

Accelerate Weaning by two Weeks

Weaning accelerated by two weeks in calves fed Quinns 17% Calf Follow-On with Shine Once-a-Day replacer

A young farmer's vision for improving calf performance on his family's dairy farm by changing the feeding system from cow's milk to a once-a-day milk replacer lives on after his tragic death.

John Kennedy, who lost his life in a quad bike accident in March 2017, had convinced his parents, Donal and Winnie, and brothers, Danial, Colin and Mark, of the benefits of switching to Shine Once-a-Day replacer.

That product, fed in combination with Quinn's 17% Calf Follow-On ration, has resulted in calves weaning two weeks earlier, at 10 weeks. The family farms at Askinch, Coolgreaney, near Gorey, currently milking 135 cows but rising to 150 next spring.

The land at Askinch is heavy and poor draining so the Kennedys keep mature cow weight at 550kgs or lower to maximise grass utilisation.

The Kennedys had never fed milk replacer until John persuaded them to introduce Shine Once-a-Day.

John had seen the results of this feeding system while working on a farm in West Cork; he was adamant this represented a solution to help reduce pressure on labour during the spring period. With the prospect of better rumen development and performance at grass too, the family went ahead with introducing Shine Once-a-Day.

After calves are born they are fed three litres of colostrum within two hours and transition milk for at least two weeks, twice daily.

Thereafter, they receive 600g of replacer mixed with three litres of water daily, in one feed, at a mixing rate of 20% dry matter.

At first, this was balanced with a mix of barley, beans and a locally-produced calf ration but the Kennedys found the perfect complement to Shine Once-a-Day with Quinns 17% Calf Follow-On ration.

This was recommended by Quinns ruminant specialist, Ciaran Murphy, for its palatability, digestibility, rumen development and health.

According to Donal Kennedy; "Ciaran suggested this ration in particular for palatability, digestibility, rumen development and health. Ciaran said Quinns Calf Follow-On ration is a 17% palatable mix designed to encourage high intakes which quickly develops a strong and healthy rumen. With Calf Follow-On, the high cereal, soya bean meal and maize content ensures the calf is receiving high quality ingredients to ensure high ADG's which enables the calf to be weaned earlier."

The results were astonishing. Calves weaned at 100kg liveweight in an average of 10 weeks – it previously took calves 12 weeks to achieve this target.

Post-weaning liveweight gain has also improved. Calves were moved to grass from March 24th and offered 1kg ration daily through the summer. Their average liveweight on October 12th was 210kg.

"We are looking forward to the calf rearing season of 2018, we can't wait to try the system with Shine Once-a-Day and Quinns 17% Calf Follow-On ration from the start of the season," says Donal.

Donal joked that John wanted to introduce Shine in spring 2016 but didn't get the go-ahead because of the low milk price. "With hindsight, I am certain Once-a-Day is a key part of the system, regardless of price," says Donal.

A high level of low heat skimmed milk and buttermilk powder are the key ingredients in Shine Once-a-Day.

Joe Murphy, of manufacturers Bonanza Calf Nutrition, says the casein present in the skimmed milk and buttermilk clots in the acid present in the abomasum of the calf; this enables the calf to better digest the milk and feel contented for longer.

"Most powders now contain too much vegetable protein which is even more difficult for the calf to digest," says Joe.

For further information on calf nutrition contact Quinns on 059 6481266



Donal, Casey and Daniel Kennedy and Ciaran Murphy (Quinns of Baltinglass) with the late John Kennedy (inset)

Sowing Spring Crops

The time is fast approaching to sow spring crops for Harvest 2018. As always Quinns are stocking a wide range of cereal and bean varieties from the department of agriculture recommended lists. It is important not only to choose the right crop but also the right variety for your farm.

Spring Beans:

Growing spring Beans in Ireland has become very popular in the last number of years due partly to the protein payment available but also the fact that beans can provide an excellent break in a cereal rotation with increased yields in a following cereal crop. 2017 also proved that Beans can be a very profitable crop with the right management. We are learning more about the agronomy of beans every year and the better our management gets the higher the yield potential. Sowing date is important and depends very much on soil type and soil moisture. Seeding rate is also very important. The target population for Spring Beans is 30-35 plants per m²; this equates to a seeding rate of 35-40 seeds/m² at 90% germination. It's very important to know the thousand seed weight of the variety you are sowing as this has a huge influence on kg/ha or stone/acre of seed sown. **Fanfare** will be the main bean provided.

Spring Cereals: Quinns have an excellent selection of spring cereal seed available whether you are hoping to sow barley, oats or wheat.

The spring barley varieties available are: **Mickle, KWS Irina, Propino, Paustian** and **Planet**. The average spring barley yield has increased significantly in the last number of years and all of these varieties are excellent yielders. Although Planet is the highest yielder at a relative yield of 105; it is weaker on straw breakdown and needs extra attention coming up to harvest. Propino is now the oldest variety on the list but has been very consistent on a lot of farms over the last number of years. It is predicted that there will be increased demand for spring barley due to the fact there wasn't as much acres of winter cereals sown. It is important for anybody looking for specific varieties with specific seed treatments to **order seed early**. In relation to oats we have the ever popular and high yielding **Husky** which continues to perform well every year. **Quintus** is our main spring wheat variety; the highest yielding on the recommended list. Contact your local Quinns technical sales advisor for more information on a variety to suit your farm.

| AGRONOMIC & QUALITY CHARACTERISTICS* | Recommended | | | | | Provisionally Recommended | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|--------|----------|---------|------------|---------------------------|--------|--------|
| | KWS IRINA | MICKLE | PAUSTIAN | PROPINO | RGT PLANET | GANGWAY | HACKER | LIMONA |
| Relative yield ♦ | 103 | 100 | 101 | 100 | 105 | 106 | 102 | 102 |
| Straw height (cm) | 72.9 | 69.1 | 74.7 | 77.8 | 76.1 | 76.9 | 74.6 | 76.9 |
| Resistance to lodging | 7 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 5 | (7) | (7) | (7) |
| Straw breakdown | 7 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 5 | (7) | (6) | (7) |
| Earliness of ripening | 6 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 5 | (5) | (7) | (7) |
| Resistance to: | | | | | | | | |
| Mildew | 8 | 5 | 8 | 5 | 8 | (8) | (8) | (8) |
| Rhynchosporium | 6 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 7 | (7) | (7) | (7) |
| Brown Rust | 6 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 6 | (7) | (7) | (6) |
| Net Blotch | 8 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 5 | (8) | (7) | (8) |
| Quality: | | | | | | | | |
| 1,000 grain wt. (g) | 51.5 | 51.2 | 51.3 | 53.6 | 52.9 | 50.8 | 50.2 | 49.5 |
| Hectolitre wt. (kg/hl) | 63.8 | 66.5 | 66.1 | 66.1 | 65.2 | 67.4 | 67.0 | 66.1 |
| Screenings % (<2.2 mm) | 2.2 | 1.4 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 1.8 | 1.3 | 1.5 | 2.5 |
| Grain Protein % | 10.4 | 10.3 | 10.3 | 10.5 | 10.2 | 10.3 | 10.5 | 10.5 |
| Year First Listed | 2014 | 2013 | 2015 | 2011 | 2017 | 2018 | 2018 | 2018 |

* Based on trial results from 2015, 2016 and 2017.

♦ Yields are expressed as a percentage of the mean of Propino and Mickle (100 = 8.24 t/ha @ 15% moisture content)

