

Hamilton's Organic Farm

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### Nitrates Regulations - Derogation applications for 2011

Farmers need to decide now if they need a Derogation for 2011 which would allow them to operate above the general limit of 170kg of Nitrogen per hectare from livestock manure up to a limit of 250 kg.

Derogation applicants approved in 2010 will receive in the post shortly the Application Form for 2011 along with their Nitrogen and Phosphorus statements for 2010. The forms will also be on the Department's website [www.agriculture.gov.ie](http://www.agriculture.gov.ie) via the Nitrates Information link. In addition they will also be available from their local Department trained Farm Advisory System (FAS) advisor. Farmers may also contact the Nitrates Section at 053-9163444 or their Local Office for an application form.

Derogation applicants must have a fertiliser plan on their farm by 1st March and have all their land soil tested at least once every four years. The closing date for receipt of Derogation applications is **Thursday 31 March 2011**. Late applications will **not** be accepted.

Derogation farmers approved in 2010 are reminded that their fertiliser accounts, along with **copies only** of receipts, dockets, invoices etc are due in to the Nitrates Section of the Department by the **31st March 2011**.

email: [info@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:info@agriculture.gov.ie)  
[www.agriculture.gov.ie](http://www.agriculture.gov.ie)



Donegal

February 2011

# CREAMERY NEWSLETTER

BALLYRAINE, LETTERKENNY, CO. DONEGAL. TEL. (074) 9121766, FAX (074) 9124823

## JANUARY MILK PRODUCTION REMAINS STRONG - UP 14.8%

Milk production in Donegal in January continued strong with a 14.8% rise over January '10 (not butterfat adjusted). This increase has been influenced by a better milk price, extended cow lactations and better quality fodder. With these increases the Creamery is NOW in an over quota position. If this continues at approximately 15% per month we estimate an over production of 5 million litres at the end of March.

Some steps have already been taken to reduce this liability, but we advise milk producers to check their own total production against their quota as each producer is responsible for levy on quota. Monies may be deducted from Suppliers who are extremely over quota next month.

Nationally the Department have confirmed that at the end of January the quota position is -1.88% (was 2.35% at end of Dec '10) Under quota.

With 2 months still to go and taking into account the continued increase in milk production, it still remains a distinct possibility of the Country ending over quota at the end of March.

## U.K. MILK PRODUCTION UP BY 3.93% TO DATE

Latest figures released by the R.P.A. show that January '11 milk production was up by 54.1 million litres (+5.14%) not butterfat adjusted as compared to January '10.

This increase has been a continuing trend since May '10 and gives a cumulative increase for the period (April to Jan) of 421.4 million litres (+3.93%)

The butterfat for January was 4.03% down from 4.11% in January '10. The cumulative Butterfat % for 2010/11 is 3.94% as compared to 3.98% for the same period last year.



Donegal Estates  
Estate Agents

## ATTENTION FARMERS

Donegal Estates offer a professional and confidential service in the following areas:

- Valuation for transfer, taxation, compulsory purchase etc.
- Site Sales
- Farm sales and lettings
- Property Management
- Auctions of stock and machinery

### WANTED

We have a requirement for land to let on short and long term lease agreements. Please contact our office to discuss.



CONTACT FOR FURTHER DETAIL  
Donegal Estates MIPAV  
Ballyraine  
Letterkenny  
Co. Donegal

E: [dermot@donegalestates.ie](mailto:dermot@donegalestates.ie)  
M: 086-8349407  
T: 074-9194408/9  
F: 074-9124926  
W: [www.donegalestates.ie](http://www.donegalestates.ie)

### DONEGAL FRIESIAN BREEDERS CLUB

ANNUAL MARCH SHOW AND SALE  
OF  
75 PEDIGREE AND NON PEDIGREE  
SPRINGING AND CALVED HEIFERS

IN  
RAPHOE LIVESTOCK MART  
ON  
WEDNESDAY 2ND MARCH, 2011

SHOW AT 11.00 A.M.  
SALE AT 1.00 P.M.

### FOR SALE

35 SURPLUS DAIRY STOCK  
AT RAPHOE LIVESTOCK MART  
ON  
THURSDAY 24TH FEBRUARY, 2011  
AT 12.30 P.M.

### Dairy Herd Certificates

If you are having a Herd Test soon remember to have your Vet complete your Herd Certificate for you. Certificates are now available from the Letterkenny office.

### FOR SALE

Quantity of Springing Friesian Heifers due to Calve end of February/March Also Mating Heifers.

