities

To mark their 10th year anniversary, Vogelsang Ireland has a special treat in store for visitors. Head over to their stand 241 for a chance to win a branded gift basket filled with goodies, a token of their appreciation for the unwavering support they've received from customers and the agricultural community. Swing by to enjoy complimentary cake and tea on the first day of the ploughing. Plus, you can sign up for a free onsite consultation with a personalised analysis of your site and system.

A Comprehensive Showcase

Vogelsang Ireland's booth at the National Ploughing Championships will feature a comprehensive lineup

of products:

- **XSplit Separator:** Experience the innovation that separates solids from slurry, reducing waste and optimising slurry nutrients.
- **UniSpread Spreading Applicator:** See the versatile universal spreading system that folds up neat and tidy for safe, clean transport.
- **RotaCut Macerator MXL:** Discover how this macerator can reliably chop up all fibres and separate out foreign objects in slurry.
- **Service Trailer with ECL and ECQ Demonstrations:** Get hands-on with Vogelsang's equipment and see how it can streamline your operations.
- **PowerFill S Filling Aid:** Learn about this practical aid that speeds up and simplifies your tanker filling process.
- **PTO Rotary Lobe Slurry Pump:** Explore Vogelsang's powerful and reliable slurry pump technology.

Whether you're interested in the latest innovations, maintenance tips, or just celebrating their milestone, Vogelsang Ireland invites you to join them in commemorating a decade of excellence and shaping the future of Irish farming. Want to know more? Visit www.vogelsang.info or on Facebook and Instagram @VogelsangIreland.



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Stop by our stand 241 and learn how to maximise the use of your slurry with the XSplit.

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How to Take a Milk Sample for Culture and Sensitivity

Samples should be taken from Individual cows
NOT BULK TANKS!

How to pick a cow:

- High SCC all year
- Mastitis – new or re occurring case.

When to take Sample:

- Early in the week (Sunday evening – Wednesday)

Materials required:

- Disposable gloves
- Sterile 20ml milk containers (NO TABLETS)
- alcohol/disinfectant wipe, teat disfecant and paper towel

Sampling technique:

1. Label the bottle with cows number before starting
2. Teat dip should be used to clean the teat, remove

3. large/visiable dirt from teat.
3. Use an alcohol wipe to scrub clean the teat end for atleast 5 seconds.
4. Begin sampling at the teat closest to you to avoid reaching across and touching the clean teat (contamintaion).
5. Ensure sampling tube is NOT held directly underneath the cow, as dirt may fall from the udder into the tube. Discard first 2-3 strips of milk on the ground and then fill sample bottle.
6. Take milk from each quarters or just with one infected quarter if known
7. Store the milk in a fridge (4°C) until collection/ drop off.

How to get sample to Nenagh:

- If in Nenagh, drop sample into the fridge found beside Milk Quality Offices.
- Lorry Driver- Can leave samples in a plastic



bag with a note saying “For Culture and Sensitivity testing” out beside the bulk tank. Text or ring your lorry driver asking him to pick up the samples at next collection.

Autumn Sampling

As we enter the last quarter of the year, it’s time to take stock of the ingredients that will influence how your farm will perform next year. It’s important to pay attention to detail and to measure what you have and maximise the return by making decisions based on solid facts.

Silage Feed Analysis - on most farms, silage is the mainstay of the winter-feeding programme, yet its true feed value is taken for granted. Often protein values are less than ideal for cows in the dry period not to mention the effect of low protein on freshly calved cows. Low dietary protein in the dry period can lead to smaller calves and poor-quality colostrum at calving. Low protein in the diet of the milking cow can lead to depressed appetite and lower milk yield.

Silage Mineral Analysis – wouldn’t it be useful if you knew there was a problem - such as milk fever, retained afterbirth or even a dead calf due to slow calving - coming down the line in a few months’ time. You could make plans to deal with the problem! A silage mineral analysis can establish the mineral status of your silage and indicate any deficiencies which may cause problems at calving.

Soil - The single biggest element of your farm is the top 4 inches of soil growing your grass. How often do you check it out for the major elements, Lime, Phosphate and Potash? By taking a soil sample now you will have time plan your fertiliser programme for next year. You can check out the wide range of fertilisers available and select the most suitable

fertiliser for your farm as well as insuring you remain within your Nitrates limits.

Slurry – what’s it worth? The slurry from the dry cow pen will be different from the slurry from the cattle or milking cow pen! If you get a sample tested, you can make a better job of balancing with bought in chemical fertiliser.

Over the coming weeks Arrabawn will be starting this year’s silage sampling campaign where any Arrabawn customer buying feed can receive a Silage Feed Analysis test free of charge.

Talk to your Arrabawn / Dan O’Connor’s Feed rep or contact your local Arrabawn branch to arrange the sampling of your farm.

Tullamore Show August 2023



Stay connected with us!! Check out our website for weekly farming updates. Find us at www.arrabawn.ie Connect with us on social media on Twitter @arrabawncoop and @milk4profit for regular farming updates and promotional offers. We are also on Facebook at Arrabawn Co Op.

For further information or advice on any subjects or products mentioned in this newsletter
Please ring 087 0963869 • Email: farmsupport@arrabawn.ie • Check out our Website: www.arrabawn.ie