

## **Grass10 Weekly Update**

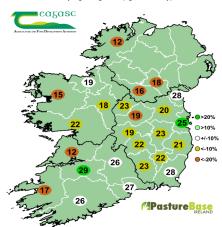


3rd November 2020

## **Pasture** Base IRELAND

| AFC          | Stocking Rate | Cover/LU     | Growth      | Demand      | Pregrazing Yield |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| 651 kg DM/ha | 2.6 LU/ha     | 253 kg DM/LU | 21 kg DM/ha | 28 kg DM/ha | 1510 kg DM/ha    |

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

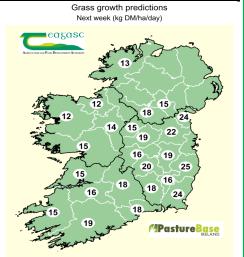


On the left: counties map showing current grass growth rates over the last week.

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 18kg DM/ha
South Wexford 18 kg DM/ha
Athenry 13 kg DM/ha
Clonakilty 18 kg DM/ha



### Keep an eye on Average Farm Cover as we enter November

Now is a good time to walk your farm and take stock of the grass situation. As we know 70% of the grass available in the spring grows in October and November so it is important to manage grass availability now so we are in a superior position in the spring.

Do <u>NOT</u> let AFC drop below 500 kg DM/ha this week. This is detrimental for grass growth on the farm. Remember grass grows grass. Consult your PastureBase grass budget and update your plan if necessary. Don't start spring on the back foot by continuing to graze now.

Farmers should complete **3 more grass walks** for this season. Now (1st November), 15th November and closing cover on the 1st December.

Farmers stocked at between **2.5-2.9 LU/Ha** should be targeting **700-750 kg/DM/Ha** of an Average Farm Cover on the 1st of December. So complete a **Grass Budget** on PastureBase to map out grazing during November.

With the bad weather conditions many farmers were forced to house animals full time. Ensure that stock are getting **good quality surplus baled silage** made during the summer to maximise weight gain and production.

Dry farms around the country have **70%** of the farm closed according to **PastureBase figures** so make sure to implement good grazing techniques to make best use of the remaining grass.

- 1) Spur roadways to get to extremities of paddocks
- 2) 12 hour allocations and back fence
- 3) On-off grazing- 3 hour blocks to avoid damage

### **The Dairy Edge Podcast**

Micheal O'Leary from PastureBase Ireland joined Emma—Louise Coffey on this weeks Dairy Edge to discuss Autumn grazing management. Listen to the podcast here -: <a href="https://www.teagasc.ie/animals/dairy/the-dairy-edge-podcast/">https://www.teagasc.ie/animals/dairy/the-dairy-edge-podcast/</a>



### <u>Webinar</u>

Head of grassland research Michael O'Donovan and

Elodie Ruelle, who leads the MoSt grass growth prediction model will speak on the ASA webinar this Wednesday 4th November which will explore the latest scientific technology for Irish grassland in light of an ever evolving policy environment.

Link-: https://us02web.zoom.us/ webinar/register/2616032215042/ WN\_bSgvBc6gTq2S7-fAe-HtEg

# Cool and damp Don't forget about Lime this Autumn

**Grass DM** 

12.4%

Moorepark @ 9am

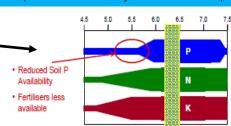
(1600 kg/DM/Ha)

Good soil fertility is key to growing grass throughout the year and soil pH is important to ensuring nutrients in the soil are available to the grass plant. Having the correct pH of 6.3-6.5 (5.5-5.8 on peat soils) -:

- 1) Release up to 80kg N/ha/year from the soil
- 2) Unlock soil phosphorous (P) and potassium (K)
- 3) Increase the response to freshly applied N,P & K fertilisers

Consult your soil samples and target paddocks with poor pH this autumn. Max application per hectare in one year is 7.5 tonne (3 tonne per acre)

N,P and K more available at a pH of over 6.3.





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#### Grass Grows Grass - Even Over Winter

Beef farmer Aidan Maguire farms outside Navan, Co. Meath running a dairy calf to beef farm finishing 75 cattle this year growing this to 120 next year. To date 81% of the farm is closed, one week ahead of the 62% target. Because of this and heavy rain Aidan decided to house most of the heavier stores last week. This will lengthen the grazing season for weanlings and help avoid poaching. Aidan tested silage from surplus paddocks on the home block at 75% DMD and 17% CP.



| Aidan's Current Grass<br>Performance |     |  |  |  |
|--------------------------------------|-----|--|--|--|
| AFC (Kg DM/Ha)                       | 619 |  |  |  |
| Growth<br>(Kg DM/Ha/Day)             | 16  |  |  |  |
| Demand<br>(Kg DM/Ha/Day)             | 12  |  |  |  |
| Stocking Rate<br>(LU/Ha)             | 2.1 |  |  |  |
| Kg LWT/Ha                            | 670 |  |  |  |

To help keep the weanlings at grass, flexibility is key. They get 1 kg concentrate and moved to paddocks closer to the yard with access back into a shed if weather is

bad. Aidan then moves them back out to graze the less sheltered paddocks during settled spells. The plan is to keep the weanlings out until mid Nov. They will only be housed fully for 9-10 weeks with the hope to get them back out grazing by day in late January.

