Grassland Science Department

Title

Increasing the usability and development Pasture Base Ireland as a National Grassland Database

Abstract

PastureBase Ireland (PBI) is now operating successfully on 530 farms nationally; there are a number of strategic improvements to be made to the database to improve both usability and data capture. The main objectives of this development phase of PBI are to;

1. Develop the PBI web service to accept grassland data from other software providers
2. Develop capability to accept generated grassland data from other research projects within the Teagasc network
3. Create a more advanced spring/autumn grassland budget
4. Improve usability of the system
5. Development of a PBI app

Teagasc currently has 530 farms on PBI. This is a huge improvement in the development of an integrated structure within Teagasc to capture and manage grassland data from both research and commercial farms. In total 15 research farms (14 Irish and 1 French farm) and 515 commercial farms (400 dairy, 115 beef and 15 sheep farms) are using PBI. For the first time Teagasc as an organisation has a central point of storage for all grassland data generated from research, better farm program, college and monitor farms. Seventy of the farms are now linked up to grass cultivar evaluation within PBI, the target is to have 100 farms on this study by year end. There are a number of new developments which need to take place in PBI, these improvements are at a number of levels, infrastructure level and at the user interface level. These improvements are needed to increase the usability of PBI and to increase the penetration of Teagasc's program out into the wider grassland industry. Teagasc must accept that once it enters the space of farm IT, it must adopt a leading role in this area, as research and industry requirements are expanding in this area. Therefore PBI must be dynamic and lead the grassland agenda in this topic. The stimulus for these improvements comes from Teagasc's own research and KT directorates. PBI is unique within the grassland community as it covers the three major ruminant enterprises dairy, beef and sheep. In the previous business case presented to the ICT committee it was suggested that Teagasc would put in place a facility that would allow other service providers of grassland management software to submit grassland data to the PBI database. While this was not possible in the first phase of PBI development, it is now. Teagasc see a real benefit to making PBI available as a platform to capture data from other software providers. Our stakeholders have emphasised the need to develop a capability in this area. This proposal also sets out further improvements to PBI grassland database, these improvements will better position the database for the challenges ahead.

Project Leader: Michael O'Donovan

Programme/Subprogramme/RMIS Number:
AGRIP – Moorepark Grassland Science-Grazing Management including Conservation_6647

Start Date: 1/10/14   **End Date:** 31/12/17