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Paddy Purcell (Milk Quality Manager, Arrabawn), Conor Ryan (CEO, Arrabawn), Jonathan Ryan (New Inn, Co. Tipperary) Arrabawn Co-op Overall TBC Winner, Edward Carr (Chairman, Arrabawn), Micheal O'Kelly (CFO, Arrabawn). Photo: Odhran Ducie

GUIDE TO RESPONSIBLE USE OF ANTHELMINTIC TREATMENTS IN DAIRY ANIMALS

Milk suppliers to Arrabawn are regularly sampled throughout the year to verify that there are no anthelmintic residues in milk. Monitoring is carried out by DAFM in parallel to Arrabawn's own internal monitoring programme. Any positive findings will result in suspension of collection while further investigations are carried out. Milk will have to be disposed of where residues are found.

ANTHELMINTIC TREATMENTS DURING THE DRY PERIOD

A number of the anthelmintic products licensed for use in dairy animals are only permitted to be used in the dry period. Of particular importance are the Ivermectin products that may be used to control worms and lice. Ivermectin products require the cow to be dried off for at least 60

days i.e. eight and a half weeks. If the dry period is expected to be shorter than this, ivermectin products must not be used.

NOTE: Combination products Ivomec Super / Animec Super are not licensed for use in animals producing milk for human consumption, including pregnant animals intended to produce milk for human consumption. Closamectin, Curafluke or Levafas Diamond are permitted to be used in pregnant dairy heifers up to a certain stage of pregnancy, depending on route of administration.

Always read the product label and check administration guidelines before use to avoid breaches of milk withdrawal times.

FRESHLY CALVED COWS Following calving, and before allowing any cow's milk into the tank, it is important to check that the milk withholding periods for all antibiotic AND anthelmintic treatments have expired. Some anthelmintic products for use in the dry period have withhold times in excess of two months. This will be critical to take into account when deciding if a product is suitable for usage in your cows if they are expected to have shorter dry periods than this. If you are breeding cows to short gestation length bulls, ensure you double check that the full withhold periods for all anthelmintic and antibiotic products has been observed before putting milk into the bulk tank. Always aim to ensure milk from your farm has zero residues – the safety of food products depends on this.

Trouble shooting for TBC.

By Clare Clabby

Total Bacterial Count (TBC) is an indicator of on-farm general hygiene conditions, milking equipment cleanliness and milk storage (temperature and time). TBC is tested twice per calendar month and show as TBC in your test message. Payment is based on the average of all tests per month.

Payment is adjusted as follows:

Average TBC for month	Payment
< 50,000 [max single test 70,000]	base price
51-75,000	-1.75 c /litre
76-100,000	-3 c /litre
101-200,000	-6 c /litre
201-300,000	-9 c /litre
>301,000	-12 c /litre

TBC can be influence by numerous factors which are briefly outlined below. If you are having issues with your TBC, please contact one of the milk advisors as soon as possible.

Milk cooling systems

Milk should be cooled to under 4°C within 2 hours of milk to minimize bacteria growth. Bulk tank cooling systems should be serviced annually, and milk temperature should be monitored both on the tank and from milk lorry dockets to ensure cooling systems are operating correctly.

A plate cooler system will significantly help in reducing milk temperature and reduces the cost of the bulk tanks cooling system. Adequate water flow to the plate cooler is needed for effective colling. It is recommended a clean filter sock is used before the milking machine is washed to keep debris from catching and building up in the plate cooler. A build-up of debris in the plate cooler acts as a reservoir for bacteria in your milking machine.

Detergents

Caustic and acid based products should be selected for use at alternative milkings in milking machine wash protocols. Detergents should be used according to product instructions and should be in date. Hard water areas may require a stronger concentration of detergents to be effective. If using a caustic liquid product, 21-29% strength is recommended. It is recommended to outline a weekly wash protocol on a chart containing all necessary caustic and acid washes along with hot and cold washes.

Arrabawn Water Quality Improvement Programme

FREE advice to all our suppliers

Confidential service

Focus on areas to improve water quality!

1. *Farmyard Management*
2. *Land Management*
3. *Nutrient Management*

Water Quality Action Plan for each Farm

For more information Contact Michael O Dwyer on **087 2667153**



Funding for Water Protection Measures

Funding is available under the *Water European Innovation Partnership* for measures implemented to reduce the loading of Phosphates, Nitrates and Sediment entering our river network from agricultural sources.

