

## **O'Neill Family Farm, Artigarvan, North Tyrone**

The O'Neill family have farmed in the area for over 250 years. The farm is situated 4 miles from Strabane in the rolling hills of north Tyrone.

Albert and his brother Wesley farm in partnership with their parents and the farm is 106 hectares of sandy loam soil and is mainly in grass with 16ha of spring cereals grown for both harvesting grain and whole cropping.

A herd of 200 Holstein X Montbeliarde cows are calved in the autumn/winter and is the main enterprise. The rolling herd average is currently 9,300 litres, with 3800 litres from forage. A key focus for the farm has been improving soil health and fertility. A 4-cut silage system is in place with a low potash silage grown for dry cows.

In 2020, 14.6 t DM/ha of grass was grown. The dairy herd is grazed full time over the summer period, with turnout normally mid-March and cows housed again by mid to late October. Pre-mowing is practised during the grazing season with a target grass cover of 3000 kg/ha grazing down to 1700 kg/ha. The 36 ha grazing block is easily accessible for the herd with further land available at the shoulders of the season. Clover is used in the grazing swards.

The O'Neill Farm is an Agrisearch Grasscheck farm, measuring grass during the grazing season with regular grass forage analysis also provided and weather data recorded through a weather station on the farm.

The farm is now part of the AFBI Beacon Farm Network, looking at sustainable farm practises and carbon foot printing.

Albert enjoys completing projects in the farm workshop. Visitors on the virtual tour will be in for a treat when they see some of his very innovative features to reduce labour and improve efficiency.