

# “Your education, your future, just better”

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Welcome to final weekly newsletter of 2021 where we give an overview of college and farm activities. More detailed information on any aspect of the newsletter may be obtained by contacting us directly by phone or email.

## Dairy Herd

All cows are now dried off. Last week Level 5 Certificate in Agriculture students dosed the cows with Endofluke for the treatment of liver fluke. Dectospot pour-on was also applied to prevent both sucking and biting lice. The incalf dairy heifers are put through the milking parlour twice per week and on their way back to the cubicle house they walk through the footbath. Preparations are well underway for Calving 2022. Calving pens are currently being installed in the group calving shed.



## Drystock Enterprise

Forward store heifers which were purchased on December 3<sup>rd</sup> were clipped, treated for liver fluke and lice during the week by our students. The students also weighed all the beef cattle during the week. The home bred steers have an average weight of 575 Kgs while the purchased steers have an average weight of 502 Kgs. The purchased beef heifers have an average weight of 501 Kgs. All finishing cattle are February to April 2020 born. Cattle are currently being fed 4 Kgs of concentrates per head per day plus 75% DMD silage. The students also weighed the bucket reared beef weanlings during the week. They average 248 Kgs in

weight. They are penned according to weight and are being fed between 2 and 3 Kgs of concentrates per head per day. Ewes are now housed. On Tuesday the students dosed them with Endospec SC to treat for worms and liver fluke. On Wednesday the ewes and ewe lambs were winter shorn. This provides more room in the sheep house, increases the live weight of the new born lamb and makes suckling by the new born lamb easier.



## Soil Sampling and Analysis

We have put in place a comprehensive plan on the college farm to grow more grass. This involves establishing the nutrient status of the soil, having a nutrient management plan in place, weekly grass covers and annual reseeding. On Thursday, the entire farm was GPS soil sampled by Farmeye having been soil sampled 12 months previously. This year's soil sampling will test for pH, Potassium and Phosphorus levels. We have also sampled to analyse the Carbon levels in the soils. Soil sampling will now become an annual feature on the farm. This approach to improving soil fertility and grassland management is reaping the environmental, economic and sustainability rewards. In 2016 we were growing on average 8 tonnes of grass DM per hectare. This compares to an average of 16 tonnes of grass DM grown per hectare in 2021 with the top paddock growing 20 tonnes per hectare.



### Student Visits & College Activities

On Tuesday, Leaving Certificate Agricultural Science students from the Salesian Secondary School in Pallaskenry were given a tour of the college's dairy, beef and sheep enterprises. A very important date in the calendar of our Level 5 Certificate in Agriculture course is the **Champions for Safety** event. On Wednesday, we were delighted to organise this practical event for our students. Pat Griffin from the Health and Safety Authority spoke to the students about farm accidents and fatalities. Michael Murray from ESB Networks gave a very informative presentation on the dangers involving electricity on the farm. Ciaran Roche from FBD Insurance spoke about safety involving tractors, machinery and quad bikes. Teagasc's Health and Safety specialist John McNamara was also present on the day and spoke about livestock and livestock handling facilities. Liam O'Keeffe is a Co. Cork dairy farmer and he shared his own survivor story with our students.



Representatives from ABP Meats spoke with our students on Tuesday about their new Advantage Beef scheme.

On Wednesday, we were delighted to welcome Dr. Anne-Marie Butler, Teagasc Head of Education and Dr. Stan Lawlor, Teagasc Director of Knowledge Transfer to our college. We look forward to working alongside them and wish them well in their new roles.

### Photo of the Week



Certificate in Agriculture student Conor Reid from Co. Wicklow busy shearing ewes on the college farm during the week.

### Group Visits

We are now open to accepting visiting groups, be that schools, groups of farmers or individuals. Contact Mary in admin at 061-393100 and we will be happy to tailor a package to suit your needs.

### Social Media

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and TikTok for daily updates on college and farm activities.

**We wish all our readers a peaceful and safe Christmas and our next newsletter will be on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

### Contact Details

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