



Grazed grass is still the cheapest and best feed for cattle

Get Cattle and Fertiliser out

Grassland Management

- Grazed grass is still the cheapest and best feed for cattle at 10c per kg DM
- Get stock out as early as possible – save the silage already in the pit/bale. It will be much more expensive to make this year
- Complete a spring rotation planner
- **Put in paddocks to grow more grass** – you need to utilise every blade of grass grown
- Cattle should not be in the same paddock for more than three days to protect regrowth's and maximise growth rates, **“grow in three weeks and graze in three days”**
- **Reels and pigtails will be key**
- 70-75% of all grass is grown by the end of June so we need to act now

Fertiliser

- Secure your silage fertiliser and your first two rounds of fertiliser now
- Apply fertiliser as soon as possible at **25 -35** units of Nitrogen (N) per acre depending on demand
- Follow three weeks later with another round.
- Check soil samples, if you have low index P& K soils apply at least 1.5 bags of 18-6-12 per acre by the end of April. If you have index 3 or 4, you may be able to skip P & K for this year.
- Apply lime, where required to grazing ground, it will release P from the soil and a possible 64 units of N per acre. **Avoid lime on silage ground before harvest**

Safeguard Fodder For Next Winter

Fodder Budget

- Silage is still much cheaper than meal at 20c versus 44c per kg DM
- Complete a fodder budget – what silage do you require for next winter, how much is left in the pits, how much do you have to grow
- Ensure to build in a 3-4 week buffer
- Plan for top quality silage 72 DMD + for younger stock and finishing cattle to reduce the meal requirement. Fertilise early and cut before the 20th of May
- Suckler cow silage can be cut later, up to the end of June.
- 75% of fodder requirements for next winter should be in place by the end of June
- **Only grow what you need**
- Graze the rest to reduce fertiliser requirement

Fertiliser for silage

- Keep slurry for silage ground
- First cut silage requires 80 – 100 units of Nitrogen (N) and Potassium (K) per acre. It requires 16 units of Phosphorous (P) per acre
- **With Slurry:** Apply 3,000 gallons of slurry, 60 units Chemical Nitrogen and 15 units of sulphur per acre. Aim for 80 units of N per acre
- **No Slurry:** Apply 3 bags of 13-6-20 plus 41 units of chemical Nitrogen and 15 units of sulphur per acre. Aim for 80 units of N per acre
- 75% of all silage required should be cut by end of June
- **Surplus Bales**, Don't forget, if you reduce the amount of fertiliser applied to grazing ground you won't get as many surplus bales

What else can you do?

- Cull all unproductive stock – cows not in calf, cows that lost calves etc
- Plan the years fertiliser, can you afford it, if not, what are your choices
- Do a cash flow budget
- Talk to your Advisor – there are always options

Fodder Required					
	A	B	C	D	
Animal Type	No. of Stock for Winter 2022/23	Number of Months, Including a 4-6 Week Reserve	Pit Silage Needed (tonnes/animal / month)	Total Tonnes of Silage Needed (AxBxC)	Tonnes dry matter (x20%)
Suckler Cows			1.4		
0-1 year old			0.7		
1-2 year old			1.3		
2+ year old			1.3		
Ewes			0.15		
Total tonnes needed				D =	D =

Remaining Fodder Reserves					
Fodder Reserves	Length x Breadth x Height		Total Tonnes (Fresh weight)	% Dry Matter (DM)	Tonnes of DM
Pit @25% DM	___ m x ___ m x 1.5 m			25	
Baled Silage	No. bales @ 0.8 t/bale			25	
Other					
Total Reserves			E		E
Additional forage required in 2022 = (D - E)			___ tonnes fresh or ___ tonnes DM		

Planned Forage 2022						
	No. acres	Yield per acre t/ac		Total Tonnes	% Dry Matter	
Pit Silage					25	
Baled Silage		Bales/acre	0.8t /bale		25	
Hay Bales		0.30t/bale			85	
Straw bales 4x4		0.15t/bale			85	
Other Forages E.g. Kale	Area (ac)	Utilisable DM yield (t/ac)				
Total tonnes planned						F
Total demand in DM (D) minus total supply in DM (E +F) = surplus/deficit					=	