Among the measures for which funding is available are, Hedgerow Establishment, Fencing of Waterbodies, Multi Species Swards, Pasture pumps and solar powered pumps with water troughs, Riparian Buffer Zones, Small Scale Wetland Ponds and Willow Beds, Sediment Traps and Water Bars, Farmyard Sediment Collection Tanks, Culverts and Bridges, Gateway relocation.

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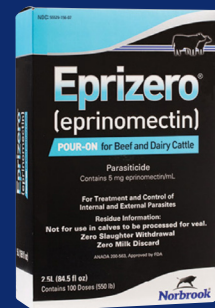
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Sowing multi-species swards

Choosing a site and preparation: Choose grazing paddocks over silage fields and choose paddocks with low weed burden. Avoid replacing areas of existing biodiversity (naturally diverse permanent pasture that is not designated) or unused land on the farm with new multi-species swards. It is important that soil fertility is good i.e. pH 6.2-6.5 and Index 3+ for P & K. For details of the seed mixture recommended for this measure see: gov.ie - Multi Species Sward Measure (www.gov.ie)

Weed Management: Address weed issues with herbicide before sowing. No post-emergence spray can be applied to the whole field once MSS / clover swards are established. After reseeding, the only methods for weed control are either spot spraying/weed licking/wiping (using a spray that targets the most prevalent weed e.g. for thistles use "Thistlex"), mechanically picking/removing weeds or regular topping to reduce annual weeds. Direct drilling results in lower weed emergence as does good establishment.

Method of Reseeding: Similar to grassland reseeding, best conditions for sowing are without drought or frost, and ideally a warm, moist seedbed (~10°C) between April and August.

Plough/ Till / Sow

- o Spray-off the existing sward as per normal reseed. Then cut the existing sward as tight as possible while complying with the prescribed interval between spraying and cutting.
- o Cultivate soil as you choose (disc/harrow/plough)
- o Lime should be applied, if necessary. If using minimum cultivation apply 5 tonne of lime per hectare to the desiccated sward pre-cultivation. If ploughing address any lime requirement post-ploughing.
- o Apply normal seed bed fertiliser at sowing (P and K with N) based on

soil test results.

- o Sow the multi-species seed mix at a rate of 12kg/acre (30kg/ha) at approx. 1 cm deep (choose seeder carefully to avoid seed separation).
- o Roll to get fine firm seed bed and good soil and seed contact.
- o Allow 6-8 weeks before the first grazing to let herbs establish strong taproots, only graze if new plants are strong enough to withstand grazing

Direct drilling into stale seed bed/minimum cultivation

This is environmentally beneficial because it retains more soil organic matter than a full reseed.

- o Graze/cut off existing sward as tight as possible,
- o Spray-off with glyphosate as per normal reseed,
- o Comply with the interval between spraying and grazing/cutting prescribed on the herbicide label.
- o Sow at approx. 1 cm deep (choose drill carefully to avoid seed separation)
- o Roll to ensure soil and seed contact
- o Seed bed fertiliser and lime as normal for reseed
- o Allow 6-8 weeks before the first grazing to let herbs establish strong taproots, only graze if new plants are strong enough to withstand grazing

Over-sowing into an existing sward

Over-sowing into an existing sward is another option but can be less reliable than a full reseed. It has the advantage of being cheaper, taking fields out of production for a shorter duration, and better protecting soil carbon. When done correctly (and with favourable conditions), it can be very successful. Note that the principles are almost identical to those for over-sowing of clover into a grass sward.

Summer Scour Syndrome

"Summer Scour Syndrome" is the latest disease to hit young calves grazing. But what is it and how can it be prevented? Here are some simple tips to understand and prevent this disease in your herd. The disease is becoming more prevalent in Irish Herds in recent years.

When: Usually occurs in calves a month or two at grass after weaning or a sudden change in diet- moving from older/stemmy grass to large volumes of green/lush grass. (flush of grass after drought)

Signs: Ill-thrift, scour (watery brown), losing weight and going backwards. They may seem very empty, hunched back and dull brown coats. It doesn't seem to be contagious, but a whole group can suffer from scour. Sometimes ulcers can be seen in their mouth from acid production and lack of rumination. However, care must be taken to observe for other clinical diseases such as coccidiosis, worms etc. as the calves will be more susceptible to picking up a secondary disease.

Why: Diet is the main influencing factor. The rumen takes a couple months to develop fully and is a very sensitive to sudden changes in diet. The bacteria in the rumen take about 2 weeks to adjust to a new diet. Spring grass is high in oils (CLA- conjugated linoleic acid), which can be quite difficult to digest and adapt to. When the bacteria are disrupted a change in stomach pH



and fermentation occurs in the rumen, causing gas and further acidosis. Spring and green grass is often low in fibre which is key in supporting good rumen health.

