

## 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."

## NDC & Kerrygold Quality Milk Awards Farm Development Category 2021



L-R Eamon Duignan, Lakeland Dairies, Eugene Fitzpatrick, daughter Ruth, Special Guest Kelly Harrington, Deirdre Fitzpatrick, son Conor, Adrian McKeague, Lakeland Dairies

Congratulations to Eugene Fitzpatrick and his family, wife Deirdre, daughter Ruth and son Conor, Lisryan, Granard, Co. Longford on winning the NDC & Kerrygold Quality Milk Awards 2021 in the **Farm Development category**. This is a prestigious national award won by the Fitzpatrick family for the conversion from a dry stock farm to the development of a modern dairy farm over the past twenty years.

Speaking on the awards, **Minister for Agriculture, Food & the Marine, Charlie McConalogue** said; "The NDC & Kerrygold Quality Milk Awards are a unique way of celebrating what is truly special about Ireland. The passion and dedication of Irish family farms, together with our unique farming system, has helped build a strong reputation for Ireland as a high-quality, sustainable food producer. While we face significant challenges as an industry, it is important to celebrate our dairy farmers who are ambassadors for the industry, committed to maintaining exceptional standards in milk quality and sustainable farming."

All farming finalists underwent a detailed assessment by an expert judging panel including **Professor Pat Wall** from UCD, **Dr David Gleeson** from Teagasc and Dr Jack Kennedy, Deputy Editor of the Irish Farmers Journal. All finalists were judged on sustainable farming practices, milk quality, technical knowledge, and animal welfare on-farm practices.

On their visit to the Fitzpatrick family farm they saw a farmer;

(a) Teagasc member, adopting modern farming practices and technologies such as; \*grass measuring, \*milk recording, \*soil sampling, \*reseeding with clover inclusion, \*using sexed semen, \*solar panels, \*selective dry cow therapy, \*low emission slurry spreading, \*protected urea, \*rain water harvesting and \*low energy appliances.

(b) in a discussion group

(c) involved with his co-op

(d) involved in his community

(e) aware of his responsibilities to the environment.

The transition of this farm began with the transfer of the holding from his late father Benny, who sold and serviced milking machines to many dairy farmers in Cavan, Longford and Leitrim. The conversion to milk production began during the milk quota regime, purchasing and leasing of milk quota for the first 13 years was a necessary and expensive part of the farm's development. The progression has been gradual and sustainable in increasing cow numbers, milk production and associated infrastructure complying with all regulations.

However, lifestyle is also important, Eugene says "outside of farming, our schedule is packed with football, swimming and gymnastics lessons"

This farm and farmer have been available for farm walks and workshops allowing Lakeland Dairies, Teagasc and Animal Health Ireland to promote all that is important and necessary for good dairy farming to his neighbouring farmers in Longford, Westmeath, Cavan and Leitrim.

# Preparing for a successful dry cow period

The time of year has come again to prepare to dry-off cows. It is important to plan to ensure cows get the correct treatment in order to avoid issues in the coming season.

Cows should be dried off for a period of 8 weeks, with problem, thin or younger cows given a longer period if needed. This time is required for the udder to repair and rejuvenate. It is important to put some time into planning this and you should use expected calving dates to plan.

It is advised to take milk samples from a good selection of cows to get a profile of the types of bacteria in your herd. It is very important that these samples are sterile, otherwise results will not be accurate. Review your bulk tank SCC and milk recording records if available. Identify problem cows from during the year that may have been treated multiple times. These cows are difficult to cure and may need to be culled from the herd while others may require sensitivity tests to identify the cause of infection if not already done.

When you receive the results of the milk samples you should contact your vet and discuss the correct course of action regarding antibiotic use. With the rules set to change from 2022, this year may be an opportunity to try selective dry cow therapy where suitable.

## Drying off procedure

Dry off in small groups with no more than 20 cows at a time and ensure that you are not tired and preferably have some help. Ideally have cow's tails clipped prior to drying off. When drying off it should be done abruptly and avoid skipping milking's leading up to it. If cows are yielding greater than 12 L /day in the week before dry-off, reduce feed availability, but not water access, this will reduce milk production by the dry-off date.

