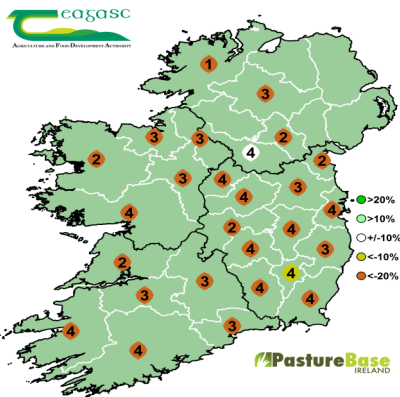


2nd February 2021

PastureBase
IRELAND

AFC	Growth	Grass Dry Matter %
852 kg DM/ha	4 kg DM/ha	14.2% (1300 Kg/DM/ha)

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



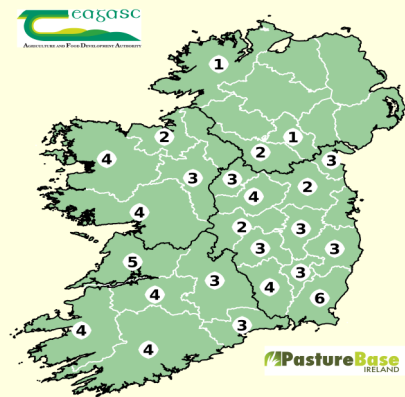
On the left: counties map showing **current** grass growth rates over the last week.

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 2 kg DM/ha
- South Wexford 5 kg DM/ha
- Athenry 4 kg DM/ha
- Clonakilty 6 kg DM/ha

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



Prepare for On – Off Grazing as we enter February

As we enter February, many farmers will be aiming to begin grazing as soon as possible. On— Off Grazing is the tool of choice during February and March where ground conditions and weather can be tricky.

Grazing in Spring is worth €2.70 per LU for every day at grass but also increasing grass in the diet improves the energy, protein content and intake potential of the animal.

When grazing in early Spring, the priority is to:-

- 1) Feed the animal
- 2) Minimise damage
- 3) Hit residuals if possible

Identify the paddocks suitable for grazing by completing an Average Farm Cover on PastureBase Ireland this week.

Be flexible– you may be grazing a number of paddocks at the one time-

Wet day paddocks– roadway on two sides, good access, low cover = right paddock

Dry days Paddocks– roadway on one side, medium cover, odd shape, cannot get to on wet days

Start with lower covers (800– 1,000 kg DM/ha) in order to train both animal and farmer back into grazing!

These paddocks will have quicker re-growths, better chance of graze out on wet days and help you to hit targets from your Spring Rotation Planner

If there are a number of paddocks fit for grazing on the farm, save the driest paddock on the farm for a rainy day! Strip graze and backfence to avoid damage and protect re-growths.



BE PREPARED FOR THE RAINY DAY
- It will come!!!

Approach: On/Off grazing: 2-3 hrs & back fence

1. Milk cows at 7am & 2kg of meal
2. Cows out to grass @ 9-11am in the RIGHT paddock & strip graze
3. Cows return to shed @ 12-2pm (no silage)
4. Milk cows at 3-4pm & 2kg of meal
5. Cows out to grass @ 4-5pm in the RIGHT paddock & strip graze
6. Cows return to shed @ 6-8pm
7. Cows have access to silage until 1-2am



Webinar this Thursday 4th February at 7pm.

Register here:-

www.teagasc.ie/grass10

REGISTER



PastureBase
IRELAND

Getting Familiar with PastureBase Ireland

Are you looking to begin your journey measuring grass with PastureBase Ireland?

Thursday, 4th February | 7pm

Join the Grass10 & PastureBase team on as they go through a step-by-step process of using PastureBase Ireland

Learn how to:

- Download the PastureBase Ireland app on your mobile
- Set up paddocks on your profile
- Enter a grass measurement on PastureBase Ireland and how to interpret the data
- Enter groups of grazing animals and correctly allocate grass
- Use Spring and Autumn rotation planners

To register visit www.teagasc.ie/grass10

2nd February 2021

Complete a Grass Budget for Spring 2021 on PastureBase Ireland

A grass budget is a plan used to map out grazing and reach targets in order to extend grazing at the shoulders of the year. It uses information specific to your farm to allow you to monitor grass supply and allocate supplement level.