How to Prevent:

1. If feeding a large volume of concentrates, spilt the feed in two. If eating large volume of concentrate at once, a calf will feel very full for a couple hours. Then eat a large volume of grass later in day. If grass is leafy this can create acidosis, causing scour. Ideally spilt large volumes of concentrates in two to encourage an even grass intake throughout the day.
2. Provide roughage- clean straw, hay/haylage or a field with stemmy/older pastures. Roughage encourages chewing, creating saliva which works as an antacid, also roughage is slowly broken down encourage correct rumen function and

development.

3. Stemmy older pastures provide good levels of roughage for calves. Avoid low covers of lush grass for 8-10 weeks.
4. High starch feed should be avoided in affected calves.
5. Provide mineral licks to avoid mineral deficiencies in particular copper.
6. Does a Faecal test for worms to check worm burden or coccidiosis. Ruling out a secondary disease/
7. Buffers such as RumBuff can be added to feed to counteract acid production, can complement fibre in the diet nicely (such as hay/straw).
8. Very badly affected calves should be brought back indoors and feed milk and bland diet of hay and small amount concentrates.
9. Avoid abrupt weaning, allow rumen and digestive tract to adjust to new diet gradually.



Low Milk Urea Levels in Milk

Milk Urea shows up as U in your test messages with milk quality results.

Milk urea can be used to monitor protein-energy balance at rumen level. For high-input systems (e.g. < 60% of the diet is pasture), bulk milk MU levels can help decide when to check the diet for an excess or deficiency of protein.

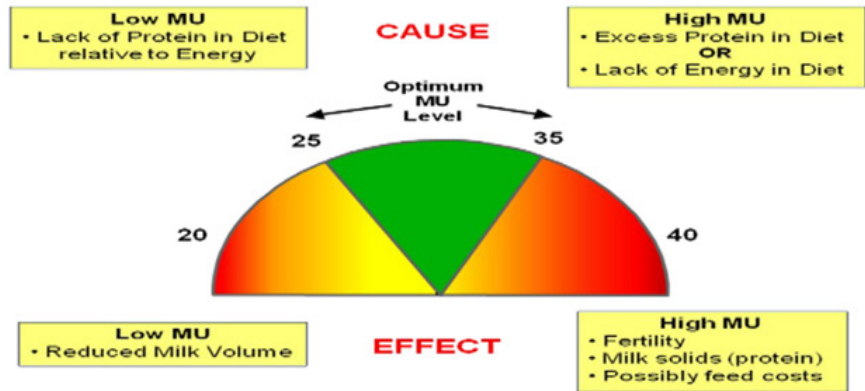
If protein is in excess of recommended levels, this can allow expensive protein supplements to be removed from the diet. However, in pasture-based systems, MU levels are usually higher than during the indoor period/systems due to the greater amount of good quality pasture high crude protein (20-25 %) in the diet. Thus, manipulating MU is very limited.

In the last few weeks, some milk suppliers have experienced low milk urea levels below the optimum level indicative of low protein intake. A milk urea level between 15 and 20 indicates that the diet is marginally sufficient in protein. Below 15 may impact on milk performance if prolonged. This is due to slow growth rates seen on those farms resulting in low nitrogen uptake of the plants, thus lower crude protein in grass.

Usually, high urea levels are a concern particularly around breeding. However, high MU concentrations are not consistently proven to be detrimental to cow fertility. Cows can adapt to continuous high dietary protein without any decrease in reproductive performance but sudden increases and levels above 35 have been shown in some research to be linked with embryonic death and the calving to conception interval.

Milk Urea Level from Bulk Milk Samples

Indicating Energy & Protein balance in the cow's diet



With milder weather over a last few weeks a growth burst is on the cards, MU will rise significantly due to an increase in grass growth rates and nitrogen up take by the plant. If growth is low on farm and currently feeding high level of concentrates or buffer feeding slowly reduce the feeding level as growth picks up to cushion the surge in nitrogen uptake. Ensuring sufficient energy is available in the diet to deal with the excess dietary protein digestion will be important to improve nitrogen utilisation

and prevent the cow using her body reserves as an energy source during this critical breeding period. Excessive dietary protein digestion creates an energy cost. The protein broken down in the rumen results on ammonia. Part of this ammonia is used directly in the rumen for microbial protein synthesis and the excess diffuses out of the rumen and is detoxified in the liver in urea. The detoxification process uses up a lot of energy and so draws energy away from milk solid production and cow fertility improvement.



