

Teagasc Notes for week ending Friday 15th October 2021

Grassland: The autumn this year has been excellent with a surge in grass growth due to high soil temperatures and low rainfall. The weather has been very mild. In the last week, this is changing as temperatures drop a little and we are seeing a little more rain. Farm cover should be in or around 1,000 kg/ha and it is this bank of grass that you will graze out into late November or early December, weather permitting. So, the challenge for October and November is to utilise that bank of grass and keep grass in the animals diet for as long as possible while also setting the farm up for grazing in the spring.

From now on, aim to graze out paddocks well and close the gap afterwards leaving any re-growth for the spring. If the autumn is good in terms of weather, the temptation is always to go back in a graze again but remember, if you do this, you will not have grass for the spring. So avoid the temptation to go back in. The aim is to allow grass to grow on these closed paddocks so that they will be among the first paddocks that you graze next February when cows start calving again. They should achieve a cover of between 800-1,200 kg/ha by early to mid February.

The 60:40 autumn grazing plan is a simple tool to help you graze the available ground in a controlled way to ensure that you hit the key grazing targets as follows:

- Graze 30% of the grazing platform by the 20th of October
- Another 30% by the 1st of November.
- The remaining 40% during November and early December.

This will ensure that you have a total of 60% grazed for the 1st of November which is a key target to hit for grass next spring. In the first 20 days up to the 20th of October target dry paddocks that are away from the yard with good access from the farm roadway. From the 20th of October to November 1st, target drier paddocks that are dry closer to the yard with good access. It also helps if they are sheltered and growing a lot of grass or recently reseeded. During November, target difficult to access paddocks that will be grazed towards the end of the 1st grazing round in the spring or poorer performing paddocks that won't grow as much grass over the winter. This may include silage ground.

Succession and Inheritance: Succession and Inheritance is a topic that should be foremost in all farmers minds no matter what stage of your farming career you are at. It beggars belief, the number of people in general including farmers who have no will made. It can be anything up to half of all farmers with no will. In addition to that, there are many more people where a will made many years ago is very irrelevant to their present circumstances. Therefore, the best bit of advice that anyone can give in this respect is to make sure that you have a will made that reflects what your wishes are after death.

To make a will is not expensive but it can save a fortune for your successors afterwards. In the event of death, where there is no will, the rules of intestacy apply. This set of rules govern how the assets are distributed and may mean that your assets end up where you would never intend them to. A will should be made as soon as you reach a stage in life where you begin to own assets. The will must also be updated during your lifetime as circumstances change.

Remember that it is you last will and testament that will come in to play on death. Take time to consider how you want your assets to be distributed and then instruct your solicitor to write the will in this way. It is also a very good idea to make a list of assets, investments, savings etc. to accompany the will so that the executors of your will can carry out their role more efficiently.

Teagasc are hold a series of transferring the family farm webinars on the 6th and 13th of October where a number of experts will deal will the key aspects of succession and inheritance. Register for this webinar series at the following link. <https://www.teagasc.ie/rural-economy/farm-management/succession--inheritance/>. If you happen to miss the webinars, they will be available to watch at any stage on the Teagasc website along with similar ones from 2020. For confidential advice and help on Succession and Inheritance, contact your local Teagasc office, we are only too happy to help.