Make sure that you have all the necessary equipment ready before starting, this includes a clean apron, disposable gloves, teat wipes/cotton wool, methylated spirits, marker, head torch and intramammary tubes. Try to have a system in place for cleaning, sterilising teats and tubing, and repeat for each cow, especially if you have extra help.

Mark cows before drying off with either an ankle strap, tail tape or marker. Once the cow is milked out completely ensure the teats are clean

and dry, completely disinfect them using cotton wool and methylated spirits, rub the teat end opening for a minimum of ten seconds, (Note: this is a very important step!). Start with the teats furthest away and then the nearest this will prevent contamination. Ensure the teats are clean by wiping with the cotton wool, if the cotton wool is not clear repeat until it is.

When treating the cow start with the teat closest to you and then the furthest away, this is to prevent recontamination of the teats. It is very important to ensure the nozzle of the tube is kept sterile to prevent introducing new infection into the teats and udder. Insert the tip of the nozzle into the teat opening and squeeze the contents gently into the quarter. When the tube is emptied into the teat, massage the antibiotic up into the quarter. Spray the teats with teat disinfectant after the treatment.

If using teat sealer, follow the same measures but before squeezing the tube use your free hand to close off the base of the teat where it joins the udder. This will ensure the sealer is left in the teat. This acts as a physical barrier to bacterial infection of the cow's teats and provides extra protection towards the end of the dry period and especially around calving time.

Make sure cows are identified correctly and all details are recorded. Once dried off, cows should be allowed to stand in a clean yard for a minimum of thirty minutes before being let out to a dry field or clean cubicles. It is important to keep cubicles clean and limed especially two weeks post drying off and two weeks prior to calving.

## Selective dry cow therapy

In January 2022 the use of blanket dry cow therapy as a preventative measure will no longer be allowed. Antibiotics will still be allowed to treat known infections, but the farmer will need to provide evidence of its requirement. Selective dry cow therapy is something that will need to be used as cows with somatic cell counts of <200,000 for the full lactation are deemed as not having an infection and under the new legislation would be deemed as ineligible for antibiotics. This will change the approach to drying off.

It is important to speak with your vet if considering using SDCT on a proportion of your herd.

Some things to keep in mind are the following:

- Do you have enough information for individual animals? Have you a record of the individual animal's clinical cases during the lactation and have you 4 milk recordings for the animal, with the last recording within 4 weeks of dry off. If not, she may not be suitable for SDCT.
- What is the current level of mastitis control in your herd at present? The minimum requirements would be a herd SCC of less than 200,000. Less than 7% new/recent infection rates and less than 2% clinical case rate in the last 3 months.
- You would also need a recent sensitivity or culture test with no presence of mastitis causing bacteria

If you meet the above criteria, then there is a strong possibility that part of your herd would be eligible for SDCT. It is advised to only select cows for SDCT that have a SCC less than 100,000. However, if this is your first time you may wish to lower this.

With SDCT it is extremely important to manage hygiene, without the use of antibiotics there is no preventative measure if dirt or bacteria enters the

teat at dry off. This will mean there is a high chance the cow will calve down with an infection.

It is crucial that the teat and sealer tube is kept sterile, and cows are left to stand in a clean yard afterwards.

If you are not currently carrying out SDCT it is worth starting a checklist now and maintain this going forward:

- Milk record a minimum of 4 times during a lactation with one test 4 weeks before drying off.
- Record all cases of clinical mastitis during the lactation, recording cow details and medication used.
- Monitor your bulk SCC, it should remain below 200,000 cells/ml
- Use the California mastitis test CMT to identify infected quarters and monitor infected cows.
- Record dry-off dates and treatments accurately.

Please see the attached flyer with details of upcoming webinars that examine the use of milk recording records in making better management decisions for SDCT, correct drying off procedure & improved herd SCC management.

