



# MILK YIELD UPLIFT IN REPLACEMENTS REARED ON SHINE ONCE-A-DAY

## ANOTHER INNOVATION FROM BONANZA CALF NUTRITION

### A DAIRY FARMING COUPLE SAY THEIR HOMEBRED HEIFER REPLACEMENTS REARED ON SHINE ONCE-A-DAY MILK REPLACER PRODUCE MORE MILK THAN CONVENTIONALLY-FED CALVES.

Liam and Helen Sherlock milk 120 cows with the majority calving in the spring. All calves are retained – heifers as herd replacements while the male calves are reared as bull beef.

In 2011, the Sherlocks were expanding cow numbers and they looked at ways of building efficiencies into their calf rearing system and improving performance.

With advice from their local coop rep, they started to feed their calves Shine Once-a-Day. This milk replacer is the only product on the market that contains unique levels of buttermilk and skimmed milk that can be digested throughout the day.

Initially the Sherlocks were sceptical that the calves would perform as well as conventionally fed calves but were convinced in a few days of trying it.

All their heifers are hitting growth targets and entering their first lactation at an average of 25 months. Their ability to milk is also slightly better than that of conventionally fed calves, says Liam.

“The milk performance of cows and heifers is impressive after they are reared on Once-a-Day,” he explains.

Calves are fed 600g of Shine Once-a-Day for one week and 700g thereafter until weaning gets underway. Weaning is based on weight – 80-85kg at eight weeks.

Calves have access to youngstock dry feed, water and straw at all times – a critical component in any calf rearing system.

“I’m really impressed at how the Once-a-Day calves perform, especially post-weaning on grass,” says Liam.

Shine Once-a-day is made with skim milk and buttermilk so forms a lump of soft cheese in the calf’s stomach and is digested over many hours unlike standard calf milk which spends as little as an hour in the stomach.

According to Joe Murphy of Bonanza, calf trials on Shine Once-a-day in France found that rumen development almost doubled compared to twice a day milk feeding. This meant he explained that calves could eat more dry feed before and after weaning. Calves can convert 3kg of dry feed into 1kg of growth compared to 300g with more mature animals so getting calves to eat more dry feed is very cost effective, he added.

To consume dry feed, calves need fresh clean water and will drink 4L of water for every kg of dry feed consumed. As the milk fed goes into the stomach and not the rumen, milk will not replace this water requirement. When water is withheld feed consumption drops by 60% and growth rates drop by 30%. So withholding plenty of good clean water is nearly worse than an outbreak of scour or pneumonia.

Finally research has shown that calves consume straw half as fast as hay but produce twice the level of saliva when doing so. This means calves eat more dry feed when straw is offered and because they produce more saliva they can digest more nutrients and the saliva acts as a buffer to reduce digestive upsets. Overconsumption of hay or haylage can also lead to potbellied calves as the rumen becomes overloaded with nonfermentable fibre.

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Joe Murphy (Bonanza )and Damien Sutton ( Glanbia) with farmer Liam Sherlock.



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