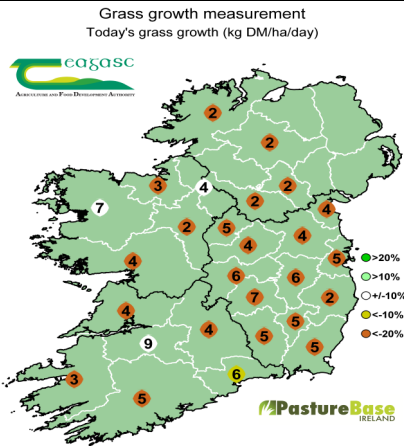


16th February 2021

PastureBase
IRELAND

AFC	Growth
869 Kg DM/Ha	4 Kg DM/Ha

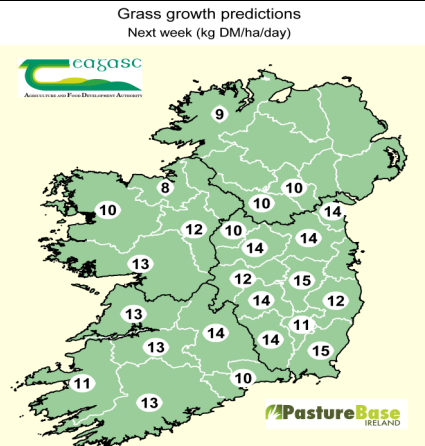


On the left: counties map showing **current** grass growth rates over the last week.

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 10 kg DM/ha
- South Wexford 13 kg DM/ha
- Athenry 13 kg DM/ha
- Clonakilty 14 kg DM/ha



On- Off Grazing is the tool of choice as the weather remains challenging

Heavy rain over the weekend has left ground conditions challenging on many farms around the country.

With some further rain expected over most of the country this week, On- Off grazing is the tool of choice to maintain grass in the diet. Research has shown cows can get 90% of their daily intake from 2 x 3 hours allocations of grass.

Approach: On/Off Grazing

Milk cows at 7am and 2kg of feed

Cows out to grass at 9am in the right paddock with a keen appetite

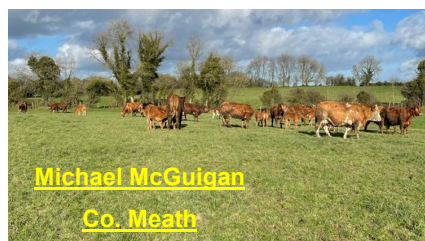
Cows return to shed at 12- 1pm

Milk cows at 3pm and 2kg of meal

Cows out to grass at 4pm

Cow return to shed at 7pm

Cows have access to silage until early hours of the morning



Grass Dry Matter %

Moorepark, Co. Cork
17.6% (900 Kg DM/Ha)

Grange, Co. Meath
22% (900 Kg DM/Ha)

Athenry, Co. Galway
19% (1200 Kg DM/Ha)

Ballyhaise, Co. Cavan
17% (1000 Kg DM/ Ha)

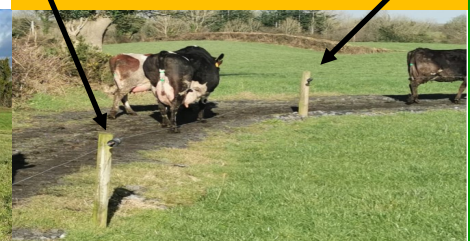
On-Off Grazing Tips

John Maher from the Grass10 team talks through some of the grazing techniques required to maintain grass in the diet of the cow during difficult grazing periods in February.



<http://bit.ly/onoffgrazing>

Multiple access points Sean O Donnell, Ballina Co. Mayo has gate handles on every post so cows can get in and out of paddocks with minimum damage.



Soil temperatures on the rise, consider the 1,2,3 for Spring N

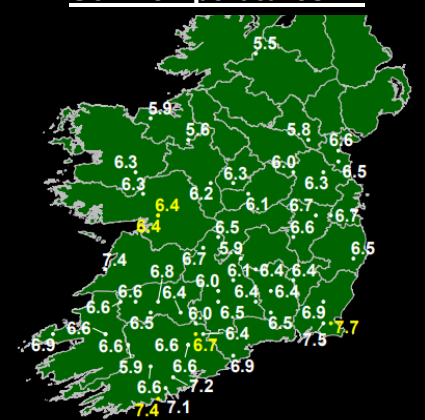
With milder weather forecast for the week, many farmers will apply fertiliser to increase growth rates throughout early Spring. On average the grass growth response is 10:1, i.e. for every 1 kg N applied there is 10kg DM extra grass grown. At the rate of 23 units per acre (30 Kg per Ha) the average paddock will respond with 300 Kg DM extra grass. For a farm stocked at 2.5 LU/ha this equates to about 10 days extra feed on the farm costing about €1/LU/day and not to mention improved animal performance.

