

Body condition scoring your herd

When and why

Seasonal/split calving herds

When	Why
1. At 8–10 weeks before drying-off*	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– To decide if the diet should be adjusted to increase BCS before cows dry off.
2. At drying-off	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– To check if cows have achieved BCS profile desired at calving or not.– To decide if intended dry cow diet needs adjusting.
3. Just before calving*	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– To check if cows have held their body condition through the dry period.– To decide if intended fresh cow / early lactation diet needs adjusting.
4. Two weeks before mating start date*	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– To check if cows have lost excessive condition since calving.– To decide if intended diet during mating period needs adjusting.
5. Three weeks after mating start date	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– To check if cows are gaining body condition.– To decide if diet being fed during mating period needs adjusting.

**1, 3 and 4 are the most important times to body condition score cows in each calving group.*

Year-round calving herds

When	Why
1. At drying-off	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– To check if cows have achieved BCS profile desired at calving or not.– To decide if intended dry cow diet needs adjusting.
2. Just before calving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– To check if cows have held their body condition through the dry period.– To decide if intended fresh cow / early lactation diet needs adjusting.
3. 40–60 days after calving (when eligible for insemination)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– To check if cows have lost excessive condition since calving.– To decide if intended diet during mating needs adjusting.