

# LATE CALVERS AND COWS WITH PROBLEMS

The goal is to retain as many of these cows as possible and avoid the costs associated with replacing them. First lactation animals will produce 20% less than a mature cow. Therefore having a higher replacement rate will impact herd maturity and overall production.

## IDENTIFY THIS GROUP OF COWS

1. Late calvers - Cows that calved after 17th March
2. Underconditioned Cows - BCS less than 2.75 at Mating Start Date or 3 weeks prior
3. Problems at calving – difficult calving, retained afterbirths, milk fever, ketosis, LDA etc
4. Problems since calving – Mastitis, lameness etc

Refer to the Problem Cow list in FarmOps.



### 1. Nutrition & BCS- OAD and/or Extra feeding

Cows do not reach their peak intakes of grass until they are calved 6 -8weeks. Therefore, late calving cows will be consuming between 10 and 12Kgs of grass DM in early lactation as opposed to 16-18Kgs for the February calving cows.

Late calvers need an extra 3-5Kgs of concentrates per day more than the early calving cows for the 1st 6 weeks of lactation. Putting these cows on once a day milking and feeding them twice a day will reduce their production and energy demand while their intakes catch up. This will allow them to commence cycling earlier.

### 2. Vet exam, Scan, Metricheck & Treat if required- Need to Gain Time

Once these late cows and any other problem cows are more than 28 days calved, have them examined by your Vet. Metricheck them or scan them to ensure no endometritis present. Treat any 'dirty' cows as prescribed by your vet. A cow calved in early February has had over 80 days and possibly 2-3 cycles to repair and cleanse her uterus - in late calvers we are continually working against the clock.

### 3. Synchronisation Programme for Fixed Timed AI

Once these cows are clean and calved 35 days synchronise them for fixed time AI to guarantee they are served as soon as possible. The programme for cows with fixed timed AI is superb as it ensures that these cows are cycling and bred within 10 days.

This will give the best chance to pull back next year's calving date for these cows.

**See synchronisation programme for cows on back page.**

### 4. Apply heat detection aids and watch for repeats

The advantage of the 10-day synchronization programme is that cows are bred quickly, and the repeats are due together which makes heat detection easier. Inseminate these cows with easy calving short gestation dairy beef bulls. These bulls will gain you an extra 7-10 days next year..

### 5. Early Scan for Pregnancy & Resynchronise if empty.

Scan these cows once 30 days have passed since insemination and the cow has not repeated. These late calvers are repeating at a time when activity is decreased, and it can be more difficult to detect them. If the cow scans empty resynchronise her if there is time and it's worth breeding her and she will be bred again in 10 days.

## 5 POINT PLAN FOR LATE CALVERS AND COWS WITH PROBLEMS:

1. Nutrition - OAD Milking and / or extra feed.
2. Metricheck cows calved 28 days.
3. Synchronisation
4. Heat detection aids for repeats plus short gestation bulls.
5. Early scan