

## New Board elected for Lakeland Dairies

Following from the recent completion of Board elections Lakeland Dairies has announced the Board of the Co-operative, taking effect on 1st November 2021.

The elections follow from the decision of members at an SGM last April approving changes to the co-operative's governance structure, including a reduction in the number of elected Board members of the co-operative, from 22 to 13 members.

This follows from the merger of Lakeland Dairies and LacPatrick Dairies in 2019, when it was agreed to review the rules of the new merged Society once the merger was completed.

Electoral areas were subsequently revised to establish a 13 member Board (from 22), with an option to

also co-opt up to 3 further directors. The 13 member Board has now been established following elections in 8 electoral areas, and further elections will also be held in Autumn 2022 covering a remaining 5 electoral areas, completing the adjustment process.

The Board membership is as follows: Niall Matthews (Chair), Andrew McHugh (Vice-Chair), Alan McCay (Vice-Chair), Keith Agnew, Sean Connolly, John Joseph Cooney, Michael Dobson, JJ Lavelle, Anthony Leddy, Christy McKenna, Oliver Neville, Alan Thompson, Alex Walker.

In May 2021, Liam Larkin was co-opted to the Board as an independent non-executive director and continues in this capacity.



Niall Matthews, Chair of Lakeland Dairies said,

“I welcome the establishment of our new Board and look forward to working with each member to advance the best interests of the co-operative for all our members and milk producers in the years ahead.

On behalf of the Board and members of the co-operative, I thank all retiring Board members for their commitment, dedication and service. Based on our democratic and leadership structures, Lakeland Dairies will continue our strong progress into the future.”

### Dairy Replacement Heifer Rearing

Two local Lakeland Dairies suppliers have recently been chosen as Technology Demonstration Farms as they are demonstrating best practice for rearing replacement heifers.

We are please to announce a farm visit on each of their farms in the next month to see how they rear their calves and heifers to the very highest standards.

Rex Wilson, 29 Ballymoyle Road, Coagh, Co Tyrone BT80 0AD on Wednesday 27th October at 11am.

Tom Craig, Carse Hall, Limavady, Co Derry BT49 9DX on Wednesday 3rd November at 11am

Due to covid restrictions each of these visits must be pre-booked to limit number on farm. Bookings will be on a first come first served basis.

To book your slot contact Niall McCarron on 07785469219.

### Soil Sampling Programme 21/22

The Lakeland Dairies Subsidised Soil Sampling Programme will be available for the months of December, January & February. The service which includes having soil samples taken and tested is available at a subsidised cost of £11 / sample plus VAT to all Lakeland Dairies milk suppliers.

Milk suppliers wishing to avail of this service should contact Niall McCarron on +447785469219 to register before Friday 19th November.

Please note, taking of soil samples will be limited to one farm visit per milk supplier registered for the programme.

Soil testing and the correct use of the results generated is not only fundamental to growing high yields of good quality grass; it also has the added economic advantage of enabling a more efficient use of organic manures and bagged fertiliser.

# Sire selection & breeding decisions for autumn calvers

Now is the time to sit down and decide what team of bulls will be used on your autumn calving cows over the next few months. It is up to each individual to decide what is important for them to breed for and you can do this by asking yourself a number of questions.

- What do you want to achieve from your breeding programme?
- What type of cows do you want to have in 5-7 years time?
- What traits need to be improved in your existing herd?
- Are you happy with the level of milk produced by your herd? Is this restricted by breeding or feeding? Does this need to increase any further?
- Are you happy with levels of milk solids produced by your herd and would you like to increase this in coming years
- Are you happy with fertility performance of your herd in recent years?

Depending on the system you use and the company you buy semen from, you will be able to select bulls on the UK system of PLI (Profitable Lifetime Index) or the ROI system of EBI (Economic Breeding Index). Within both these systems of genetic evaluation you will see sub-indexes for milk production, solids production, fertility traits and other production related traits.

One of the main criteria that should be looked at is breeding good fertility and longevity into the herd. If we are to make dairy farming more sustainable, longevity of dairy cows should be maximised. The key to improving longevity is to breed more resilient, healthier cows so they stay in the herd for longer. At present our average number of lactations is 3.0 per cow.

Typically, the dairy cow reaches peak production between lactations 3 and 4, therefore we should aim to increase our average number of lactations, so cows survive in the herd past the fourth lactation. Generally, cows begin to make profit after 2.5 lactations. A good target to work towards would be 4 to 5 lactations. This will only be achieved if cows are bred to be more robust and healthy. We can choose these traits by selecting on management traits within the PLI or EBI system.

Within these parameters we can choose bulls with positive fertility genetics. Fertility Index (FI) predicts the fertility of the bulls offspring. A bull with an above average FI will breed cows with improved calving intervals and better non-return levels. As a rough guide every point increase in FI will decrease calving interval by 0.6 days. To improve fertility ideally we should pick bulls with a fertility index (FI) of greater than 10.

