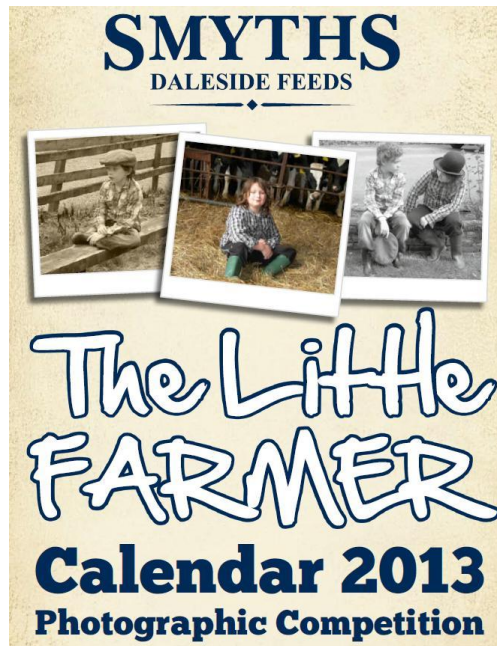




06th September 2012 – Newsletter

THE LITTLE FARMER CALENDAR – 2013



IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN - WE ARE CALLING ALL THE LITTLE FARMERS OUT THERE TO SEND IN THEIR PHOTOS, THEY COULD BE HELPING ON THE FARM, OR JUST HAVING FUN!

FOR TERMS AND CONDITIONS, VISIT OUR WEBSITE – NEWS SECTION, FACEBOOK OR EMAIL CONTACT@SMYTHSFEEDS.COM AND WE WILL SEND YOU A COPY.

Farm Management Notes - September 2012

By Jeremy Mc Gonigle

Grass growth has been very variable over the past month, with heavier soils recorded growth rates in the range of 35 - 40 kg per day with most of drier farms recorded 60-70 kg per day. The net result of this is good grass on most farms; the challenge is the heavy showers or rain fall which is causing major problems on many dairy and beef farms, with grazing conditions becoming very difficult on many farms.

Many dairy farms are feeding silage in relation to grass dry matter, grass, scarce, or difficult ground conditions, at the rate between 20-30 kg per/cow/day or 5-7 kg of dry matter per cow/day based on 24% dry matter

A cow milking 28lt of milk while part time on grass / silage would need min of 7-8 kg of a 18% dairy ration, if one is to hold her body condition and milk yield, this is based on grass quality of a 16% dry matter and protein 18% this will vary from farm to farm on length of time grazing and weather conditions.

There are number of factors to consider at farm level to look at, on how much concentrates should one use, silage quality , grass supply and quality, cow type, body cow condition and the number of first calving heifers in the herd, under the above conditions first calving heifers would need +1-2kg more per/ head/day.

Beef cattle and bulls would need to be supplemented if they are to achieve their target weight for slaughter, if present wet weather continues, feeding at rate of 6-8 kg per 550-750 kg body weight, if grass is becoming scarce these cattle would better housed and fed, and allow lighter cattle to graze the grass.

WEANING OF SUCKLED CALVES IN AUTUMN.

Weaning can be very stressful for both cow and calf. If badly managed the weaning process will cause lack of thrive and predispose calves to disease such as pneumonia.

The harmful stress at weaning can be reduced by the following.

- Introduce a good palatable creep feed(do not take short cuts at this stage of your calf live) feed a well balance diet to counter act the stress at weaning and give top performance to your calves as they were suckling their mothers. Diets Such as;
Mmunchy Super Calf / Bull Stage 2,
Mmunchy Calf Weanling or
Calf Weanling Gold.

These are diets that are designed to give maximum daily live weight gain.

Introduce at least 4-6weeks prior to weaning. Feed 1-2 kg or more per/head/day, depending on weight of the calf and available of grass and quality.

- Allow calves to forward creep feed graze into a field ahead of the cows. This weakens the cow/calf bond and calves also get benefits of the better quality grass.
- Weaning calves at grass avoids the double stress of housing and weaning at the same time