## CELLCHECK | VIRTUAL WEEK

18-22 OCTOBER 2021

**The CellCheck Virtual Week is a collaboration between the Dairy Co-ops and others involved in the dairy industry including Animal Health Ireland and Teagasc. As you know there will be regulation changes from January 2022, which will affect antibiotic usage on Irish farms. The topics covered during the CellCheck Virtual Week will look at the main areas of mastitis control for the dry period with a view to improving herd SCC and reducing antibiotic usage at this key time.**

<b>MONDAY</b>	Prof. Martin Cormican, who is the National Clinical Lead on Antimicrobial Resistance & Infection Control Team in the HSE, will introduce the week and explain why changes are necessary to antibiotic use in human and animal health.
<b>18 OCT</b>	
<b>TUESDAY</b>	The focus will be on how to best manage your winter housing with a view to preventing and managing mastitis for a successful dry period.
<b>19 OCT</b>	
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	We will look at effective tubing of cows in the parlour and how to perfect your technique to ensure tubing is as clean and as successful as possible.
<b>20 OCT</b>	
<b>THURSDAY</b>	You can't manage what you don't measure! We will highlight the full benefits of milk recording and how to make the most of the data it provides. We will hear from farmers who are milk recording, who will share their advice, experiences and the benefits they have seen.
<b>21 OCT</b>	
<b>FRIDAY</b>	We conclude the week by highlighting the supports that are available through the CellCheck programme, including the TASA-funded Dry Cow Consults.
<b>22 OCT</b>	

Links to the day's key message will be sent by text message to you by your Co-op. More details and additional information on the message of the day will be released on social media and on the Animal Health Ireland website.

Teagasc, as part of their Let's Talk Dairy podcast series, starting on the 14th of October and running for three weeks will be covering the key messages from the CellCheck Week. Don't forget to join them!

<https://animalhealthireland.ie/programmes/cellcheck/>

# 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 1890 47 47 20.

## Lakeland Dairies / Farmeye Soil Sampling Programme 21/22

Soil sampling provides farmers with an accurate picture of nutrient levels and chemical balances in soil. Correct soil pH levels contribute to the overall productivity and sustainability of the farm for the long term.

Lakeland Dairies has again teamed up with agri-tech specialists Farmeye to further enhance the soil sampling service available to suppliers.

Farmeye is a highly visual, map-based soil management system that can be accessed on a laptop, desktop, or smartphone app, and used to maintain a record of the soil management and nutritional profile of every field on a farm. It provides an easy-to-use and quality map-based system to record as well as track where and when each sample was taken.

By using accurate soil tests to carry corrective actions to address nutrient deficiencies in the soil, farmers can grow more grass and significantly reduce fertiliser usage saving money every year.

As part of the service being offered by Lakeland Dairies and Farmeye, the farm will be mapped out prior to soil samples being collected. Using the SoilMate App, each sample is barcoded and geo-tagged to the field that they were taken in. This allows for complete traceability of results and will give greater consistency in sampling for subsequent years.

The soil sample results will be assessed and interpreted by Lakeland Agri's team of technical experts who will advise farmers on how best to implement improvement actions. In addition, farmers will receive a unique and customised soil report containing colour-coded maps which are easy to read and interpret, along with access to the Farmeye online system. The colour-coded system allows farmers to select and view each individual field to view nutrient status and fertiliser requirements.

The service which includes farm mapping, GPS soil sampling and soil analysis is available to all Lakeland Dairies milk suppliers at a cost of €22/sample. The farm mapping is a once off cost of €2.50/field and fields which were mapped previously will be charged at €19.50 per sample. The soil testing will be carried out from Mid-November, December, January and February each year.

To provide this service in an efficient manner, farmers who intend to carry out soil analysis this year should contact Lakeland Dairies over the next number of weeks to begin the process of mapping.

Milk Suppliers wishing to register for the soil sampling programme must contact Member Relations on 1890 47 47 20 and register by Friday 19th November.

## 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.

## Reducing TB risk.

Here are some steps you can take to reduce the risk of a TB breakdown in your herd.

