

28th January 2020

PastureBase– Initial Farm Covers for 2020

**PastureBase**  
IRELAND

AFC	Growth
<b>760</b>	<b>4</b>

Predicted Growth Elodie Ruelle:

Ballyhaise 3 kg DM/ha, Johnstown 5 kgDM/ha,  
Moorepark 3 kg DM/ha, Clonakilty 5 kg DM/ha

## Walk the Farm– The Grass Plan

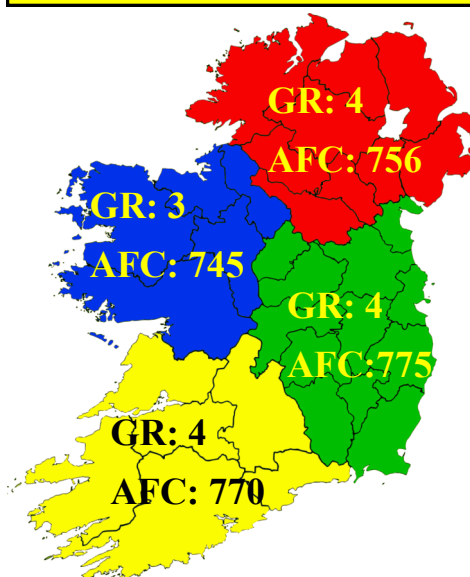
- Establish Average Farm Cover & Growth
- Identify the paddocks where grazing will commence. Start with low covers (**800– 1,000 kg DM/ha**). These paddocks should have **good infrastructure**, ideally **beside the yard**
- Have a Grass Budget & Spring Rotation Plan done to know what to supplement cows while grazing this spring  
**grass day & night + concentrates if possible (no silage)**

Donal O’Gorman, Ballyhaise, Co. Cavan

AFC: 865 kg DM/ha. Grass supply is not an issue, so cows will go out day and night as they calve. Paddocks will be walked weekly to assess ground conditions. No fert can go out until after 1st Feb. Spur roadways put in to gain access in the spring. Cows will start grazing 800 kg DM/ha swards.



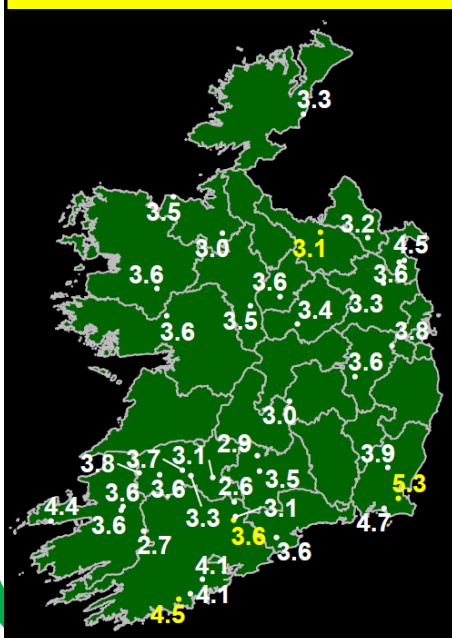
## Below: Covers in the Last 7 Days



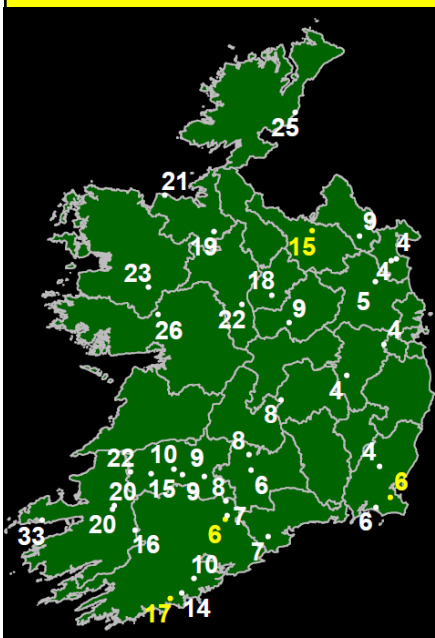
Current Soil Temperatures (28/01/20): (Target 5°C and Rising Temperature)

Location	Moorepark	Kilkenny	Cavan	West Cork	Roscommon	Ennis	Westmeath
Soil Temperature (100mm @9am)	2.8°C	3.3°C	3.3°C	4.1°C	2.8°C	4.7°C	3°C

Predicted Soil Temperature Over Next 7 Days (Met Eireann)



Predicted Rainfall (mm) Over the Next 7 Days (Met Eireann)



## Slurry/Fertiliser Message

Many farmers were right to take the opportunity to spread slurry and fertiliser last week. Soil temperatures were well above 5°C and conditions stayed dry.

This week, soil temperatures are decreasing and snow has fallen in many areas. In this case, early N should cease until soil temperatures start to rise above 5°C.

Know the time is right by:

- Paddock is fit to be travelled
- Having a dry weather forecast
- Soil temperature 5°C+
- Perennial ryegrass swards 1st



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Video: The Grazing Plan– Dairy Grassland Farmer of the Year:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmqtlHy7BEc>

Farmer: Mike Bermingham, Ballyhooly, Co. Cork



**PastureBase Checklist**  
Opening Cover  
Spring Rotation Plan  
Grass Budget



Spring Rotation Plan: Targets

Targets	Light/ Early Farm	Heavy/Very Late Farm
30% Grazed	1st March	Mid- March
65% Grazed	17th March	1st April
Start of 2nd Rotation	Early April	Mid- April



- Graze lower covers 1st (800– 1,000 kg DM/ha) to get area grazed with low numbers of cows in early February
- Eliminate silage from the diet if possible in February to maximise grass intake and to maximise area of the farm grazed in February
- If average farm cover is high, let young stock graze on the platform to increase area grazed in February
- Heavy covers should be grazed in early March, after the 30% grazed target for February has been reached