



Making milk recording a priority in 2022

The steps to take to make milk recording a success >> page 3

Tel: 0818 47 47 20 | www.lakeland.ie | Twitter: @DairiesJP

Latest COVID-19 wave is a major challenge



As we start 2022, the Omicron wave of COVID-19 has seen record case numbers on the island.

Although hospitalisations are remaining steady thanks in no small part to the success of the vaccination programme, the new wave is a threat to everyone in society. Positive COVID cases as well as close contacts are having an impact on our farms and the processing of your high-quality milk into world-renowned products.

Keeping yourself, your family and the Lakeland Dairies business safe and operational has never been as important or as challenging.

By working together we will get through this latest surge.

Everyone at Lakeland Dairies is committed to keeping our staff, farm families, hauliers and customers safe.

HOW TO KEEP SAFE

We have previously written to you, the Lakeland Dairies farmers, to keep you informed and updated on what is happening in the business while also offering tips and advice on how to keep safe on your farm.

We have devised strict protocols around the collection of milk as well as the delivery of feed and fertiliser to your yard. These protocols might

seem restrictive but it is absolutely critical that you follow them.

They are not aimed to be disruptive to your everyday activity on the farm.

They are in place to keep you, your family and everyone involved in the running of your farm safe as well as ensuring the hygienic collection and processing of milk.

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 anyone in your family / the running of your farm becomes infected with COVID-19, contact Member Relations on 0818 47 47 20 **IMMEDIATELY** where your situation will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

Your haulier has received training and advice on how to safely collect milk from farms that have a case of COVID-19.

STORES AND FEED

You will have noticed recently that we have also stepped up our strong policy of social distancing across our network of Agri Stores, where Perspex screens have been installed to keep you and all staff safe.

This is on top of clear protocols in place aimed at halting the spread of COVID-19 at our stores.

This is to ensure that our Agri Stores and feed mill remain operational.

Informative videos have been produced outlining the contact distancing protocols in place at the Lakeland Agri stores and around the collection of milk.

You can view the videos on www.lakeland.ie or www.facebook.com/LakelandAgri

We will continue to keep you informed as we work our way through this situation.

It is difficult for everyone but by continuing to stay apart, we are working together for a better future.



By working together we will get through this latest surge

Lakeland Agri Soil Sustainability Programme

Sean McMahon, Product & Marketing Manager, Grassland Agro

The Lakeland Agri Soil Sustainability Programme is a partnership between Lakeland Agri and Grassland Agro, tailored to address the soil health challenges facing Lakeland Dairies suppliers. The objective of this programme is to maintain output with reduced chemical fertiliser inputs.

The strategy employed to achieve this objective is to improve soil health across all three pillars.

- Chemical (soil fertility)
- Physical (soil structure)
- Biological (soil bacteria)

Achieving this objective will significantly increase the sustainability of suppliers' farms economically, environmentally and socially. The starting point on each individual farm is to first measure and then benchmark participating farms.

Every farm is different, taking a farm specific approach to soil health is fundamental to the programme. Lakeland Agri's in-house Technical Department headed by Alan Hurst, work closely with Grassland Agro advisors to develop the most suitable programme for each farm.

The programme is entering its second year and is open for more farmers to join.

Over the first year of the programme data has been collected from Lakeland suppliers.

- The main findings can be seen below
- 18% of soil samples are below pH 6



- 29% of soil samples are Index 1 & 2 for Phosphorus (P)
- 39% of soil samples are Index 1 & 2 for Potassium (K)
- Average silage yields are 6.3T per acre
- Average CO2 burst is 174 (range from 50-200)
- Average Labile Nitrogen is 353kg N/ Ha (range 178-443)

The national average statistics in the most recent soil fertility report highlights that only 41% of dairy farms had soils at optimum pH, 48% had soils that were suboptimal (Index 1 or 2) for Phosphorus (P) and 41% had soils suboptimal for Potassium (K).

From the 11,000 acres soil sampled for participating farmers who joined the programme in 2021, soil pH is well ahead of the national average

This highlights the brilliant work car-

ried out by Lakeland suppliers in soil testing and regular lime application.

The Soil Sustainability Programme equips each participant with a detailed field specific fertiliser programme, which utilises the right product, in the right place, at the right rate and the right time.

This is carried out in conjunction with the farmer so that practical considerations are factored in. Each farmer is supported on the programme throughout the year.

THE LAKELAND AGRICULTURE SOIL SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMME IS OPEN TO ALL FARMERS. PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL LAKELAND AGRICULTURE TECHNICAL SALES REPRESENTATIVE OR ALAN HURST ON +353 87 2901663. OR CALL OUR CUSTOMER SERVICES CENTRE ON 0818 47 47 20 (ROI).

