

# SPRING CALVING SUCKLER COW NUTRITION AND BODY SCORING TIMELINE



## Late Pregnancy & Calving

### Maximise calf survival

Aim to get all cows to target BCS by 30 days pre-calving and then maintain.

## Early Lactation

### Maximise milk production and ovulation

Driven by high quality spring pasture.

## Breeding

### Maximise conception rates

Continue to offer quality pasture to support peak lactation and embryo survival.

## Early Pregnancy & Late Lactation

### Maximise calf growth

Calf growth increasingly driven by pasture quality as milk production falls.

## Mid Pregnancy & Dry Period

### Manage cow condition

Aim for uniform BCS across the herd. Group and feed cows accordingly.

### Performance Driver

Essential to feed to maintain BCS in last 30 days. Good nutrition maximises calf vigour, colostrum quality and peak lactation.

### Performance Driver

Total milk yield driven by how high peak lactation is. Good nutrition maximises lactation, ovulation and embryo survival. If cows <2.5 raising BCS will increase ovulation.

### Cost Saver

Cow's nutritional demand and intake falls at weaning. Priority for high quality pasture shifts to calves. Cows can be used to manage grass quality and tidy up paddocks.

### Cost Saver

Use BCS gained at grass to reduce winter feed costs when dietary energy is expensive. Any drop in BCS must be controlled.

Assess cow condition score. Preferentially feed leaner cows.

Last date to adjust feeding to ensure cows reach target BCS 30 days before calving.

Calving Date

Cows likely to start cycling.

Peak Lactation

First cycle ends.

Second cycle ends. Cows need to be back in calf to maintain 365 day calving interval. Remove bulls.

From day 155 cow is contributing little to calf growth. Can consider weaning, but must have high quality pasture for calves.

Wean at 175-210 days  
Wean light cows and heifers early, fat cows later. Use opportunity to BCS cows.



-90 -75 -60 -45 -30 -15 0 Days 15 30 45 60 75 90 105 120 135 150 165 180 195 210 225 240 255 275

Aim for target BCS at calving

BCS 2.5 to 3

TARGET

Essential to maintain or increase BCS

BCS 2.5 to 3

TARGET

Cows likely to gain condition. Allow increase BCS prior to weaning

BCS 3 to 3.5

TARGET

Can allow BCS to fall by up to 1.0 CS to hit target for calving

BCS 2.5-3.0

TARGET

Highest Grass Quality & Quantity

Lowest Grass Quality & Quantity

Highest Nutritional Demand & Intake

Lowest Nutritional Demand & Intake

## Energy & Dry Matter Requirements for 700Kg cow

\* These figures assume 20% grass wastage

<b>30 days pre calving</b>	90MJ ME/day 10.3Kgs DM/day (assuming 10.5ME forage)*	<b>1st 60 days lactation</b>	135MJ ME/day 13.5Kgs DM/day (assuming 12ME grass)*	<b>Peak lactation -&gt; 6 weeks post bulling</b>	155MJ ME/day 16.9Kgs DM/day (assuming 11ME grass)*	<b>Late Lactation</b>	120MJ ME/day 13.7Kgs DM/day (assuming 11ME grass)*	<b>Maintenance</b>	77MJ ME/day 8.8Kgs DM/day (assuming 10.5ME forage)*
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These guidelines are applicable to mature cows on a pasture based spring calving system. Individual cow requirements may vary. Cows with twins and heifers may require different management at certain stages. Internal parasites and mineral deficiencies can also affect nutritional efficiency and BCS. Peak lactation and cow cycling dates are approximate.

QMS would like to acknowledge Trevor Cook for his input to this publication and Rhidian Jones for his assistance.

For further information, visit [www.qmscotland.co.uk](http://www.qmscotland.co.uk)

