



Lakeland Dairies/Teagasc Joint Programme Update

A three year Lakeland Dairies/Teagasc Joint Programme commenced at the start of the year. The two main objectives of the programme are improving efficiency of milk production and planning for sustainable and profitable expansion. A team of 4 joint programme advisors are delivering these messages through a series of interactive workshops, farm events and individual farm consultations. The first series of workshops, 'Improving Milk Protein', was rolled out during April and May. In total, over 200 Lakeland suppliers attended one of 15 workshops that were held across the region.

Milk Protein Workshop- Summary

Why Improve Milk Protein?

- A+B-C Milk payment system rewards high solids production and 1 KG of protein worth more than 2.5 times of 1 KG of Fat.

	Lakeland Average	Lakeland Top 10%
Protein %	3.29	3.43
Fat %	3.98	4.2
Milk Price C/L	32.9	34.7

Difference in milk receipts on a typical 60 cow herd (5,000L) between Lakeland top 10% for 2012 and Lakeland average for 2012 was 5,400 (1.8C/L) which equates to €90 per cow per lactation.

- Methods to increase Protein are **FREE**.

What's causing the difference between herds?

Breeding – Genetic Merit for milk protein (60%)

Feeding – Forage quality, Supplementation (30%)

Management – Calving pattern, Dry cows, Heifers (10%)

Breeding for Improved Protein

- Select bulls of moderate milk kgs (e.g. **100kgs**) but high combined solids of **+25Kgs**. Aim for a protein figure of at least + **0.11** and a fertility index of **€120**.
- Aim to use AI of over 80% of the milking herd and at least once on maiden heifers. Where dairy stock bulls are used, check EBI figures to ensure high protein %

Does breeding for milk protein work?

Cow A (PD of 0.11% for P) 5570L @4.10%F and 3.56%P			Cow B (PD of -0.04% for P) 5620L @3.80%F and 3.09%P		
A	204Kgs @ €7.68	=€1568	A	179Kgs @ €7.68	= €1373
+B	235Kgs @ €2.80	= €658	+B	220Kgs @ €2.80	= €616
-C	5570L @ €0.035	= - €195	-C	5620L @ €0.035	= - €196
Milk receipts for 2012		€2031			€1793
Difference		€238			

- Cow A delivered 50 less litres but delivered €238 more in milk receipts for 2012

Feeding for improved milk protein

- Energy is first limiting nutrient not protein. Try to get as much energy as possible into the cows' diet
- Springtime: Get early grass in diet and fill energy gaps through high energy supplements.
- Summer: Graze at correct growth stage (8-10cm) and hold rotation length. Remove grass surpluses as round bales and supplement with energy feeds in time of deficits.
- Autumn: Increase rotation length and close paddocks from the first week of October to set the farm up for the following spring.
- Winter: High quality silage for milking cows (72-75% DMD) and high energy concentrate

Farm Visits

Suppliers who attended the workshops are currently being visited on a one to one basis to develop a breeding and feeding plan to improve milk solids on their farm. Any supplier who could not attend the workshops, but would be interested in discussing their milk protein on-farm can contact one of the joint programme team.

Milk Protein Farm walks.

To follow-up on these workshops a series of farm walks are planned for the area, focussing on:

- Why protein is so important to the supplier and the manufacturer
- Breeding for milk protein
- Mid-season grassland management and feeding to promote milk protein production
- Calculating fodder supplies for next winter

Thinking of reseeding?

Having visited a number of farms after the protein workshops, it is clear that significant damage has been done to grazing swards due to difficult weather conditions in the last year. A large amount of reseeding will be required to rectify this. The joint programme advisors are available to help with reseeding plans with suppliers and to discuss best practice in delivering a highly productive reseed.

Joint Programme coordinators

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If further information is required on any of the issues contact one of the joint programme coordinators above.