



NO POST-WEANING GROWTH CHECK IN SHINE ONCE-A-DAY CALVES

ANOTHER INNOVATION FROM BONANZA CALF NUTRITION

CALVES AT AN IRISH BEEF FARM ARE WEANING TWO WEEKS EARLIER WITH NO GROWTH CHECK SINCE A ONCE A DAY MILK FEEDING SYSTEM WAS INTRODUCED.

Noel O'Shea rears 135 Friesian bull calves at Watergrasshill, Cork and is also involved in a machinery enterprise. Dividing his time between the two businesses is challenging so Noel decided to try Shine Once-a-Day calf milk replacer after discussing the system with Francis and Eamon Sweeney at Glanbia Agri-business.

Glanbia Agri-business manufacture the GAIN brand of premium quality animal feed.

Noel was initially nervous about using the product and therefore fed it twice per day for the first week. But after switching to a once a day regime, he quickly discovered that calves were more content. And although the powder allocation is the same, concentrate intake is higher. "When the calves were fed at 7.30am daily with free access to dry feed they were more content than when they were fed twice daily," says Noel, whose mother, Rosarie, and son, Eamon, assist with the calf rearing.

Calves of the same age are sourced from the one livestock market at the end of January, ensuring an even batch that make the best use of spring grass at turnout in April.

Calves are grouped in batches of eight when they arrive on farm and are fed 600 grams of Shine Once-a-Day mixed with three litres of water. There is free access to fresh water, dry feed and straw in every pen.

Noel says calves are significantly easier to wean and there is no post-weaning check. "Calves are weaned around 14 days quicker compared to the previous twice a day system and calves are healthier," says Noel.

Fresh bedding is introduced daily and pens cleaned out weekly. Noel is certain that this reduces the risk of pneumonia. "We have significantly less difficulty with scour and pneumonia," says Noel.

According to Joe Murphy of Bonanza Calf Nutrition, Shine Once-a-day is made with skim milk and buttermilk along with 4 plant oils to ensure slow even digestion. The skim protein and fat form a soft curd in the calf's stomach taking up to 14 hours to be digested. This compares to whey protein that needs to be digested in 1 hour, he added.

Shine Once-a-Day, together with palatable and nutritious dry feed are now a key part of Noel's business. All calves are castrated and after weaning are reared on silage together with 1.5kg of concentrate for the first winter and fattened on 8kgs of concentrate for the final 120 days before slaughter. Average kill out weight for each carcass is 340kg.

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Francis Sweeney (Glanbia), Joe Murphy (Bonanza) and farmer Noel O'Shea with his son Eamonn



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