For Further Details Contact  
074 91 51062 after 7.00p.m. or 087 0639643

### FOR SALE

4 SPRINGING BRITISH FRIESIAN HEIFERS DUE FEBRUARY/MARCH.

For Further Details Contact 086 - 1660185



## 2015 – BREEDING HEIFERS FOR PROFIT

The Steering Group of the Ballyhaise dairy herd research programme has initiated a campaign this spring to increase the quality and quantity of dairy heifers in the region. This group consists of representatives of the four Co-ops in the region – Connacht Gold, Donegal Creameries, Lakelands and Town of Monaghan.

With the abolition of milk quota in 2015, it is essential that sufficient numbers of quality heifers are available in this region. Breeding decisions this spring are the starting point for the type of heifers entering the herd in this post quota era.

Research work from Moorepark is showing that up to €1,000 per hectare is being lost from poor fertility in dairy herds. These losses occur due to later calving dates, more spread out calving, lower milk yield, extra labour, extra breeding costs and extra veterinary costs.

There are three issues in this region that require urgent attention at farm level:

### 1. Number of Heifers

Sufficient heifers are needed for normal replacement rate, planned expansion and the option to sell surplus heifers. This region needs to increase the number of heifers reared per 100 cows to satisfy their requirements. While data from the National Farm Survey show that 90% dairy farms are using AI – the same data shows that not enough dairy replacement inseminations are being used. It takes approximately 5.5 straws to generate one milking heifer. Remember, half will repeat and half will be males before any losses are incurred.

Therefore, if you want 30 milking heifers in 2014, you need to use minimum of 165 straws this spring.

**Message:** Decide heifer numbers you require in 2014. Multiply by 5.5 to give number of straws needed to use this spring.

### 2. Quality of Heifers

Nationally the dairy herd has good genetics for milk production. The weakness is fertility, particularly in the northern counties which have an average fertility sub-index (SI) of only €21. Heifer calves born should have a fertility sub-index of at least €70. To achieve this – you need to select a team of bulls which are at least €100 of fertility sub-index.

e.g., €40 cow fertility SI + €100 bull fertility SI  
= €70 Daughter fertility SI

**Message:** Use a team of bulls with at least €100 fertility sub-index in their EBI.

### 3. Rearing Heifers

Data from ICBF show that of the dairy heifer calves born in 2007, only 48% of these calved between 22 – 26 months of age. By 36 months only 73% had calved. This suggested that a lot of calves do not reach target weights. The key target weight for calving at two years of age is mating weight. For Friesians, this should be 330kg, which is usually in mid-April for Spring-born herds. These heifers should calve at 550kg. This is equivalent to an average daily gain of 0.7kg / day over two years. Heifers born a month later must gain closer to 0.75kg. There is no space for a store period when rearing heifers. The first year is crucial.

**Message:** Start monitoring heifer performance now. Remember, heifers must gain an average of 0.7kg / day from birth to calving.

This is the first of four Newsletters dealing with “2015 – Breeding Heifers for Profit”. The next Newsletter will deal with AI bull selection.

**Farm Walks:** A series of farm walks will be held in each Co-op area in late March focusing on bull selection and heifer rearing. Dates and venues to be advertised in next month's newsletter

## BRANCH OFFERS DEC

From Friday 18/02/11 to Friday 18/03/11

### SOUTHERN STORES

Multiject 24 pk - €29.00

#### OFFER OF MONTH

Immuboo dry cow mineral High spec buy 8bags get 1 FREE Only €5.00/cow to feed for 2 months @ 100g/head/day

All trace bolus-2 bolus covers animal for 6 months Only €5.50/cow

### NORTHERN IRELAND STORES

High iodine all trace bolus 10pk €50.00 no vat

Calium milk fever bottles 12pk €29.00+vat

2 ply kim wipes (bale of 6) €20.00 +vat

Closamectin pour fluke and worm special deals in-store

Contact Malcolm /Brian 04882244184

## Donegal Creameries Retail Stores

NOW STOCKING PARLOUR PAINT  
CHLORINATED RUBBER



AVAILABLE IN BLUE & WHITE  
ASK IN STORE FOR SPECIAL OFFERS



## News Release

15 February 2011  
NA11.02.486

## Grass Silage Quality in 2010

by Kyla Whiteside  
Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute, Hillsborough

The analysis of grass silage for the 2010 season by the Hillsborough Feeding Information System (HFIS) Service is nearing completion. To date we have analysed 9500 forage samples with average results indicating an improvement in quality particularly in relation to the first cut silages. The better weather conditions in early May played a role in the ability of farmers to harvest grass at optimum condition and on suitable ground. Farmers who took advantage of the good weather conditions to harvest leafy material have benefited from some very good quality first cut silages. Overall the Crude Protein and Metabolisable Energy averages of first cuts are higher this year compared to last year.