- Check for badger activity including setts through September and October, notify the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) if you find any and prevent cattle accessing them by fencing off the setts.
  - Throughs should be at least 1 meter off the ground, do not feed concentrates on the ground as badgers may contaminate the area.
  - Badger proof feed stores and sheds.
  - Ensure your perimeter fences are stock proof.
  - Reduce the risk of introducing infected cattle into your herd, source cattle from herds which are TB clear in recent years and look for cattle with a recent TB test date, consider isolating them and doing a post movement TB test to protect the rest of your herd.
  - Reduce the risk of residual infection, if you had a TB breakdown previously, cull older cattle that were exposed to infection at that time.
  - Cull any cattle that ever tested inconclusive
  - Use breeding bulls which are genetically TB resistant, using the Irish Cattle Breeding Federation (ICBF) TB scores.
  - If contract rearing, discuss ways to reduce TB risk with the contractor and prepare for how you would manage a TB breakdown on either the home farm or the rearing farm, and
  - Please see information video on TB at - [www.bovinetb.ie](http://www.bovinetb.ie)
- Source, ERAD, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

# On Farm Electricity Generators

There is some concern that the country could experience power cuts this Winter, while not certain, this issue should get some consideration, particularly for suppliers in Winter milk production systems. Investigating the purchase of a generator might be worthwhile right now.

Generators can be funded by Fundequip 01-6391370 or Milkflex loans 01-6470255. In the longer term equipment, reducing power requirements on your farm could be considered, such as, variable speed pumps and motors, plate coolers, solar panels and efficient, fast cooling milk tanks.



## Tip of the Month

To help you prepare for this dry season CellCheck have produced a leaflet that demonstrates what is involved in effective tubing and also a self assessment checklist for winter housing.

This shows you how to take a fresh look at your winter housing with a view to preventing and managing mastitis and outlines the small changes that you can make that will be effective in reducing the spread of disease.

Both will be available online at [https://animalhealthireland.ie/resources/?q=&resource\\_type%5B%5D=documents&prog%5B%5D=cellcheck](https://animalhealthireland.ie/resources/?q=&resource_type%5B%5D=documents&prog%5B%5D=cellcheck)

The entire dairy industry is working together to support you with the move towards using less antibiotics, and only using antibiotics where necessary to treat disease. Support is available through the CellCheck Dry Cow Consult, which is a chance for you to have a free 3-hour consult with your trained veterinary practitioner. It is an opportunity to assess the current drying off process and dry period performance and identify additional gains that can be made. Some eligibility criteria apply, and for more information and to apply, see <https://animalhealthireland.ie/training/tas-ah-dry-cow-consult/>

The dry period is a crucial time, when new udder infections can be picked up from the environment leading to mastitis, even though clinical signs may not be seen until the start of the next lactation. Hopefully, you had the opportunity to catch some of the key messages that the CellCheck virtual week promoted during their campaign week in October.

Just in case you missed them, they are available on the AHI website to review. In brief, we focused on three areas that are fundamental to a good dry period and will help improve mastitis control and overall herd health and performance at this key time of year.

These areas were:

1. The importance of hygienic tubing cows at dry-off, whether you are using teat sealant, antibiotic tubes or both.
2. The importance of good winter housing management.
3. The benefits of milk recording, and how to get the most value from the milk recording data for your farm.

# Animal Health Certificates

Animal Health Certificates have been sent to all suppliers along with your April Milk Statement. It is a DAFM requirement that all suppliers submit this annually to Lakeland Dairies to allow milk collection.

These certificates are audited by both DAFM and Lakeland Dairies customers and are key for ensuring export certification for dairy products.

They must be returned by FRIDAY 26th NOVEMBER 2021 to allow processing of the certificate before year-end. We recommend you fully read the DAFM coversheets for full details on how to fill out the certificate with your vet.

Pages 1 and 3 must be returned to our Member Relations Division.

- No animal tag list is needed, but you must note the number of cows submitted to the vet for testing on page 3, and the vet must also note that number on page 1.
- You must sign PAGE 3 and your Vet must sign PAGE 1
- Please only return the white copies of the form to Lakeland Dairies, the other copies should be retained by yourself.

You will need this for your Bord Bia audit.

- Please return direct to Member Relations, Lakeland Dairies, Bailieboro, Co. Cavan

## Out of Season Bonus

	November	December	January	February
% of May supply	50%	45%	45%	45%
Payment c/lt	3	5	5	5
SCC Max	300	300	300	300
TBC Max	30	30	30	30
Lactose, min %	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4

Other conditions and quality criteria;  
 No added water or Antibiotics  
 Minimum collection 250 lts  
 No unscheduled collections, carrying or holding milk from one month to the next  
 A signed milk supply agreement must be in place

## 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)