

Dermot Heaney



I reseeded 12ha on the milking platform this year, which included white and red clover. The seed mix used in Solohead research farm; it should perform well at the shoulders of the year. Just over 4ha were also reseeded on an out block with red clover. I planted 20m of hedging on the milking platform. We put in 2M wide spur roadways on the milking platform after seeing them at the Ballyhaise open day. These should help maximise grazing at the shoulders of the year. This year we grew 10.5T with 179kg N.

Breeding was slightly disappointing as we had 12% empty rate after 10 weeks of breeding. If I had continued for a week or two this figure might be lower, but I would rather keep calving compact for the spring. Sexed semen was used on selected cows and heifers with conception rates of 49% and 53%, respectively. Some animals received a beef straw from day one of breeding. I bought in 15 in-calf heifers this week to ensure numbers for next year. Cows were culled due to TB last December.

Cows are currently out full time but receiving 3-4kg of silage/day at the head barrier after evening milking. I hope to keep them out until mid-November with buffer feeding, weather dependent. Cows are performing well doing 1.7kg/MS.

Kieran McDermott



I reseeded 5 acres this year including red and white clover in the mix. Clover struggled this year, I noticed it especially around May, where I would normally have cut back on nitrogen I had to go with another round as grass was not performing.

Breeding ran for 11 weeks, I used sexed and conventional dairy AI on selected cows and heifers, the remainder got beef AI. I used some Belgian blues and Hereford bulls with high DBI.

I have hedges to plant this backend for Acres and plan to resurface some farm roadways while cows are in to give them time to settle.

Cows are in by night this week and there is about 2 weeks of grass ahead of them until they are fully housed. I have enough fodder for the winter. Cows are doing 16 litres at 4.11 protein and 4.64 fat.