Act now to prevent a drop in mid-season Protein
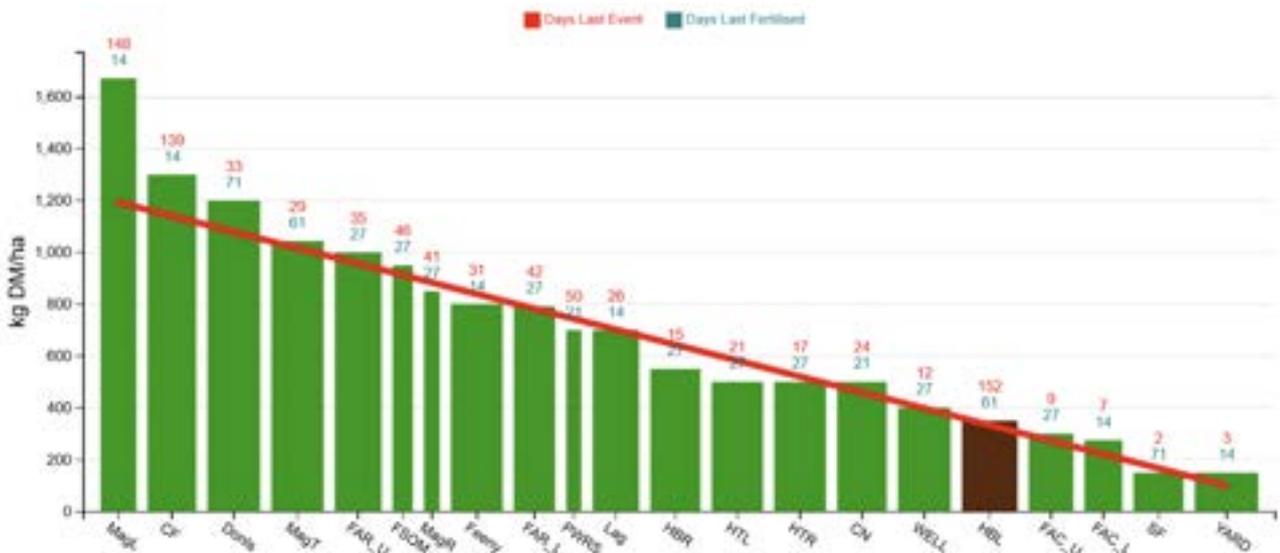
Lakeland DAIRIES

Farmer Focus

Dermot Heany Kilberry Co.Meath

Dermot is currently milking 222 cows on 78ha with a stocking rate of 2.85LU/ha. Dermot is currently full time at grass with an average farm cover of 667kg dm/ha. From reviewing grass growth on the farm in previous years Dermot has decided to close 4ha of the farm off for reseeding and a further 10ha of platform for silage. Mid-season stocking rate will be 3.5lu/ha as a result. 50% of the farm has been reseeded in the last 3 years and soil fertility is good leaving Dermot confident that he should be capable of carrying the stocking rate.

Dermot started his 2nd rotation on the 3rd of April with first grazed paddocks with covers of >1100kg dm/ha. There are still 3 paddocks left on the first rotation so Dermot will continue to graze them by night and graze 2nd round by day. Cows are currently being allocated 19-20 kg of grass.

Clover paddocks have all received slurry in late January + 25 units of N in mid-March. Non clover paddocks received 23 units of N in early February and a further 35 units in mid-March.

Average protein for March was 3.54%.

Act now to prevent a drop in mid-season Protein

▶ Ensure farm cover does not drop below 600kg dm/ha.

▶ Start second round when first 4-5 grazed paddocks have a cover greater than of 1100 kg dm/ha.

▶ Match stocking rate with ability to grow grass.

▶ Research showing that farmers must allow for 18.5-19kg grass per cow + concentrate.

Stocking Rate	Growth rate required mid-season
2.5 lu/ha	47
3.0 lu/ha	57
3.5 lu/ha	67
4.0 lu/ha	77

▶ Do not forget about reseeding when closing off ground for silage.

▶ Stay up to date with nutrient application.