Later into the summer the weather conditions changed leading to poorer growth and harvesting conditions during late June and July giving farmers increased difficulties with ensiling over this period. Improvements in weather conditions during August produced some good quality third cut silages.

Information submitted with the Donegal Creameries samples showed the 14th June to be the average cutting date for first cut silage with the 9th August being the average date for second cut silages.

Table 1 highlights the main differences between Donegal 2009 and 2010 silages with the countrywide average given by comparison.

Table1. Comparison of silage quality and predicted animal performance for 2009 and 2010 Donegal Creameries silages and countrywide averages for 2010.

	DONGEAL 2009		DONGEAL 2010		COUNTRYWIDE 2010		
	1st cut	2nd cut	1st cut	2nd cut	1st cut	2nd cut	3rd cut
Dry Matter (%)	24.5	23.2	25.8	23.0	28.5	25.8	28.7
Protein (% DM)	11.0	11.0	11.3	9.2	12.2	12.4	14.0
Metabolisable Energy (MJ/kg DM)	10.4	10.1	10.8	10.5	11.0	10.4	10.7
DMD (% DM)	68	67	70	68	71	67	70
Intake potential	87	81	90	85	97	89	95
Milk yield sustained @ 0 kg conc	10	8	12	9	14	10	13

The main points being:

- Good weather during May was reflected in an increase in the overall quality of first cut samples. 20% of the first cut silages submitted by Donegal Creameries were predicted to sustain 15 litres of milk at zero concentrate.
- Donegal protein levels have also followed the national trend for first cuts increasing on last year, although the opposite has been shown for the second cut samples where the Donegal protein levels have dropped significantly from last year. This could be explained by various reasons including delay of cutting dates, possible reduced application of bag fertiliser and slurry due to conditions and cost and/or leaching losses.
- Digestibility has increased slightly both in Donegal and countrywide compared to last year. The third cut has again seen an improvement from previous years, which may be attributed to the improved weather conditions, in particular during late August and September, which allowed a third cut of young grass to go ahead in good ground and overhead conditions.

Overall the improvement in first cut silage quality is very positive with an average 2 litre lift in milk yield per day. Hopefully this summer will bring good conditions for all. We look forward to providing a quality and useful analysis service to you during next season's winter housing period.

The Hillsborough Feeding Information System forage analysis service is a non-profit commercial service operated by The Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute, Hillsborough. It is the only service in the UK and Ireland that gives added value to forage analysis by incorporating animal performance tables and feeding recommendations based on your individual farm silages.

For further information contact Kyla Whiteside 0044 (0)28 92681589 or Rae Park 0044 (0)28 92681580.

AFBI Headquarters, Newforge Lane, Belfast BT5 9PX  
Tel: (028) 90255326 Fax: (028) 90255035 E-Mail: afbi.press-office@afbini.gov.uk

## FARMER PROFILE – BREEDING FOR FERTILITY

Patrick Carlin farms in Castlefin, Co. Donegal. He has a spring calving herd starting calving in late February each year. All cows are dried off in December. His objective is to calve as compactly as possible to produce as much milk from grass as possible. Milk solid production over the last four years has averaged 407 kg milk solids (5,220 litres at 3.52% Protein and 4.04% Fat).

Patrick sees fertility as crucial to his farming system. Current herd EBI is €107 (January 2011) with €33 from the milk sub-index and €62 from fertility sub-index. “We have been focusing on fertility for a number of years now, and have built up herd fertility – this is delivering on the farm” according to Patrick. Over the last four years the herd has an average six week calving rate of 82%. This is crucial to his farming system. Calving interval has averaged 373 days for the last four years. This is excellent reproductive performances, with herd fertility sub –index of €62 being a major contributor.

Young stock for breeding this year are €174 EBI with €64 fertility sub-index. These animals will maintain herd fertility while improving milk solids.

Last year's team of bulls included IMO, CWJ, UPH, HZS, which had an average EBI of €178 and fertility sub-index of €87. This team of bulls will ensure that there will continue to be excellent genetics for fertility entering the herd in 2013.

Bull selection is the key to breeding according to Patrick. This year he has selected a team of bulls from the Active Bull List (ICBF) that will have high fertility and high milk sub-index. They are - UPH, IRP, HZS and LRW. They have an average EBI of €207 with a fertility sub-index of €107

Over the last four years the herd has grown from 85 cows to 130 cows. In addition, some surplus heifers are also sold. This expansion was from home produced heifers with almost 40 heifers being produced per 100 cows over the last four years.

## FOR SALE

Bales of Kiln Dried Sawdust for Dairy cubicles.  
Large square bales of top quality English straw.

For further details contact  
048 82841578 from R.O.I.  
or 028 82841578  
or mobile 07776141436