Joining the Johne's eradication Programme

Johne's disease is a bacterial disease of cattle and other ruminants for which there is no cure.

It is caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium avium* subspecies *paratuberculosis* (MAP), hence the other name for the disease Paratuberculosis.

As an industry we are trying to eradicate this disease which has a huge impact on the dairy sector.

We are encouraging Lakeland Dairies suppliers to consider joining the eradication programme.

HOW TO JOIN?

Log on to the Animal Health Ireland (AHI) website <https://portal.animal-healthireland.ie/programs/> and fill out the registration form or call AHI on 071 9671928.

BENEFITS OF JOINING

1. Awareness of a potential disease level within the herd.
2. Ability to implement a plan to reduce disease level in the herd, keeping young replacements safe.

3. Improved performance: yield and fertility.

4. More valuable stock.

WHAT IS INVOLVED?

1. Registration to the programme.
2. Milk record and Johne's test all cows over 2 years old.
3. Vet will blood sample all other animals over two years old.
4. Vet will carry out a confirmatory dung sample on any test positive cows.

5. Vet will carry out a Johne's farm risk assessment and recommendations (VRAMP).

TESTING PAYMENT

The testing is part funded by Lakeland Dairies. Current members will receive payment for 2021 testing with February/March 2022 milk statements.

For further information on Johne's disease visit <https://animalhealthireland.ie/programmes/johnes-disease/>

Have you considered using the SNAP test on your farm?

Lakeland Dairies continues to offer 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 at a cost of €3.15 each+VAT from Member Relations by contacting 0818 47 47 20.

Making milk recording a priority for 2022

A new year brings with it new opportunities, and a chance to improve a farm's overall performance. One thing a farmer can do to improve performance is by carrying out regular milk recording. Milk recording can have huge benefits on farm for several reasons. These include:

- In herds where SCC has become an issue, milk recording helps identify those cows in the herd that are contributing the most to elevated SCC levels. In turn the farmer can then put a plan in place to treat effectively.
- By identifying high SCC cows in a herd and taking appropriate action, this puts the herd in a better position to reduce antibiotic use into the future. Selective dry cow therapy is one such way to reduce antibiotic usage and, in turn, reduces antimicrobial resistance.

Milk recording leads to more informed breeding decisions – it is a good tool to identify the high-performing animals in a herd.

While most farmers are aware of the higher milk volume animals in their herds, those animals may not always be the animals providing the highest milk value. By measuring the fat and protein content for individual cows, this allows the identification of the most profitable animals in the herd.

NINE-POINT GUIDE TO HELP START MILK RECORDING IN 2022

1) Before carrying out the first recording on your farm it is vitally important to have cow identification well set up. Freeze-branding cows is the fool-proof method of identification.

2) In parlours with Auto-ID make sure tags or pedometers are reading correctly



3) Does your parlour have jars or meters? Or is it a direct pipeline parlour?

No matter what is in your parlour, milk recording can still be carried out, but the equipment required may change, therefore contact with Progressive Genetics milk recording team prior to first recording is recommended.

4) Make sure all equipment is clean before sampling

5) Are the meters in your parlour ICAR approved? If not it may be recommended to use the eDIY meters instead. Talk to Progressive Genetics milk recording team on this.

6) Good records – recording calving dates, dry-off dates & mastitis incidence is extremely important to have accurate milk recording data.

7) Your herd needs to be on the ICBF database. All reports are uploaded to this and available for viewing on your ICBF page.

8) Contact the milk recording team at Progressive Genetics well in

advance of carrying out the first recording. Ideally spring calving herds should record within 60 days of the start of calving.

9) If going down the eDIY route have help available for the days you are recording. Milking will take longer on these days so be prepared for it. It is also possible to have a recorder accompany the eDIY meters and do this work for you, this is something worth considering.

Most important, when milk recording, is to use the information that is subsequently generated.

If you start milk recording for the first time in 2022 and would like some help and guidance on interpreting the reports please contact the Lakeland/Teagasc Joint Programme team and we will be happy to help.

TO GET STARTED MILK RECORDING CONTACT PROGRESSIVE GENETICS MILK RECORDING TEAM ON (046) 954 0606.



Selective dry cow therapy is one such way to reduce antibiotic usage

Successful Chlorine-free wash routine in Co Longford

Brendan O'Reilly from Moyne, Co. Longford milks 90 cows.

He sources his chemicals from his local Lakeland Agri store in Longford. He purchases Co-Op Source Turbosan CF (detergent) in 200L barrels and Co-Op Source Acid Descaler in 25L drums.

On his 5100L Packo bulk tank he is using Co-Op Source Turbosan CF for two washes and Co-Op source Acid Descaler on the third wash. All the washes on the bulk tank are hot washes.

