

7th January 2020

PastureBase
IRELAND

Start 2020 on the Front Foot– Prepare for the Grazing Season Ahead:

- Establish the area of each paddock on your farm and make sure your farm map is in order– an accurate farm map is critical on any farm
- Register on PastureBase Ireland through your Teagasc advisor or through our help desk– support@pbi.ie
- Download the ‘PBI Grass’ offline app



Opening Cover Due on Farms

1. The amount of grass should be established on the farm
2. Set up budgets for the spring based on the opening cover

Where to Start on PBI?

1. Set up and edit paddocks on PBI
2. Carry out an opening average farm cover
3. Carry out a spring rotation plan for your farm

3 Advantages of Early Turnout

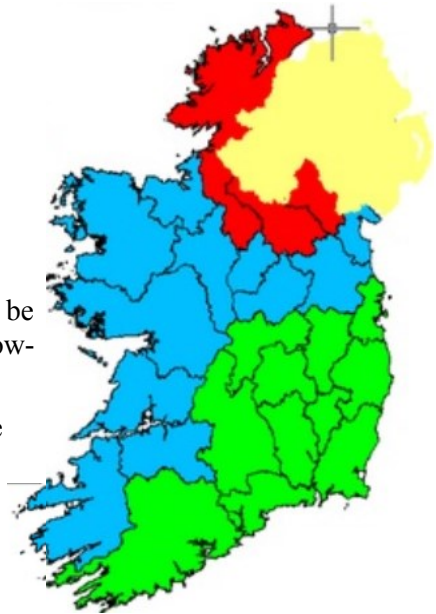
1. Reduce cost (more grass, less purchased feed/silage)
2. Maximise production (increase milk solids/ LWG from grass)
3. Reduce workload in the yard

Fertiliser and Slurry Spreading Dates:

Fertiliser Type	Zone A	Zone B	Zone C
Chemical Fert	13th Jan	16th Jan	1st Feb
Organic (Slurry)	13th Jan	16th Jan	1st Feb
FYM	13th Jan	16th Jan	1st Feb

Above are the upcoming slurry, chemical fertiliser and farm yard manure spreading start dates for your area.

- Make sure to have fertiliser in the yard and slurry agitated in time to be able to avail of a good spell of weather if the opportunity arises following commencement of the spreading period
- Slurry is the cheapest form of N, P and K on farms. Slurry should be spread where grass covers are low and on soils deficient in P and K. Farmers can spread slurry on heavier covers (up to 1,200 kg DM/ha) using applicators such as the trailing shoe in dry weather
- Make sure to use a Protected Urea or Urea product when spreading chemical fertiliser this spring. This will minimise the risk of N leaching on farms



Why should farmers target an early N application this year if conditions are correct?

1. Increase grass supply where there is a high demand for grass in the spring
2. Increase the amount of feed on the farm and potential reduce demand for purchased feed/silage
3. To minimise the cost of purchased feed this spring (meal and silage)
4. To achieve more days at grass this spring! →

Every extra day at grass is worth €2.70/cow/day. For a 100 cow herd, that's €270 profit per day!!

Current Soil Temperature:

Location	Moore-park	Kilkenny	Drogheda	Cavan	Roscom-mon	Limerick	West-meath
Soil Temperature (100mm @9am)	7.7°C	8.1°C	7.1°C	7.5°C	8.7°C	8.4°C	8.1°C

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Grazing 2020– Be Proactive & Flexible in Your Approach:

- Make sure to have enough temporary posts to be able to manage strip grazing and back fencing for all grazing groups this spring
- Start setting up strip wires now. This will reduce workload in February. Target lower covers for grazing 1st and in wet weather. Heavier covers can be grazed in late-Feb/ March during a spell of dry weather
- Make sure that there are multiple access points into paddocks, that roadways are in good order and that all permanent posts on the farm are standing firm
- Walk the farm and carry out an opening cover:
 1. Measure the grass supply across the farm
 2. Identify dry paddocks with low covers (suitable to graze in wet weather)
 3. Set up a Grass Budget on PastureBase to establish what supplement should be fed along with grass to hold farm cover above 500 kg DM/ha this spring



Options to Reduce Demand for Winter Feed:

- Turn out younger animals to out-farms early this year. Target end of January on dry soils and mid – February on heavy soils to get weanlings out and make use of available grass on out-farms
- Try and feed milking cows grass and meal alone, without supplementing silage, where grass supply is high on farms. Every effort should be made to get cows out day and night as a result
- Use on-off grazing, strip grazing and backfencing, suitable paddocks depending on weather and graze low covers in wet weather to achieve this
- Spread slurry and Protected Urea when an opportunity presents itself to increase grass supply

