

Teagasc Signpost Programme Newsletter

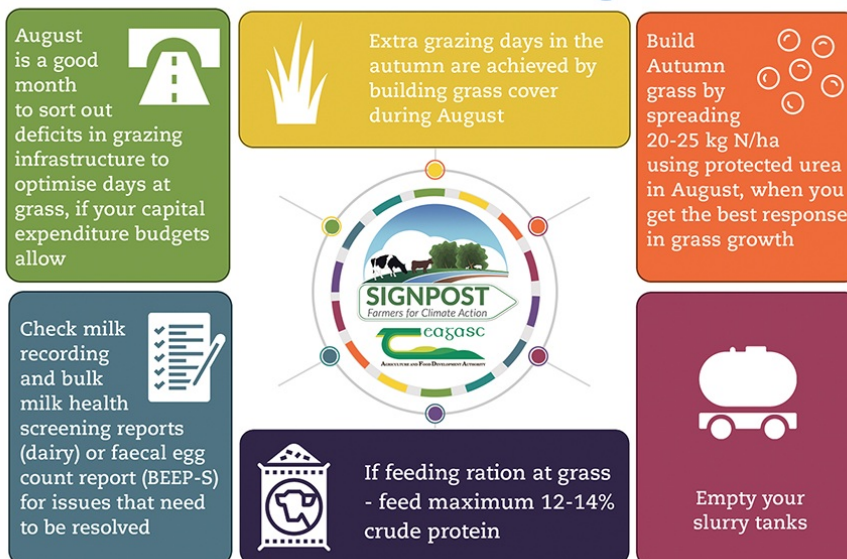
Issue 3 - August 2021

This month's edition of the Signpost e-newsletter features an article on the reasons why farmers need to engage with climate action. We also feature 2 Kerry farmers - Joe Carroll and Tomas O'Leary - and the progress they are making to reduce emissions. We have our monthly climate actions for August while John Douglas from the Grass 10 team provides a guide to building grass for Autumn grazing. The Environment Edge discusses the role of cover crops. Our image of the month - The Warming Stripes - demonstrates very clearly the change in temperature in Ireland over the last 120 years.

Climate Actions for August

Each month, we will present climate actions that farmers can take to reduce gaseous emissions. These actions will be practical and timely. See below climate actions for the month of August.

Climate Actions for August



The infographic consists of a central circular logo with the SIGNPOST and Teagasc logos, surrounded by eight colored boxes, each containing a specific climate action for August. The actions are: 1. Green box: August is a good month to sort out deficits in grazing infrastructure to optimise days at grass, if your capital expenditure budgets allow. 2. Yellow box: Extra grazing days in the autumn are achieved by building grass cover during August. 3. Orange box: Build Autumn grass by spreading 20-25 kg N/ha using protected urea in August, when you get the best response in grass growth. 4. Dark blue box: Check milk recording and bulk milk health screening reports (dairy) or faecal egg count report (BEEP-S) for issues that need to be resolved. 5. Dark purple box: If feeding ration at grass - feed maximum 12-14% crude protein. 6. Red box: Empty your slurry tanks. 7. Light green box: August is a good month to sort out deficits in grazing infrastructure to optimise days at grass, if your capital expenditure budgets allow. 8. Yellow box: Extra grazing days in the autumn are achieved by building grass cover during August.

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If feeding ration at grass - feed maximum 12-14% crude protein

Empty your slurry tanks

[Click here for more information](#)



5 Reasons Why Farmers should engage with Climate Action

Climate change is perhaps the greatest environmental challenge facing the world right now. Climate change is already happening with increasing temperatures, changing rainfall patterns and rising sea levels. Irish Agriculture contributes to 35% of the greenhouse gases produced in Ireland. We are starting from a good place in that the carbon footprint of Irish milk and beef compares well to other countries. But we have to play our part to reduce total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

So why do farmers need to take action now to reduce emissions?

Button

Meet two of the Signpost Farmers



Tomas O'Leary



Joe Carroll

Tomás O'Leary farms in Killamey, Co. Kerry. His farm is divided in 2 sections either side of Killamey and approximately 27km apart. The main grazing block is good dry land while the land at the home farm is heavy, difficult land which is primarily used for silage production and grazing ewes in the autumn.

