

Simmental Competing with all breeds on 500 Cow Co. Louth Farm

Tateera & Rathmore Farms operates one of the largest Suckling enterprises in Ireland, farming just under 1,000 acres based around Castletown just outside Dundalk in Co. Louth. John Kingham is the operations manager for this Suckler herd and states that there will be 510 cows calving down in 2021.

Running such a large Suckler Herd requires a lot of planning and John's first emphasis was placed on getting his ideal cow. For John this cow must have good calving ability and be well able to rear its calf to its full potential as all progeny are sold as weanlings. Fertility is the other key factor as farm profitability depends on a calf per cow per year.

Cow Type:

The cow type on this farm is Simmental and Limousin and the cross between these two breeds.

This mix gives John the ideal platform to cross with other terminal breeds or mate back to the cows own breed.

Stock Bulls & A.I.

Presently there are 19 stock bulls on the farm. These bulls are split between the following breeds, Simmental, Limousin, Charolais, Belgian Blue and Shorthorn. John finds this mix of sire breeds give him great flexibility at mating time with the aim always being to breed a quality replacement heifer or male progeny that will deliver for his purchasers. Currently there are 4 Simmental stock bulls on the farm.

In the springtime each year 160 cows are artificially inseminated to Simmental & Limousin, with sexed semen used if available. Cows are currently calving down to bulls like Popes Grandsalm, Coose Jericho & Bosahan Dynamo.



Replacement Policy

The policy on the farm is to retain their own replacements with the occasional purchase of quality heifers when required. Presently there are 50 homebred heifers being artificially inseminated with another 34 weanlings being brought forward for serving later in the year.

Sales Policy

All progeny are sold at the weanling stage as this allows for maximum cow numbers to be maintained. The farm holds a special heifer sale each October at Carnaross Mart with 140 heifers being sold last October. This year there are 160 quality heifer calves already earmarked for this sale which will take place on Friday October 1st at Carnaross Mart.

All the weanling bulls are sold direct from the farm to mostly repeat customers either for bull beef or to take on as quality stores. John is very pleased with the returns on his Simmental weanling bulls where they match or in cases outperform other breeds. John's motto is very simple "if you purchase a top-quality stock bull regardless of the breed, you will have no problem selling their progeny". The Simmental bull weanlings easily reach 450kgs at 10 months of age and go on to deliver for his customers.





