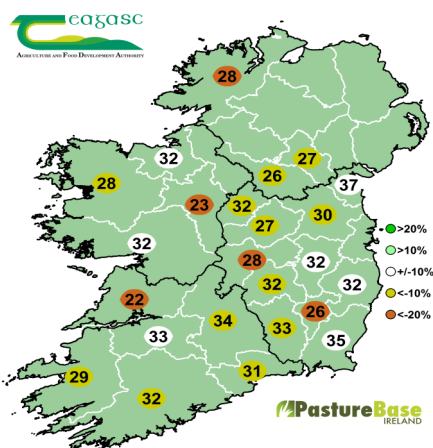


20th October 2020

PastureBase  
IRELAND

AFC	Stocking Rate	Cover/LU	Growth	Demand	Pregrazing Yield
774 kg DM/ha	2.8 LU/ha	276 kg DM/LU	28 kg DM/ha	38 kg DM/ha	1750 kg DM/ha

Grass growth measurement  
Today's grass growth (kg DM/ha/day)



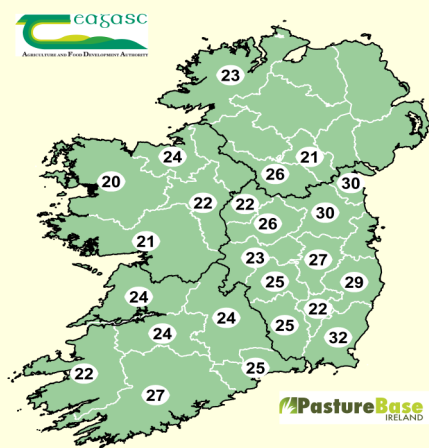
On the left: counties map showing **current** grass growth rates over the last week.

On the right: counties map showing **predicted** grass growth over the next 7 days from farms involved in Elodie Ruelle's MoSt grass growth model (55 farms).

Predicted Growth Rate:

Ballyhaise 24 kg DM/ha  
South Wexford 24 kg DM/ha  
Athenry 19 kg DM/ha  
Clonakilty 26 kg DM/ha

Grass growth predictions  
Next week (kg DM/ha/day)



**A return to wet weather puts pressure on grazing**

Heavy rainfall has made grazing conditions difficult on many farms. Some farmers have had to revert to on-off grazing and house cows at night to avoid damage. Its during difficult weather spells farmers are thankful for good roadways / grazing infrastructure on their farms.

What can we do to maintain grass in the diet? Revert to our Spring grazing rules.

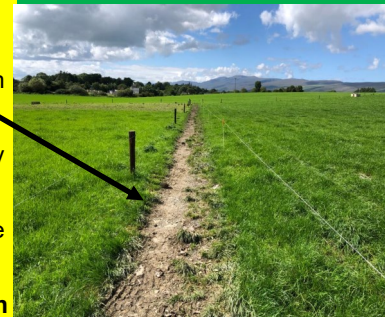
- **Walk the farm daily** to identify dry areas of paddocks to graze
- Graze paddocks on the farm that have good access and easy exit back onto farm roadways. **Spur roadways are great to get animals to the back of paddocks.**
- **12hr allocations & back-fencing** to avoid damaging where has been already grazed.
- **On - off grazing** for 3 hours AM and PM and then standing them off in the shed in more sustained spells of rain.
- Where silage & grass is in the diet, it is important that cows **go out with a keen appetite when grazing**. Leaving cows without silage for 2-3hrs before grazing will enable cows to utilise all the grass, e.g. holding cows in yard until 11am after morning milking
- Animals should be grazing **medium covers of (1200 to 1500kg/DM/ha)** and 8-10 cm on drystock farms.

**Grass DM**

13.1 %

Moorepark @ 9am

(1600 kg/DM/ha cover, damp)



**Keep an eye on the Autumn Rotation Planner**

Farmers on heavy soils should have 70% + of the farm grazed and closed and dry farms should have between 50 and 60% closed this week. Farmers should be grazing paddocks that they want to be grazing early next Spring e.g. paddocks with good infrastructure and access and have 800-1000 kg/DM/ha on them.

**Replenishing & Building Soil Potassium (K)**

Now is the ideal time to apply additional K on low index soils (Index 1 & 2). Grass silage crops have the largest demand for K, for example a typical 1<sup>st</sup> cut crop will require 80 to 100 units K/ac (maintenance) while grazing fields requires ~ 20 to 40 units K/ac per year. Check rates of K applied to date and where there is a shortfall, apply remaining K to keep soils in balance. For soil K build-up, apply 0.5 to 1.0 bag/ac of MOP (0-0-50) on Index 2 & 1 soils, respectively. Grazing paddocks cut for bale silage, apply K to replenish soil K levels, for example each 1 round bale of silage will remove ~ 5 units of K.