The first paddocks closed received a light application of slurry and they have 1000+ kg DM/ha back on them which has helped maintain AFC allowing Aidan to graze for longer in the autumn and still have grass for the spring.

Once AFC drops below 500 Kg DM/ha (or grazing covers less than 1000 kg DM/Ha) animals should be housed straight away. If grazing continues most of the paddocks will have only one leaf present during the winter. This is detrimental to over winter growth. "I ran the AFC down too far last year and could have done with a lot more grass in the spring." Aidan experienced this last year when AFC dropped to 366 Kg DM/ha in mid Nov and the opening cover on Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> was 425 Kg DM/ha (growing less than 1 kg DM/ha per day). He is focused on avoiding that problem this year.

This year he is targeting a closing cover on Dec 1<sup>st</sup> of 600 kg DM/ha to get out to graze early again next year. Continuing to walk the farm is crucial to meeting that target as it will help Aidan decide when to stop grazing.

### Aidan's Autumn Rotation Planner

| WEEK                    | TARGET HA GRAZED/DAY | TARGET HA GRAZED BY WEEK END | ACTUAL HA GRAZED BY WEK END | TARGET % | ACTUAL % |
|-------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|----------|
| 27/09/2020 - 03/10/2020 | 0.56                 | 3.90                         | 6.13                        | 12       | 19       |
| 04/10/2020 - 10/10/2020 | 0.56                 | 7.81                         | 10.7                        | 25       | 33       |
| 11/10/2020 - 17/10/2020 | 0.56                 | 11.71                        | 15.99                       | 37       | 50       |
| 18/10/2020 - 24/10/2020 | 0.56                 | 15.61                        | 21.96                       | 49       | 69       |
| 25/10/2020 - 31/10/2020 | 0.56                 | 19.52                        | 25.76                       | 62       | 81       |
| 01/11/2020 - 07/11/2020 | 0.90                 | 25.84                        |                             | 82       |          |
| 08/11/2020 - 14/11/2020 | 0.90                 | 31.60                        |                             | 100      |          |

### **Looking Ahead To The Spring With LESS**

William Burchill works on the Teagasc/Dairygold Joint Programme and has investigated the N value of cattle slurry depending on the technique used and timing of application (Table 1 on right). Using either the trailing shoe or dribble bar (LESS techniques) improves the efficiency of N within slurry by around 3 units of N per 1,000 gal compared to using splash-plate. The 1<sup>st</sup> application of N of 23 units N/acre in late January or February can be replaced on a large portion of the farm by applying 2,500 gal/acre of slurry with the dribble bar or trailing shoe i.e. 8.7 unit N/1,000 gal × 2,500 gal/acre = 21.75 units N/acre. This allows for the shifting of fertiliser N applications to later in the spring where there is a higher grass growth response to fertiliser N. Where slurry is applied for 1st cut silage to supply P and K the N value in the slurry N should be considered and taken off the recommended 100 units N/ acre for 1st cut silage using the figures from Table 1. For example, if 3,000 gal/acre of cattle slurry is applied by trailing shoe for 1st cut silage fertiliser N application can be brought back to around 74 units N/acre i.e. (100 N units - 26.1 N units from the slurry = 74 units N from fertiliser).

Table 1. Units N/acre depending on timing of cattle slurry application, application rate and the application technique used.

| Spring (units N/acre) |                  |                             |                     |  |  |  |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|--|--|--|
| Gallon/<br>Acre       | Splash-<br>plate | Dribble bar & trailing shoe | Injection<br>system |  |  |  |
| 1,000                 | 6.5              | 8.7                         | 10.8                |  |  |  |
| 2,000                 | 13               | 17.4                        | 21.6                |  |  |  |
| 3,000                 | 19.5             | 26.1                        | 32.4                |  |  |  |
| Summer (units N/acre) |                  |                             |                     |  |  |  |
| Gallon/<br>Acre       | Splash-<br>plate | Dribble bar & trailing shoe | Injection<br>system |  |  |  |
| 1,000                 | 3.3              | 5.4                         | 7.6                 |  |  |  |
| 2,000                 | 6.6              | 10.8                        | 15.2                |  |  |  |
|                       |                  |                             |                     |  |  |  |











3,000



16.2



22.8