

SIMPLICITY IS THE NAME OF THE GAME

Nestled 850ft above sea level near Kells in Antrim, James and Andrew Adair manage a well-run 130 cow housed herd. An all year calving herd, average milk yield stands at over 10,000kg with solids 4.18% butterfat and 3.37% protein producing 766kg per cow. DM concentrate usage stands at approx. 2,236kg per cow. Currently, the herd contains about 30% first calvers as they are building up the herd towards 160 cows with 70 more young heifers recently served. With simplicity in mind, the herd are fed a diet of concentrates, straw and liquid feeds with the single forage source coming from grass silage.

After a visit to the winter fair last December, James & Andrew decided to upgrade their diet feeder and invested in a New Mech-fiber® 350 with PACE® Connect controls. "We bought our first Keenan in 2008 and were very pleased with how it had worked. Maintenance with the Keenan is low, simply oil and grease it but the herd had outgrown the old wagon so it was time to change" commented James.

FARM FACTS

Location	Co. Antrim
Keenan since	2008
No. of cows	130
Yield (kg)	10,147
Solids (kg)	766
Concentrate usage (DM kg)	2,236

Going with PACE® Connect has been a good decision added Andrew. "It's simple to use, feeding the right amount is easy and there is no more remembering rations in your head". Part time helper Ian, who usually feeds added "it definitely saves me time feeding, Andrew or James will tell me if the numbers have changed and I adjust it on the box. No more calculating in my head. With the revolutions being counted, I am able to get a lot more consistency into the mix every day".

Looking at it from the management side of the business, Andrew added "The support from the inTouch Centre is also a big plus. The feed data goes to them automatically and once I add in the milk data, we get rapid feedback, and we can compare the results against the best. They have amended the rations for me and we can monitor loading variation, especially at the weekend when Ian isn't feeding".

Since the new machine arrived, the Adair's have seen improvements in different ways. "Milk has gone up around 1 litre, butterfat improved and there is definitely less stomach upsets" says Andrew. "The mix is more consistent and they are cleaning it up better with less sorting. Diet feeding makes cows last longer and we enjoy seeing healthy cows milking well!" concludes Andrew.



Photograph by Roger Jones