It's no wonder every day at grass in the spring is worth €2.70/LU!

Consider the 1,2,3 of Spring N application:-

1. Are soil temperatures 5.5°C and rising on my farm? →
2. Is my land trafficable?
3. Is the forecast favourable? Avoid yellow rainfall warnings

Soil Temperatures °C



16th February 2021

Protected Urea use at Johnstown Castle Dairy Farm

With pressure on Irish agriculture to reduce GHG and ammonia emissions, protected urea is a technology which can help achieve target reductions. Protected urea is an urea-based nitrogen fertiliser coated with a urease inhibitor which stabilises urea. It greatly reduces nitrous oxide emissions with 71% less when compared to CAN. It also reduces ammonia emissions by 79% when compared to standard urea. For this reason protected urea should be used to replace standard urea and CAN fertilisers across the growing season. Aidan Lawless, farm manager at Johnstown Castle dairy farm, has been using protected urea since 2016. His experience and the benefits are summarised on the right. **The renewed focus in 2021, is to have targeted and effective N usage.**

Farm scale protected urea experience at Johnstown Castle Dairy Farm

Aidan Lawless – Farm Manager

- Using since 2016, now main N source
- “Spreads in the same way as normal urea”
- “More concentrated than CAN so less refilling time. 2 bags of CAN (1000kg) covers 10ha vs about 13ha for 2 bags protected urea (750kg).”
- “Slightly cheaper product, so we grow the same amount of grass, it costs us less to grow & we have lower GHG emissions”



“in terms of meeting emissions reductions its about the lowest hanging fruit I can think of”

Let's Talk Cattle... And Grazing In The Spring!

Last week's Let's Talk Cattle webinar saw John Douglas, Grass10, highlight that every day at grass in the spring earns cattle farmers €2/LU as well as other benefits. (See slide on right). He demonstrated how farmers can exploit these benefits by focusing on dairy calf-to-beef farmer Aidan Maguire who last year achieved 297 days at grass. This really helped with farm profitability. The 10 steps Aidan takes are summarised:

1. Close up the farm properly in the autumn.
2. Use the spring rotation plan to calculate area to graze.
3. Ensure cattle have an appetite for grazing.
4. Walk the paddock & set up the strip-wire—move each day.
5. Plan your route to grazing – shed to paddocks.
6. The animal– lighter animals graze first.
7. The grass– graze light covers 700-900 kgDM/ha (7-8cm).
8. Have a flexible approach– cattle can go in and out!
9. Too wet? Stay inside – but try again tomorrow.

Is getting out to grass worth it?

Average days at grass = 220 days (7 ½ months)

Housed from Nov 1st until Mar 15th

E.g. You have 60 acres & turnout early Feb = 1 mth extra grazing in spring (30 days)

Based on area to graze & grass supply = enough grass each day for 30 yearlings to graze (about same stock to eat 1 bale/day)

30 strong yearlings = 20 LU x €2/day = €40/day x 30 days = + €1,200

Every week **saving** the cost of a Ton of meal!!

How many cattle needed to sell to make €1,200 profit?

10. Apply slurry and fertiliser to help grass growth.

John pointed out that farmers should focus on improving their **own** farm year on year as every farmer can benefit from more days at grass. To view the full webinar go to <https://bit.ly/Grass10LetsTalkCattle>

Or to watch how Aidan gets cattle to grass click on <https://bit.ly/EarlyGrazingEarnMore>

View Grass10 Webinars back!

Have you missed the Grass10 & PastureBase Webinar titled “Getting Familiar with PastureBase Ireland” in early February?

Not to worry as the webinar along with our December and January webinars are all available to view on the Teagasc Grass10 page on the Teagasc website– under the “Webinar” tab. The PowerPoint presentation and FAQs from the webinars are also available to view!

www.teagasc.ie/grass10

Need help getting set up on PBI for grass measuring in 2021?

Email support@pbi.ie or call 046-9200965



Planning Your Spring Grazing with PastureBase Ireland

Wednesday, 3rd March | 7pm

Join the Grass10 & PastureBase team on the night and hear:

- Update on Spring grass supply and February grazing from PBI
- Practical advice on how to make the Grass Wedge, Spring Rotation Planner and Grass Budget work for you on your farm
- Tips and advice from Grass10 team on managing grass throughout March

Hear from special guest's heavy soils dairy farmer **Sean Barry** from Co. Limerick & beef farmer **JP Hammersley** from Co. Tipperary as they discuss how they will manage grass on their farms throughout Spring using the tools on PastureBase



Looking to graze more in March?



Or visit www.teagasc.ie/grass10



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