Most bulls listed in semen companies catalogues will have positive traits for milk yield. Many farms locally are now reasonably happy with milk yield or at least the genetic ability to achieve high yields and are not looking to add much more milk to their cows coming forward. Therefore, a milk kg PLI of +100 or EBI of +200 will be ample for maintaining or rising milk yield in your herd. Some farmers are using bulls with lower indexes than these and reporting no loss on milk yield.

Whilst milk yield is important it is also vital to look at milk solids production for your herd. This is one area where you can add value to each litre of milk supplied to the co-op. Over the last number of years the AI & semen companies are placing more emphasis on these traits and with the progression of genomic testing more bulls with positive protein and fat percentages are coming forward.

It is important to look at the percentages of fat and protein rather than the kg of fat and protein of a bulls potential. This is due to the fact that a positive fat or protein kg figure is mostly down to the extra milk yield that a bull might bring. This will not change the % of fat and protein in the milk.

To make any great strides in changing the composition of milk going forward, we should try and pick bulls with high positive % for fat and protein. I would suggest that at least +0.10% for both fat and protein should be a target when selecting bulls if any significant changes are to be seen over the next couple of cow generations.

Some suggested targets for selecting bulls this season

| PLI System                  | EBI System           |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| PTA (Milk) >= +100kg        | Milk 0 to +200kg     |
| PTA (Butterfat %) >= +0.10% | Butterfat% >= +0.10% |
| PTA (Protein %) >= +0.10%   | Protein % >= +0.10%  |
| Fertility >= + 8 days       | Fertility >= +€100   |

Finally, as you will note from looking at AI catalogues, most bulls listed are genomic. This means they are chosen due to genomic testing showing that they have the genes capable of delivering on the various parameters. The reliability of this genomic data is around 65%. Therefore, when using genomic sires, it is important to select a team of bulls (4-6) as these bulls are not yet proven and some will not deliver on their genetic potential.

Where a bull is proven then the reliability of data will be over 90% and he has daughters on the ground milking and delivering on each of the parameters listed.

## Managing the liver fluke challenge in dairy cows and in calf heifers

The challenges that liver fluke present to dairy farmers are increasing. With milder winters making longer grazing seasons possible, liver fluke related disease is becoming more of an all year-round threat. Also, the products available to treat liver fluke in dairy cows and in calf dairy heifers is becoming more limited.

It's now more important than ever that farmers understand the process that begins with the fluke egg and finally lead to a traumatised liver. Such a liver can reduce herd yield and, as a result, lower the financial potential of the farm. Once the challenges of fluke are understood, you can build targeted control measures that are also cost effective.

A 'dry' farm is not an assurance against liver fluke infection and, consequently, a liver fluke control programme should be implemented on all dairy farms irrespective of whether they are wet or dry.

A liver fluke control programme may vary from a simple dung sample – to rule out the presence of the parasite. Other measures could include grazing management; diagnostics; and pharmaceutical On farms where liver fluke disease has been confirmed, it's vital to implement a planned treatment regime, which is likely to deliver meaningful health improvements for the herd.

### Fluke dosing and the dry period

In recent years, regulatory bodies have limited the availability of flukicides with a wide range of activity in terms of the age of liver fluke. This was due to a lack of residue data to support their use in dairy cows during the dry period.

This contraindication presented dairy farmers with a dilemma in terms of maintaining cow health and managing the transition of the cow to ensure she calved down in optimum condition. The main fluke treatments used on many farms only kill adult fluke in the

liver. The most common type contains the active ingredient called Oxyclozanide (Zanil or Rumenil). This can be used on dry cows and in calf heifers. It can also be used on lactating dairy cows if the withdrawal period is adhered to (72 hours for Zanil & 108 hours for Rumenil). These products also kill mature rumen fluke.

The other main product range that can be used contains Albendazole as the active ingredient (Endospec/Albex/Tramazole). These can again be used in dry cows and in calf heifers and also in lactating dairy cows if the 60-hour withdrawal period is adhered to. These products again kill mature liver fluke but also can treat and control mature and developing immature forms of gastro-intestinal roundworms, lungworms and tapeworms.

Products which are used for the treatment and control of all three stages of liver fluke, mature, immature and early immature are

more regulated in their use on dairy cows and in calf heifers. The range containing Triclabendazole (Fasinex/Tribex/Endofluke/Triclaben etc) are only licenced for use to dry cows or in calf heifers at least 50 days prior to calving.

Products containing the active ingredients of Closantel (Solantel/Closamectin etc) or Clorsulan (Ivomec Super/Animec Super/Topimec Super/Bimectin Plus etc) are not permitted for use on animals producing milk for human consumption and should not be used on any dairy stock including in calf heifers in the second half of pregnancy.