This is an extract from a spring budget for a dairy farmer on free draining soils, stocked at 3.4 LU/Ha on the milking platform. Using this farmer's calving data, coupled with Opening Average Farm Cover and predicted grass growth based on spring growth on his farm for the last number of years we can generate a budget.

WEEK START	AREA (HA)	SPRING MILKERS	GRASS INTAKE	MEAL INTAKE	SILAGE INTAKE	TOTAL INTAKE	TARGET COVER (KG DM/HA)	Click to copy Predicted to Target Predicted Cover	ACTUAL FARM COVER(KG DM/HA)	PRED. GROWTH (KG DM/DAY)	ACTUAL GROWTH (KG DM/DAY)	DEMAND(KG DM/HA)	STOCKING RATES(LU/HA)	ACT. COV./ LU (KG DM/ LU)
08/02/2021	47	19	6	3	2	11	1091	1091		6		2	0.4	2728
15/02/2021	47	51	8	3	0	11	1116	1116		8		9	1.09	1024
22/02/2021	47	71	9	3	0	12	1111	1111		10		14	1.51	736
01/03/2021	47	83	10	3	0	13	1086	1086		11		18	1.77	614
08/03/2021	47	119	11	3	0	14	1039	1039		15		28	2.53	411

As this farmer is on target with his opening Average Farm Cover (AFC) this spring (**1035 Kg DM/Ha**), it is clear that grass and meal only is required over the next month. This is important as the farmer aims to graze 30% of his farm during the month of February.

Farms with AFC under target will have to supplement higher rates of meal and silage or else risk dropping AFC under 500 Kg DM/Ha which is detrimental to grass growth in the spring.

Along with full time grazing, this farmer must target grazing covers of average of 900 Kg DM/Ha during February in order to hit the target of 30% grazed on the 1st March.

The key to a successful grass budget is to regularly update on PastureBase to react and adapt to changes in grass growth and grazing conditions. Walking the farm weekly and entering grass covers on PastureBase will ensure this.

What covers must this farmer graze to get to 30% on 1st March?

Week Start	Area (ha)	No. of stock
01/02/2021	47	0
08/02/2021	47	19
15/02/2021	47	51
22/02/2021	47	71
01/03/2021	47	83

Average – 50 cows calved for February.

47 Ha x 30 % = 14 Ha to be grazed in February

50 cows x 8 kg DM grass x 25 days = 10,000 Kg DM

10,000 Kg / 14 Ha = 750 Kg

Pre grazing cover in order to hit 30% = 750 Kg DM/Ha + residual = 850/900 Kg DM/Ha.

“Aim to graze on average 900 Kg DM/Ha in February to hit target grazed”

Getting Ready for Grazing on Beef and Sheep Farms

To get yourself off to a good start in 2021, even as livestock are still housed on many farms, there are a few things you can do:

- Soil Test** – If you haven't soil tested paddocks in the past 4-5 years they should be retested to identify if they need additional lime, P or K to build up indexes and achieve optimum soil fertility. Optimum soil fertility enables more grass to grow as nutrients are balanced and gives a much better response to fertiliser applied.
- Put a grazing plan in place** - Identify one-third of the farm to graze first by early March; paddocks close to yard, medium grass covers 800-1000 kg DM/ha or 7-8cm, drier paddocks and good grazing infrastructure. Avoid grazing silage ground first as these first paddocks grazed will be needed to graze again in early April. Dry farms should begin grazing now and finish the first rotation in early April. Heavy farms should aim to start grazing when ground conditions suit and be prepared to let some stock in and out as conditions allow. Flexibility is key.
- Fertiliser Plan** – Applying early spring N can give a good economic response in grass growth under the right conditions. Target paddocks that are drier, have grass cover > 500 Kg DM/Ha or 6cm, good soil fertility and recently reseeded. Aim to spread 50-70% of the farm with 23u N/acre (30 Kg N/Ha) of protected urea and the remainder of the farm should get slurry. Wait until ground conditions are travelable before applying any fertiliser or slurry. For more information go to <http://bit.ly/springN>



Weanlings out grazing on the farm of Aidan Maguire, Navan, Co. Meath last week