

Where to go from here?

The story so far this year has been anything but simple for all types of farming. Not only have we worked through some of the toughest weather conditions known for generations, but we have been subject to a range of policy changes, new regulations and continued market fluctuations.

June marks the summer solstice and the longest and brightest days of the year. This offers us a chance to take a moment in the evenings to consider how much we have achieved so far this year in spite of everything; crops are planted and growing, cows are bulled, cattle are thriving out on grass, lambs and calves are grazing, and the countryside is in full leaf. It is also a good time to look forward and plan for the coming winter.

How did first cut silage go, will I need more ground for second cut? Where am I at with milk production compared to other years, do I need to squeeze more production from the back end of the year? Are my cattle on target for selling as stores in the fall, should I do anything to push them on? Where am I at financially? Will I be able to make time to get away for a few days? Will I take a chance at reseeding a paddock?

Quite often the simple act of making a list is enough for us to realise not only what work is ahead of us, but also where pressure and stress is coming from. Having a list allows us to delegate some work, albeit it hired in or within the farm, thus freeing up time for further planning and perhaps some important down time. For help with budgeting forage and planning for the autumn/winter ahead, please contact your local technical sales representative.



Lameness in Cows

Following one of the most difficult weather periods in livestock farming, we are noticing an increase in the incidence of lameness in dairy and beef farms.

The root causes are both infectious sources such as Interdigital dermatitis (IDD) known as Mortellaro, and non-infectious sources like white line disease and sole bruising (which can later lead to sole ulceration). The average cost attributed to a case of lameness was recently outlined by Conneely and Ryan* to between €210 and €536 per case depending on the disease. The authors went on to say that this could cost a 100-cow farm between €4,000 and €14,000 depending on the severity of lameness in the herd.

These costs are incurred from treatment and labour costs along with significant loss in production and an increase in animal culling. Furthermore, the visual impact of lame cows in a herd is often detrimental to a farmer's morale, and watching these cows walking last on the roadway or paddock everyday takes away some of the joy in good farming practice. (see overleaf)



*Conneely, M; Ryan, E, Veterinary Ireland Journal, April 2024



Lameness in Cows (Ctnd)



So what can you do to improve lameness on your farm?

1: Identify the type of disease and the severity of lameness in the herd. This will require a vet or hoof trimmer to turn up feet on all lame cows from mild to severe cases. A gait score on the farm is also helpful in understanding the overall severity of lameness on a herd level.

2: Treatment plan. After diagnosing the lameness carry out the correct course of action, which may be a trim, or a foot bathing routine, or antibiotics and anti-inflammatories.

3: Decide on the follow-up treatment and timeline, book the trimmer or vet for a revisit before they leave the yard (normally within two weeks).

4: Foot bathing will minimise the spread of infectious disease while helping to improve hoof integrity and is recommended even if the incidence of severely lame cows is low.

5: Reducing the degree of body condition score loss after calving and during difficult grazing conditions will reduce the incidence of sole bruising and ulceration.

6: Improving and maintaining roadways (as pictured above) is a major factor for reducing lameness, however allowing cows to walk at their own pace is also a critical factor.

7: Putting your cows on a supplement that specifically targets hoof development. Bretts Performance Improvement Pack, (PIP) includes high levels of protected zinc and biotin to improve the development and integrity of hoof horn so cows develop stronger harder hooves. PIP is integral to our flagship range of feed such as Maxi-Breeder 14%, Supreme Breeder 14%, PIP 15% and Milkwell 18%.



ProClova XL

ProClova XL is a new product which has been developed by Corteva to provide safe and effective control of broadleaf weeds in grass and clover swards. The product comes in a dual pack. The first bottle contains 250 grams in granular form of the product ProClova, which contains the new active Rinskor. The second bottle contains 500ml of the XL adjuvant that is required to be applied with ProClova in all circumstances. The product is suitable for red clover swards but must be applied the year after establishment.

Maximum Rates for ProClova XL

Sward type	Rate full pack	Rate per ha	Water volume
Newly sown ley	1 pack 3ha/ 7.4 acre	85g PC+ 165ml XL	200l/ha
Leys with >90% ground cover	1 pack 2 ha/ 5 acres	125g PC +250ml XL	200l/ha
Established grass	1 pack 2 ha/ 5 acres	125g PC +250ml	200l/ha



The image shows docks treated with ProClova on the right hand side, in an established grass sward. The area to the left of the red line has not been treated.



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