

## Teagasc Notes for week ending Friday 05<sup>th</sup> June 2020

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The Beef Exceptional Aid Measure (BEAM) scheme was launched by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) in 2019 and many farmers in the region have joined the scheme to avail of the financial incentive involved. The purpose of this voluntary BEAM is to partially compensate Irish beef farmers for a significant loss in output value arising from market disturbance as a result of market volatility and uncertainty arising out of Brexit.

Each participant of BEAM must fulfil two key criteria:

1. Be a member of a Bord Bia Quality Assurance Scheme **or** be a participant in a DAFM environmental scheme (BDGP, BEEP, OFS, GLAS); and
2. Reduce the production of organic nitrogen from cattle (total N figure) per herd by 5% for a target period (**1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021**) compared to the reference period (**1 July 2018 – 30 June 2019**).

### Payment Rates:

The payment for finished animals is €100 per animal subject to a maximum of 100 per eligible herd. Suckler Cows are eligible for a payment of €40 per animal subject to a maximum of 40 cows per eligible herd.

### Actions:

The challenge for farmers in the scheme is to calculate the 5% reduction in total organic nitrogen in terms of stock numbers from July of this year to the end of June next year. If the targeted 5% reduction is not met within this period, any payments received under the scheme will have to be repaid to the DAFM.

The key message is for farmers to plan ahead and start from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July this year. It is far easier to meet the 5% reduction by planning it over the full twelve months. To reduce stock numbers, farmers in the scheme will have to plan to sell animals earlier or finish animals earlier to meet the 5% reduction.

Contact your Teagasc advisor who can help you to calculate the number of animals that need to be sold or finished earlier, by using a BEAM calculator to track monthly stock numbers during the remainder of this year and into next year.

### Managing Grass in Drought Conditions

We have beautiful sunny weather at the moment but very little rain to drive grass growth. Even with the heavy two weeks ago, there have been very strong drying conditions with high temperatures and windy conditions since.

The key messages in managing grass are:

- Walk the farm on a weekly basis to monitor the cover of grass on the farm and enter your covers on Pasturebase
- Maintain your rotation a 24-25 days by splitting paddocks with temporary fences where necessary.
- Feed baled silage and meals where necessary to make up the daily feed allowance.
- Continue to apply Nitrogen in accordance with your Nutrient Management Plan and use Protected Urea to avoid losses of Nitrogen to the atmosphere.

## **Farm Safety**

We have written recently about farm safety and it is a topic that needs continued coverage in order to reduce the number of farm accidents causing injuries, some of them life changing and deaths on farms. Right across all the risk categories from machinery to livestock, the highest number of injuries and deaths are among children and older people. There is an onus on all farmers, family members and machinery operators to be extra safety conscious at this time of year with the silage season in full swing. Children and older people must be kept away from the farmyard and supervised where necessary to ensure their safety.

With silage cutting and slurry spreading, large and heavy machinery comes very much into view in fields and along the roads. Farm machinery must be fully road worthy. Check brakes are working properly on tractors, trailers, vacuum tankers etc. Ensure that all front and rear lights, indicators and brake lights are working on all machinery used on the roads. All tractors are now required by law to have a flashing beacon light in good working condition for road use. Modern tractors used for this type of work are large and very powerful allowing them to draw heavy loads at high speeds. Machinery operators must take into account the condition of the road when driving and slow down on smaller narrow roads for both driver and other road user safety. Following on from silage cutting, slurry spreading becomes a key task on farm. Ensure that your Vacuum tanker has a fully functional PTO guard, lights and brakes and that the tractor has a U guard in place to protect the operator against these horrific injuries.

## **Fire Warning**

Due to the continued warm and windy weather, mountain areas and land with dense scrub is drying out and there is a major risk of fire. A RED Alert for fire has recently been announced. To protect vegetation, wildlife, farms and households, every rural dweller needs to be extra careful with barbeques and fires, cigarette butts etc. to prevent fire. Many fires are started accidentally through a lack of alertness to the danger of fire starting in the current conditions.

## **Teagasc Kildalton College Virtual Open Day 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

Teagasc Kildalton College will host a virtual event for prospective applicants to its Level 5 courses in agriculture, horticulture, and equine on Thursday the 4<sup>th</sup> of June.

The open day for the different courses will take place over the course of the day. At 2pm for Equine Studies, 4pm for Horticulture and 7pm for Agriculture. It is essential that any individual who wishes to join the open day registers at [www.teagasc.ie](http://www.teagasc.ie) for the virtual open day of most interest to them. Anyone can register for any or all of these events and get a complete feel the college and campus life.

During the event, college staff will provide a live panel discussion which will be interspersed with video footage of the college educational facilities and farm enterprises. Viewers will then have the opportunity to post their questions during a virtual question and answer session. The College boasts impressive facilities and it is worth tuning in to view the campus and get your questions on progression, application, grants, courses or whatever answered on the 4<sup>th</sup> June.

The recent pandemic and restrictions in movement means that potential students cannot come to the college for a tour but we hope that this virtual open day will still provide lots of information about our courses and college life at the College. Kildalton is still taking applications for their Level 5 courses and this is the last opportunity for potential students to see the college before the closing of applications.

<https://www.teagasc.ie/corporate-events/virtual-college-open-day>