On the 10-unit Dairy Master parlour with auto wash, all morning washes are hot with a start temperature of 75-80°C, and all afternoon washes are cold. Co-Op Source Turbosan

CF is made up fresh for each milking with Co-Op source Acid Descaler washes done on three mornings per week (Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday) with hot water. All products are used once and dumped.

Brendan puts the success of his wash routine down to his 300L hot water tank, able to wash parlour and tank at the same time.

Daily hot wash and the correct calibration and dosage rates.

For alternative wash routines visit https://www.teagasc.ie/media/website/animals/dairy/research-farms/Chlorine-free-wash-routines_2020.pdf or contact your milk quality advisor.

Brendan's 2021 Milk Quality Results

TBC 11k

THMO 410

Chlorates 0 (formed from the degradation of chlorine)

TCM's 0 (TCM is the measure of reaction between chlorine and milk)

Getting ready ahead of Spring 2022

It's time to make some final preparations for the calving season ahead. Planning now will reduce stress and save time. It is important to go through the checklist below and make sure you have everything ready and at hand to ensure an easier spring.

- o Prepare the calving area (e.g., prepare a calving kit –jack, ropes, gloves, lubricant, wash, disinfect and bed pens, check calving gate)
- o Check that you will have enough space per calf (1.7m² floor space). If not check other vacant sheds that could be converted.
- o Set up the calf shed (e.g., wash and disinfect, order tags, purchase electrolytes).
- o Do a stock take and purchase items required (e.g., calcium, magnesium, iodine, needles and syringes etc. and store safely in the medicine cabinet)
- o Organise workstations (e.g., set up areas of the farm with the equipment used at that location. It may be necessary to have multiples of certain items such as shovel/fork/brush/scrapper). Keep all calf equipment in one location.
- o Simplify milk transport. Use pumps or milk karts to prepare and move milk around the farm.
- o Train your heifers to the parlour in advance of calving. This will make their transition to milking easier with less of an impact to the milking routine.
- o Utilise your contractor for slurry and fertiliser in the coming weeks.



- o Have a farm office where your farm map is visible with all paddocks numbered. Understand what type of fertiliser and quantity you require for the first round and for silage.
 - o Prepare a spring grass plan, ensure you have enough reels/posts and make any necessary repairs to fences.
 - o Have procedures in place for managing colostrum, cubicles, meal feeding, milking and wash routine. Ensure all workers are aware of these procedures.
 - o Consider once a day milking to free up time during peak calving. Only do this if you have had no previous issues with SCC.
- NEW YEAR, NEW MILK INTERVAL**
- If there's one thing you change this year make it your milking interval. Several of Lakeland Dairies' top producers use a 16-8hr or a 15-9hr milking interval. It allows for better work life balance, is easier for staff and allows more flexibility on farm. When milking cows this spring try and bring the evening milking

forward to 3.30-4pm. It has been shown there is no effect on cow production or SCC. You can still finish jobs off after milking if needed but you have the flexibility to leave it too.

MANAGING PEAK CALF NUMBERS

There are a number of factors which impact the peak number of calves that will be on a farm which indicates the minimum calf accommodation required:

- o Six-week calving rate: This can be calculated using breeding and/or scanning results.
- o Age of sale of non-replacement calves

As you cannot change the six-week calving rate now, the only option for a farmer is to reduce pressure on calf sheds. If you can't create more space by utilising vacant sheds you need to sell calves at a younger age.

The table below shows how peak calf numbers can be reduced by selling calves at two to three weeks of age rather than six weeks.



It allows for a better work life balance

Table 1: Effect of calving rate and age at sale on peak calf numbers for a 100 cow herd

6-week calving rate	Age at sale of beef calves	Peak Calves	Space required (m ²)
70%	2 weeks	47	80 m ²
70%	4-5 weeks	70	119 m ²
85%	2 weeks	50	85 m ²
85%	6 weeks	85	145 m ²

Tom Downes retirement

After 38 years of dedicated and loyal service with the Member Relations Division, Tom Downes has retired.

Tom played a huge part of the Lakeland Dairies we see today. From a fragmented business in the 80s to a consolidated business today, processing almost 2 billion litres. Tom was a point of contact, a source of advice, a problem solver for so many people. Lakeland Dairies along with many in the dairy industry wish Tom a long, happy and healthy retirement.

Adrian McKeague replaces Tom as Dairy Advisor for his area and can be contacted on 087 413 8584.

Contact Member Relations

The Lakeland Dairies Member Relations Division works 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: 0818 47 47 20 (ROI).

Agri txt

Stressed about your Bord Bia audit? Let Agri txt help you...

We'll do the paperwork for you

Completed Bord Bia File, Calf Registrations and Help with Department of Agriculture Livestock Issues

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT PAUDY
Tel: 022 34136 Mob: 085 821 0406
We'll do the paperwork for you