**Continue to walk your farm using PastureBase**

Month	# Farm Walks
October	1 (In the next week)
November	2 (Early Nov & Mid Nov)
December	1 (Dec 1 <sup>st</sup> Closing Cover)
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>

20th October 2020

## Flexibility Is Lengthening The Grazing Season In Limerick

Last month, Sean and Pat Barry gave us an overview of autumn grazing management on their heavy soils dairy farm outside Pallasgreen, Co. Limerick. Having begun their autumn rotation plan on 6<sup>th</sup> Oct they have **53% of the farm grazed and closed** in the past two weeks (see rotation plan below). Sean says *“The weather has played ball over the past few weeks and allowed us to get through a lot of area”*.

The cows have been grazing day and night and will continue to do so for the next week. Silage has been kept out of the diet to get through area and ensure good cleanouts (see picture on top right), but meal has increased to 5kg per cow during this unsettled weather period. Next week, depending on grazing conditions, they will decide whether to continue day and night or stretch out the remaining area into early Nov by grazing by day only. If grazing by day only cows will receive high quality silage bales at night and meal will be reduced to 3kg per cow.

Had it not been for the Barry's flexibility last week Sean admits they would probably be housing their cows later this week. **“We were grazing 1600 kg DM/Ha covers on drier paddocks, but we switched to grazing light covers on heavier ground last week when we seen a lot of rain forecast”**. Had these paddocks not been grazed last week, they wouldn't be grazed at all this autumn. **“This will help us stay out grazing for at least a week longer”**.

The cows are currently grazing 17-1800 Kg DM/ha covers using a 12hr stripwire and backfencing where needed. They are also putting spur roads to good effect to graze the back of paddocks (see picture on bottom right). This is ensuring high utilisation of grass and excellent quality for the spring. Sean says they don't want to let AFC drop below 500 kg DM/ha so this will also help determine housing date. This can only be identified by continuing to walk the farm.

Barry's Current Grass Performance	
AFC (Kg DM/Ha)	830
Cover/LU (Kg DM/LU)	279
Growth (Kg DM/Ha/Day)	23
Demand (Kg DM/Ha/Day)	36
Stocking Rate (LU/Ha)	2.98
PGY (Kg DM/Ha)	1750



Top right: Barry's grazeouts. Bottom right: using spur roadways to graze awkward paddocks. Table Below: Barry's autumn rotation planner.

WEEK	TARGET HA GRAZED/DAY	TARGET HA GRAZED BY WEEK END	ACTUAL HA GRAZED BY WEEK END	TARGET %	ACTUAL %
06/10/2020 - 12/10/2020	0.63	4.39	5.57	19	23
13/10/2020 - 19/10/2020	0.63	8.78	11.26	38	48
20/10/2020 - 26/10/2020	0.63	13.17	12.49	57	53
27/10/2020 - 02/11/2020	0.63	18.06		77	
03/11/2020 - 09/11/2020	0.87	23.30		100	

## Teagasc Moorepark Grass-Clover Research

**Update** (From Deirdre Hennessy & Ellen Fitzpatrick)

The grass-white clover research programme at Teagasc Moorepark is comparing herbage and milk production from three pasture-based systems, all stocked at a whole farm stocking rate of 2.74 cows/ha. The three experimental treatments are grass-white clover receiving 150 kg N/ha, grass-white clover receiving 100 kg N/ha and grass-only receiving 250 kg N/ha.

Current pre-grazing herbage mass is 1750 - 1900 kg DM/ha and post-grazing sward height is 4.2 cm. Herbage production to the 12 October 2020 is 12.7 t DM/ha on the grass-only treatment, 12.5 t DM/ha on the grass-white clover 150 kg N treatment and 12.3 t DM/ha on the grass-white clover 100 kg N treatment.

Current sward clover content is 29% on the grass-clover 150 kg N/ha and 30% on the grass-clover 100 kg N/ha. Cows on the grass-only 250 kg N/ha treatment are producing 16.43 kg milk and 1.45 kg milk solids, while the cows on the grass-white clover 150 kg N/ha treatment are producing 16.23 kg milk and 1.58 kg milk solids and the cows on the grass-white clover 100 kg N/ha treatment are producing 15.60 kg milk and 1.46 kg milk solids. Summarised in the table on the right.

### Current Performance of the Grass-Clover Trial

	Grass 250	Grass-Clover 150	Grass-Clover 100
Milk yield (kg/cow/day)	16.43	16.23	15.60
Milk solids yield (kg/cow/day)	1.45	1.58	1.46
Pre-grazing Yield (kg DM/ha)	1900	1850	1750
Post-grazing sward height (cm)	4.2	4.2	4.1
Current sward clover content (%)	-	29	30
Herbage grown to 12 Oct 2020 (t DM/ha)	12.7	12.5	12.3