

4th February 2020

PastureBase
IRELAND

PastureBase– Initial Farm Covers for 2020

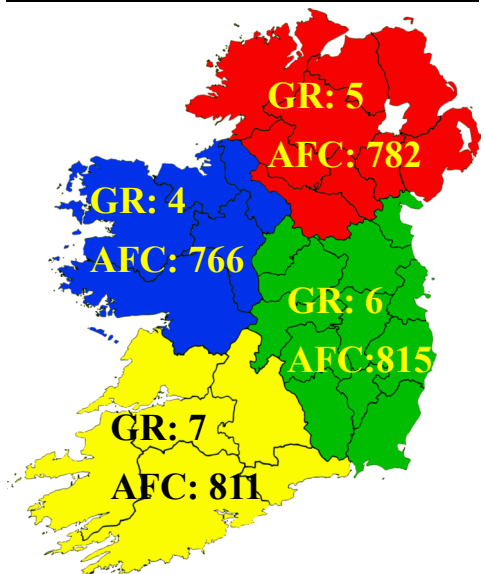
AFC	Growth
793	6

Predicted Growth Elodie Ruelle:
Ballyhaise 7 kg DM/ha, Johnstown 8 kgDM/ha,
Moorepark 11 kg DM/ha, Clonakilty 9 kg DM/ha

Grazing This Week– Now is the Time

- Walk the farm and monitor grass covers and ground conditions. Take note of paddocks fit for grazing & paddocks that are too wet.
No decision can be made from the farmyard!
- Identify the paddocks for grazing this week. Start with low covers (800– 1,000 kg DM/ha). These paddocks should have **good infrastructure, ideally beside the yard**
- If there are a number of paddocks fit for grazing on the farm, save the driest paddock on the farm for a rainy day!
- Strip graze and backfence to avoid damage and protect re-growths (12 hr grazing bouts)
- **Grass day & night + concentrates if possible (no silage)**
- **Target 30% of the farm for grazing in Feb**

Below: Covers in the Last 7 Days



Gerry McGuire
(Tipperary)

“Every day at grass makes life easier for farmer and cow!”



Every Day at Grass

- Increases milk solids/ liveweight gain
- Reduces costs on farms
- Reduces workload for farmers
- Reduces Green House Gas Emissions!

Off to a Good Start– Grazing 2020:

Many farmers have sent us in pictures of grazing commencing on farms.

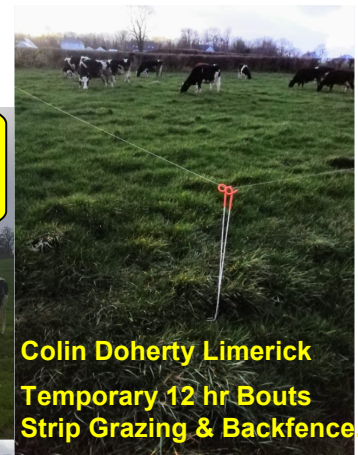
@IrelandsFarmers

Targeting days at grass with animals being out on fields for over 300 days of the year producing natural quality milk



Mike Jones, East Cork
Higher Milk Solids

Target 30% of the farm for grazing in Feb
e.g. 30 ha farm, graze 10 ha



Colin Doherty Limerick
Temporary 12 hr Bouts Strip Grazing & Backfence

Lower GHG Emissions



@TeagascBeef
Lower Costs, Save Silage



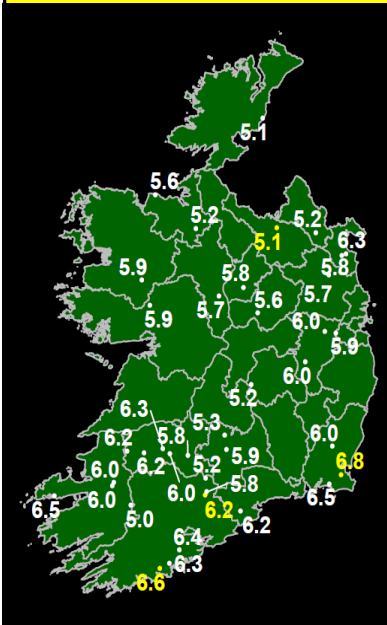
Moorepark, Fermoy, Co. Cork
Low Covers 800 kg DM/ha

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Slurry/ Fertiliser Plan For Next 7 Days:

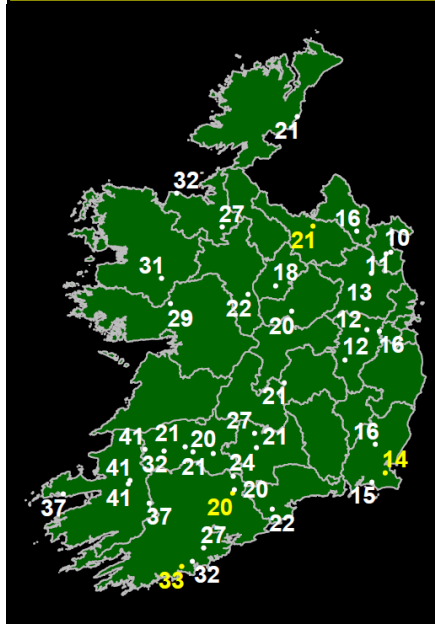
Predicted Soil Temperature Next 7 Days

(Source: Met Eireann)



Predicted Rainfall (mm) Next 7 Days

(Source: Met Eireann)




Use Low Emission Slurry Spreading Where Available

Higher Nitrogen efficiency
Less contamination of grass
Can be spread on covers up to 1,000 kg DM/ha
Cows/ cattle can go in and graze sooner



- The outlook for soil temperatures and rainfall look positive over the next 7 days. Where soil temperatures are rising and where conditions are dry, it is a safe time to apply slurry & chemical fertiliser on farms

- Refer to Teagasc guidance on the application of early N
- Check weather forecast (www.met.ie) prior to making fertiliser N applications
 - Check the soil moisture deficits (SMD) for your area and only spread if SMD is greater than zero
 - Only apply fertiliser N when soil temperature is greater than 5°C and rising
- Target fields for early N that are most likely to respond to an early N application:
 
 - Perennial ryegrass / recently reseeded fields with early N first
 - Drier, free draining fields for early N
 - Fields with a grass cover of greater than 400kg DM/ha or 5 cm grass
 - Fields with optimum soil fertility i.e. good P and K status, pH > 6.2
- Replace chemical N fertiliser on approx. 1/3 of the farm with cattle slurry. Target slurry applications to fields with low P & K levels & low grass covers; 25 M³/ha (2,500 gals/ac) by low emission application will supply ~25kg / ha (20 units/ac) of available N
- Use protected urea (NBPT) for early N applications
- Apply up to 30 kg/ha (24 units/ac) in 1st spilt in late January or early February and avoid fields that have received an application of cattle slurry
- Link your early N application strategy with spring feed budget for the farm
- Calibrate and maintain your fertiliser spreader in good condition