Interested in Milk Recording?

- Improve Your Herd's Profitability
- Monitor Somatic Cell Count (SCC)
- Identify Performance of Individual Cows
- Milk Pregnancy Testing & Johnes Testing

A minimum of 4 milk recordings is required to give you more accurate information for herd management decisions

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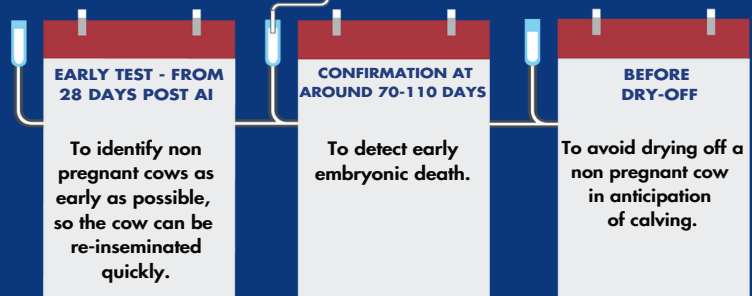
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Mastitis and SCC control involves knowing your cows and their SCC levels and managing milking to control this.

Acting as soon as you notice SCC rising is key. This indicates that infection levels are rising, which is a negative for cow health and milk value and processability.

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.

So, if you have elevated SCC on farm, the next steps are to milk record, use the CMT to identify infected quarters, and then carry out some culturing and sensitivity on milk from the infected quarters. That will give insights into which cows, which quarters are infected and then you can review your options for:

- The Herd
- The individual cows

Once you have identified your infected cows from your uninfected cows you should be able to prioritise the management of both groups. You should be able to milk uninfected cows as normal—but it is key to protect from



infection. However, cows can vary quite a bit in SCC and infection status so milk recording on a regular basis and using a CMT will be key to preventing infection of this group of cows. Focus on:

1. Teat Disinfection
2. Grouping of animals based on SCC readings.
3. Clean Gloves/Aprons while milking.
4. Clean and fresh clusters

With the infected cows it is critical to not allow cross-contamination between this group of cows and the uninfected group of cows. This can

be managed by treating cows (consult with your vet), use of the CMT and drying off with long-acting treatments.

The new Cell Count Solutions consultation is available free of charge for anyone whose SCC is > 200,000 cells/ml and allows you to take advantage of a DAFM funded

consultation with a specialist vet and advisory team. Enrol here Cell Check TASA Cell Count Solutions Consult Registration - Custom Portal (animalhealthireland.ie) or through your milk quality advisor.

Milk Recording is a tool which is vital on every farm to make data-based decisions! So why not start this year?

1. Reducing bulk tank SCC will be easily seen as cows contributing to the high value can be easily removed. 2 or 3 cows in a 100-cow herd can drive up the overall value

very easily.

2. Earn more for surplus heifers or cows being sold from by having the data to back up their EBI's and potential milk supply.
3. By knowing the amount of milk solids being produced you can feed more accurately according to their production values and removing cows with high SCC will stop the spread of disease in the herd and ensure udders are healthy.
4. Breed from the best cows only, use the best bulls on your best cows to produce great calves. Don't breed from poor performers! This can only be known from milk recording regularly.
5. EBI values are great but don't always give the full picture. Two cows with the same EBI's can vary hugely in milk volumes produced. One cow may have higher milk solid values while another cow with the same EBI could be made up from fertility values.
6. Identify cows to culls follows on from breeding decisions. The bottom few cows in the herd should be ideally removed each year to allow for younger cows with better genetics to enter the herd. Cows with millionaire values for SCC have no place being in the herd and should be shipped out!

Reduce bulk tank SCC

Add value to animals

Improve Yield and solids

Breeding decisions- breed best

Accurate EBI's

Identify best and cows to cull

Benefits of Milk Recording

Dairy by herdwatch.

✓ Herdwatch links with Arrabawn for **bulk tank milk data**, linking with **cow performance** for each collection

✓ Take care of **Bord Bia compliance**, no more evenings spent on paperwork

✓ Herdwatch will be at the **open day** on **June 21st** with **new sign up and upgrade offers**

Download the FREE App

Simplifying Livestock.



Eoin Greene and Eoin Toohey from the Toomevara branch attending the Arrabawn AGM in the Abbey Court Hotel, Nenagh. Photo: Odhran Ducie



Sean Daly and Adrian Hctor from the Birr branch attending the Arrabawn AGM in the Abbey Court Hotel, Nenagh. Photo: Odhran Ducie