



Bandon Co-Op Heifer Rearing Programme

Have you weighed your maiden heifers yet?

Now is the ideal time to weigh your maidens to see where they are in relation to their targets. This is the most important weighing as it will have a huge bearing on the success of subsequent the breeding season.

Latest figures indicate the cost of rearing a heifer to calve down at 24 months is €1550, with the cost doubling if she doesn't calf until 36 months of age. The 24-month calving heifer won't start to leave a profit until halfway through her 2nd lactation.

Poor fertility is often caused by heifers not reaching their target weights and being underweight by their mating start date (MSD). Underweight heifers will struggle to cycle correctly and in turn lead to poor conception rates. If these heifers do go in calf, they will struggle to meet their full mature bodyweight, they will produce less milk in their first and subsequent lactations, and will struggle to go back in calf and reach our target of 5+ lactations.

The Bandon Co-op Heifer Rearing Programme is designed to assist farmers to improve the efficiency of heifer rearing on farms by putting a greater focus on genetics and achieving weight targets. The aim of the programme is to ensure heifers calve down at 22-26 months to increase their lifetime profitability. This can be achieved by hitting target weights at key stages throughout the heifer's life.

	Age (months)	% of Mature Body Weight	Maint €0 (641kg mature weight)	Maint €10 (591kg mature weight)	Maint €20 (541kg mature weight)
February	0	6.2%	40	37	34
May (Weaning)	3	13.5%	86	80	73
August	6	30%	192	177	162
Oct (Housing)	8	35%	225	207	190
February	12	50%	320	296	270
May (Breeding)	15	60%	385	355	325
Feb (Calving)	24	90%	577	532	487

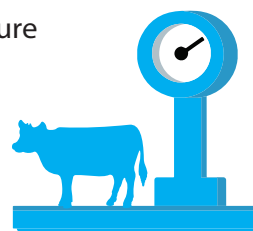
Target heifer weights based on EBI Maintenance Sub Index (Base cow €0 = 641kgs, every €1 = -5kgs)



How often are my heifers weighed?

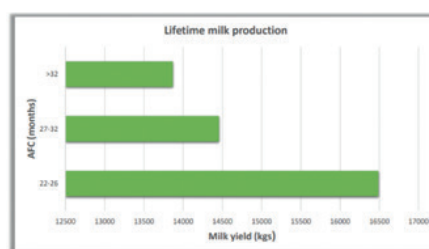
Heifers are weighed 4 times over their lifetime at key stages to ensure they are achieving target weights

1. June/July – Post Weaning
2. October/November – 1st Winter
3. January/February – Pre-Breeding
4. November/December – Pre-Calving



Benefits to achieve target weights and calving at 22-26 months

- ↑ Increased conception rates
- ↑ Increased lifetime yield
- ↑ Increased longevity in the herd
- ↓ Lower replacement rates
- ↑ Increased profitability



Put into perspective: Optimal 22-26 group producing 15% more milk over lifetime!



Technical Support

- Participants will receive technical support and advice from our Agri team on all aspects of heifer rearing
- Target weight and Average Daily Gain (ADG) figures will be set for each individual animal and herd
- Support available to interpret weighing reports from ICBF
- Forage analysis and nutritional advice available to all farmers

Cost

€60 call out fee (includes the weighing of up to 15 cattle)
 +€1 per head over 15 cattle
 20 heifers - €65 total
 30 heifers - €75 total



What can I do for heifers not on target?

- Weigh heifers
- Separate underweight heifers from those at or above target weight
- Give priority feeding to the underweight group
- Focus on getting lighter group out to grass earlier
- Feed 2-3kg/head/day to the underweight heifers. (Calves on good grass plus meal will gain 0.8kg/day which is 100kg in 125 days)



If you would like to join the Bandon Co-op Heifer Rearing Programme in 2023 please contact your local Sales Rep or Brendan Scully on 087-3453495 or bscully@bandoncoop.ie



24 MONTH REPLACEMENT HEIFER (21% Protein)

- ✓ This ration is specially aimed at Dairy Replacements in the first winter feeding period to maximise growth while avoiding over-conditioning
- ✓ High energy feed with high quality sources of protein such as Hipro Soya
- ✓ Achieves maximum skeleton growth and body condition before breeding, without laying down excessive fat in the developing mammary glands
- ✓ High levels of calcium and phosphorus encourage bone growth and development, building the future frame for the future herd
- ✓ Buffer included to promote rumen stability and improve performance
- ✓ Available in 25kg, mini-bulk and bulk