.What actions will Tomás take?

[Find out here!](#)

Joe milks 84 dairy cow herd on a 25.5 hectare milking block in Ballyheigue, Co. Kerry. The carbon footprint for his dairy enterprise is 0.90kg CO₂e / kg fat and protein corrected milk. Joe continues to adapt his way of farming to reduce his carbon footprint based on key principles outlined below.

What actions will Joe take?

[Find out here!](#)



Building Autumn Grass

John Douglas, Teagasc Grass10 joins Stuart Childs on Let's Talk Dairy about autumn grazing targets.

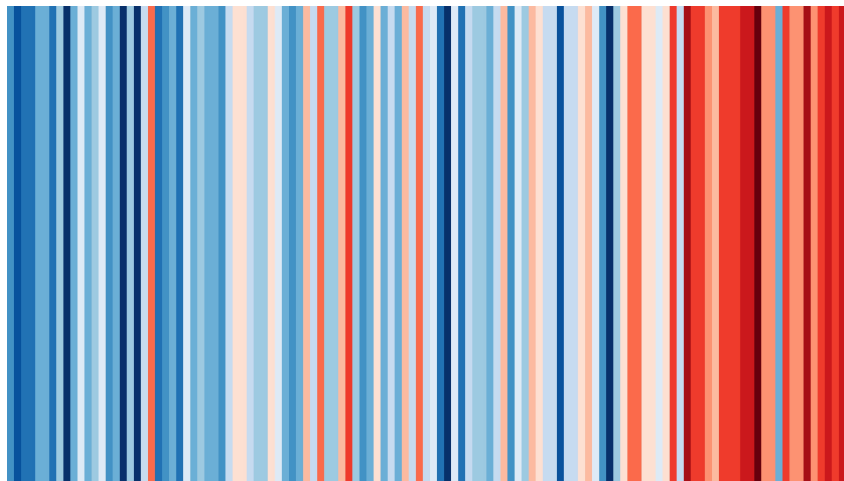
[View the video here](#)



Increasing soil pH reduces fertiliser derived N₂O emissions

A recent scientific paper from Teagasc has shown that getting soil pH right through a liming programme can significantly reduce emissions of nitrous oxide (N₂O), a potent greenhouse gas. The paper from researchers at the Teagasc Environment, Soils and Land-Use Department in Johnstown Castle, County Wexford has just been published in the scientific journal, Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment (AGEE).

[Click here to read more](#)



Warming Stripes for Ireland from 1901-2020

Climate scientists, meteorologists, and citizens united on the 21 June — the summer solstice or Show Your Stripes Day — to raise awareness around the climate crisis.

The graphic is a visual representation of the change in temperature in Ireland as measured over the past 120 years. Each stripe represents the average temperature over a year.

The blue indicates cooler than average annual averages, and red warmer than average. As you can see Ireland has had cool and warm periods. Similar to most nations, the warming being observed for Ireland has intensified in the past two decades. Ireland's air temperature in 2019 was around 10.5 °C, which was 0.9 °C above the 1961-1981 long-term average. The warmest year since 2017 and the 9th consecutive year above normal.



Signpost Programme Update

National Farm Survey (NFS) recorders have been out and about meeting Signpost Farmers to explain the process of collecting physical and financial

data. Data will be gathered throughout the year to allow for the preparation of a set of financial statements and a Sustainability Report at the end of each year. In this way, we will be able to track progress made in terms of farm performance, farm profitability and as well as environmental indicators including total emissions, emissions per hectare, emissions per kilogram of product etc.

Kevin McNamara (NFS Recorder) and Signpost Farmer David Fennelly discuss the information required to be gathered for the annual NFS report.

The Environment Edge Podcast



On this episode of the Environment Edge we are joined by Mark Plunkett Teagasc Soil & Plant Nutrition specialist to discuss cover crops, their soil, cropping and environmental benefits as a long term investment that progressively improves farm management in multiple areas. Do the benefits outweigh the costs?

[Listen in here](#)

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