These active ingredients are being tested for more regularly and accurately by DAERA and food companies in the final products, so it is critical that products listed above are used as described on their label and in adherence with all withdrawal periods. Please contact your vet for advice if unsure.

## It's crucial to test for antibiotics in your milk

As autumn herds are calving down and for farmers preparing for the 2022 spring calving season, it is critical that every step is made to ensure that antibiotic milk does not make it into the bulk tank.

There has been a worrying increase in the number of farmers failing antibiotic tests in 2021.

This brings huge cost to the co-op and also brings unnecessary Department attention to farmers too.

Simple steps can avoid this cost and burden.

### ANTIBIOTIC SNAP TEST

To help farmers detect the presence of antibiotics in milk, Lakeland Dairies is offering the sale of the Snap Beta-Lactum ST Plus / Antibiotic test.

The snap test is an on-farm test for antibiotic residues in milk. The test is both fast and accurate and can be used as an aid on farm to detect antibiotic residues.

Many farmers have already carried out the snap tests and found them easy to use, providing tremendous peace of mind. We would encourage all farmers to carry a bank of them over the busy spring calving period to ensure your milk is as it should be.

It is critical that the test is performed and interpreted correctly to ensure results are accurate. It is recommended that a supplier carries out a number of trial tests before relying on it completely.

Snap tests are available to purchase for £3 each + VAT from Member Relations by contacting 028 3026 2311.

## Final Chance to Complete Red Tractor Essential Antimicrobial Course

Animal Health and welfare have announced that it will no longer be routinely providing Dairy Antimicrobial Courses Online or in venues across Northern Ireland. Completing the Dairy Antimicrobial Course is ESSENTIAL to attaining Red Tractor Certification.

The workshops are free to farmers, members of the farm family and employees. Attendees must pre-register in order to attend a workshop.

### Next Course Date:

**Thursday 4th November – Online Webinar – 11.00am**

There may be one Final Online Webinar in December.

To gain Certification you MUST Pre-register. Once you are pre-registered log in details are then provided. You must be logged in to the webinar for the entire presentation, complete the poll during the webinar, and complete the evaluation at the end of the webinar.

### To register Call Animal Health and Welfare on 028 7963 9333.

• Ask to Register for the Dairy Antimicrobial Course

• You Need to give your:

|               |
|---------------|
| Full Name     |
| Address       |
| Date of Birth |
| Business ID   |
| Email Address |
| Phone Number  |

Remember the course only needs to be completed once and to make sure you put your certificate in your Red Tractor File.

If you have any queries, please contact your local Red Tractor Advisor.

## Lactose Levels in late lactation.

Lactose percentage will drop in late lactation, this indicates;

(a) that the cow should be dried off or

(b) her diet isn't sufficient to maintain reasonable yield or lactose percentage.

Low lactose milk causes processing problems, particularly in Autumn and early Winter. The ideal lactose level approaching the end of lactation is over 4.6%. Any cows yielding 10 litres or less, along with thin cows and first calvers should be dried off.

Where there is a requirement to maintain levels of production increasing the level of meal feeding will help with lactose levels, talk to your Agri-rep about this option. Don't dilute your tank with low lactose milk, penalties are imposed on low lactose milk and will also exclude you from the Out of Season Bonus. Where there is an ongoing problem with lactose levels, there is often a problem also with high SCC's and early drying off will in many cases help solve both.

## Important changes to Red Tractor scheme

By 1st November 2021 Red Tractor requires that all Lakeland Dairies Suppliers are fully certified under the Red Tractor Scheme. Milk Collection will cease from farms that are not fully certified by 1st November 2021.

If current Certified Members become suspended or refused from the scheme their Milk will also not be collected until they are fully certified and Red Tractor approved again.

Please note: Suspension or refusal will happen after your initial surveillance visit if you do not close out any non-compliances within the 28 day period.

If the 28 day period lapses and you are not approved for Red Tractor we cannot lift your milk until your status has been returned to approved.

From 1st August 2021 the Red Tractor Penalty will increase to 4ppl for farms who are not fully certified under the scheme.

To begin the registration process for the Red Tractor Assurance Scheme, please contact your local Lakeland Dairies Red Tractor Advisor immediately.

### IMPORTANT RED TRACTOR CHANGES IN NOVEMBER 2021:

1. Farm Staff – All New Farm Employees will require a written Induction alongside Staff Health and Safety Documents
2. Antibiotic contamination of Bulk Tanks will be reported to Red Tractor and must be recorded in the complaints record
3. Tethering during housing - Tethering that restricts normal animal behaviour, such as self-grooming will not be permitted
4. Calf Euthanasia - By 2023 the dairy Industry wishes to eliminate the routine euthanasia of calves. To help with this Red Tractor will require all suppliers to fill in a breeding policy. The Breeding policy will ensure that farms have enough space to accommodate 10 day's worth of calves in peak calving. it will also provide a risk assessment showing potential markets for calves and stock if closed with TB.
5. Fertiliser must be stored to minimise theft
6. Electrified Backing Gates will no longer be permitted.

