

# Saving time, money and producing better animals

**Saving time, money and producing better animals often involves an initial big capital outlay. Feeding calves Shine Once-a-day produces the benefits with no extra cost or outlay. Many farmers went away from once a day feeding as they we're only saving time but with Shine Once-a-day farmers see it as a vital part of their calf rearing regardless as the whether they are calving all year round, block calving or rearing calves for beef.**

Father and son John and Jason Rankin run the Cannons farm situated in the Ards peninsula in Co Down together with Farm Manager (equity holder) Chris Catherwood. They have been successfully employing Shine Once-a-Day to rear heifers many of whom will be sold as in calf heifers as culling rates are 15% on the farm and cows numbers are stable.

“**saving more than an hours work a day**”

With 100 cows calving in February feeding Shine Once-a-day is saving more than an hours work a day during the spring. Calves are stomach tubed with 2 ½ litres of colostrum at birth. They are then fed twice daily on cow's milk for 4 to 5 days and then cow's milk and Shine Once-a-day powder, from Bonanza Calf Nutrition, on a 50:50 basis for the next two days. Thereafter they receive Shine Once-a-Day at a rate of 2 ½ L/day through to weaning at six weeks. Shine Once-a-day is mixed at a rate of 200g/L mixed milk replacer or 250g of powder in 1L water. Jason Rankin feels that Shine is very easy to mix and feed and that anyone could do it. Straw, water and meal are available to calves at all times.

After weaning calves are offered ad-lib concentrate calf weaner feed and are turned out to grass in mid April. Some dry feed is fed during the early part of the winter but in total heifers receive no more than 175kg concentrates before they calve as 2 year olds.



Coordinating arrangements for this week's calf rearing workshop: James Gabbey, John Thompson and Sons; Jason Rankin and Chris Catherwood

The farm extends to 118 hectares and is currently home to 175 milking cows. The Rankins are exponents of a New Zealand based approach to milk production. This entails the block calving of the cows in early spring with a total commitment, thereafter, to produce as much milk as possible from grazed grass.

To date in 2010 the herd is on target to produce up to 6,400 litres of milk per cow at 4.83% butterfat and 3.78% protein from a maximum of 800 kg of meal. The cows are a mix of New Zealand Friesians and crossbreds, all suited to a grazing based production system. Calving commences on February 1st and continues on for the next 12 weeks.