



Billy Gilmore - Cartron



Billy Gilmore



34.82 hectares



animal management

CONTRACT REARING SYSTEM

Billy, along with his wife Anne, operate a contract heifer rearing system, rearing over 200 heifers a year. The system has changed over the years, moving from a mixed system consisting of an autumn-calving suckling system, a spring-lambing flock and tillage enterprise.

Billy and Anne operate a contract rearing system. Contract heifer rearing is a written agreement whereby the dairy farmer supplies a heifer to be reared at an agreed fee per head per day. In return the contract rearer undertakes to care for and return an in-calf heifer in good condition. The replacement heifers may be moved from and returned to the owner's farm at different ages depending on the individual agreements made.

On the Gilmore farm, calves are gradually turned out to grass after arriving on the farm and Billy puts a huge emphasis on the importance of grass measuring for the calves and year-old heifers. This ensures animals have high quality grass ahead of them and allows Billy and Anne to reduce the inputs of concentrate and feed animals from majority home-produced forage in the diet. This reduces the overall costs.

Farmer Interview

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R88E15YHscg>



Photo credit: photos generated from farmer interview - Teagasc – Agriculture and Food Development Authority