### JOHNE'S DISEASE

Suppliers will be required to enrol on the AHWNI Johnes Control programme. They will do this by contacting an AHWNI Johnes Trained Vet, to carry out a Veterinary Risk Assessment & Management Plan (V-RAMP) The risk assessment will look at different sections of the farm procedures i.e. calving, calf rearing, colostrum management etc. The Vet will then give three recommendations per farm.

The Vet will also fill out a Vet Declaration, which is required for the Red Tractor inspection. This will need to be carried out annually and will also be sent to AHWNI. Please note there is currently no requirement to carry out on-farm Johnes testing. Even if a farmer is currently testing for Johnes they are still required to have the Risk Assessment and Vet Declaration Carried out.

IF YOU HAVE AN UPCOMING INSPECTION OR ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING RED TRACTOR, PLEASE ENSURE YOU CONTACT YOUR MEMBER OF THE RED TRACTOR TEAM. JENNIFER PRUE (FERMANAGH/ TYRONE) ON 077 67846350 OR IAN OLPHERT (L'DERRY/DERRY/ANTRIM) ON 075 25897746 OR HEATHER MARTIN (ARMAGH/DOWN) ON 07741168627.

# Details of the Out-of-Season scheme

As we approach the end of the year, we wanted to remind you of the details regarding the 2021 Lakeland Dairies Out-of-Season scheme.

We are happy to confirm the details of the 2021 Lakeland Dairies Out-of-Season scheme.

In November and December, a 3p/l payment will be made to all Lakeland Dairies milk suppliers.

The Out-of-Season payment will be made to all farmers who supply milk in the months of November and December.

## Critical advice on reducing chlorates for your farm

Chlorates are formed as a result of a breakdown of chlorine in liquid detergents and it is critical that farmers eliminate the presence of chlorates in milk.

A good chlorate test result ranges from 0 parts per billion (ppb) to 5ppb. Milk supplied above this limit is not suitable for powder intended for infant milk formula. Contact member relations on 028 3026 2311 should you have questions.

From April onwards your milk will be tested on a monthly basis and will be communicated to you via text message.

Chlorate testing will be part of the Lakeland Dairies milk purchasing terms & conditions and will be linked to a penalty for milk which does not meet the chlorate specification.

More info regarding this will be made available in the coming months.

### Steps to avoid chlorate residues:

1. Use chlorine-free detergents on your farm;
2. Rinse the milking machine fully before and after detergent circulation with 14 litres of water per unit;
3. Never reuse or add chlorine to rinse water;
4. Do not reuse detergent solutions more than recommended;
5. Use only the correct amounts of detergent – don't use extra;
6. Do not stock pile detergents and ensure all detergents are in date – chlorate levels increase significantly over time;
7. Store detergents in a cool, dark place;
8. Ensure the bulk tank rinsing cycle is correctly set so that the tank is adequately rinsed;
9. Use peracetic acid as an alternative to chlorine for cluster dipping and water sterilisation.

## COVID-19 has not gone away

Thankfully, a number of significant steps forward in the battle against COVID-19 have been taken during 2021.

Unfortunately, the Delta Variant is having a dramatic impact as we see significant positive case numbers both on the island of Ireland and globally.

Therefore, we need to continue to keep each other, our farms and the entire Lakeland Dairies business safe at this time.

### HYGIENE IS CRUCIAL

We have written to you with our operational procedures to ensure the highest hygiene standards on your farm.

Please continue to:

- Wash your hands regularly.
- Do not come in contact with your milk collection or feed / fertiliser haulier.
- Sanitise the areas that you and your milk haulier come in contact with such as the dairy door handles, the bulk tank, etc.
- Have a source of soap, hot water, paper towels and a bin for your milk collection or feed / fertiliser haulier to thoroughly wash their hands.

By following these simple steps, you will greatly reduce the spread of COVID-19.

If you or any one in your family / involved in the running of your farm contract COVID-19, it is IMPERATIVE that you contact Member Relations immediately.

Your situation will be dealt with in the strictest confidence. Any failure to inform us of a case of COVID-19 on your farm or in your family is incredibly serious and puts our entire business at risk.

## Contact

The Lakeland Dairies member Relations Division works closely with all our milk producers to help drive profitability at farm level as well as providing information on the progress of the Society.

Contact us by calling  
1890 47 47 20 (ROI) or 028 3026 2311 (NI)

