UNIT : THE BEEF COW – FERTILITY

STAFF

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Unit is to highlight the importance of cow fertility and maintaining a tight calving pattern.

On completion of the Unit students will recognise the importance of a tight calving pattern, identify the reasons for poor fertility and be able to describe the key components of cow fertility management.

KEY WORDS

MAINTAINING A TIGHT CALVING PERIOD – labour at calving, cow and calf management, increased weaning weights, even batches of calves for sale, reduced costs and greater returns

INCREASING CONCEPTION RATES

REDUCING THE INTERVAL BETWEEN CALVING AND CONCEPTION

REASONS FOR POOR FERTILITY – poor condition at bulling, difficult calving, diseases, poor heat detection

HEAT DETECTION – restless, mounting or standing to be mounted, scuffed tail head and pin bones, mucus from vulva

IMPROVING COW FERTILITY – detecting the cause, feeding after calving, breeding, avoiding difficult calvings, herd health, heat detection and synchronisation, keeping eye on the bull

BULL / ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION (AI) – top quality bulls, availability of more than one breed, cost or danger of keeping a bull, biosecurity and opportunity to synchronise heat and insemination BUT heat detection, labour and handling and competence

RESOURCES

EBLEX (2006) Beef Action for Profit 18 – Better Returns from Planned Weaning

EBLEX (2007) Beef Action for Profit – 19 – Better Returns from AI

HCC (2007) Making the Most of your Suckler Cows

HCC (2008) Profitable Beef Breeding

LEARNING ACTIVITIES