

22nd May 2018

Current Pasture Performance PastureBase Ireland: www.pbi.ie

	Farm Cover (kg DM/ha)	Cover/LU (kg DM/LU)	Stocking Rate (LU/ha)	Growth (kg DM/ha)	Demand (kg DM/ha)
Average	742	190	4	72	59

- Cover/LU is above the target 160-180kg Cover/LU indicating a surplus of grass on farms.
- Growth is currently 72kgDM/ha and is exceeding the current demand of 59kgDM/ha on farms.
- If a farm has surplus grass and growth exceeds demand, it is strongly recommended to cut surplus bales to maintain quality grass on farm.
- Grass DM=15% (Moorepark Monday 20/05- wet weather, cover 1500kgDM/ha, 3rd rotation).

Grazing Tips for this Week:

- Enter covers of 1400kgDM/ha and meet residuals of 4cm.
- Walk the farm to monitor grass levels and growth rates on your farm.
- Cut surplus grass as bales (PastureBase update illustrates that there is a surplus of grass all over the country).
- Don't graze heavy covers. Skip and cut as surplus bales.
- Farmers should be spreading a minimum of 1 unit N/acre/day. Soils deficient in P and K need compound fertiliser. Any fertiliser being spread should include sulphur.
- Slurry should be spread where silage is being taken off.



Silage/ Fodder Message:

Silage Yields	Sugars	Nitrate Levels
Huge Variation: 3,400-6,500kgDM/Ha Fresh Yield: 7-13 ton/acre	Average: 2.5%	Currently: Low

- Walk the silage ground and assess where the crop is at in terms of yield and quality
- Late grazed crops (mid-April on) are low in yield.
- Earlier closed crops are well on target.
- Get a sugar test and Nitrate test on your grass before cutting if possible.
- Currently sugar readings are reasonable with nitrates low.
- A 24hr wilt will increase the DM content and sugar levels:

DM% of Crop	Wilting Hours		
	0hrs	24hrs	48hrs
6 metres Per Row	17	19	34
3 metres Per Row	17	23	31
Tedded Out	17	30	50

- Weather forecast is good this week, so cut if given the opportunity.
- Mow in the middle of the day to increase sugar content.

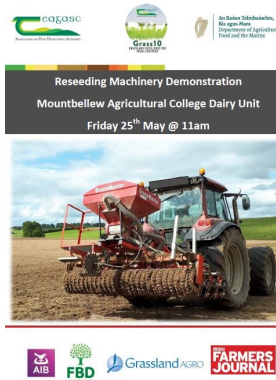
Aim to cut early to maximise quality! Look at the following table:

Harvest Date	15 May	22 May	29 May	5 June	12 June	19 June
Yield (t DM/ha)	4.98	5.96	6.79	7.82	8.48	8.93
DMD%	77.5%	76.6%	74.6%	69.2%	67.9%	64.3%

22nd May 2018

Upcoming Event:

**Reseeding Machinery Demonstration,
Mountbellew Agricultural College Dairy Unit,
Friday 25th May @11am**



Grassland Farmer of the Year Regional Winner: Heffernan Farm Take Home Messages:

- The Heffernans grew over 19 tonnes DM/ha in 2017. This enables them to produce over 1,500kgMS/ha on 500-600kg meal/cow.
- The Heffernan herd has grown from 70 cows in 2008 to 450 cows in 2018. As a result grazing infrastructure has been constantly upgraded including investment in roadways, paddocks and water systems all over the farm. Multiple access points help extend the grazing season in the shoulders of the year.
- Soil samples are taken every 2nd year and 500 tonnes of lime applied on the milking platform over the last 2 yrs. All paddocks received 1 bag of Muriate of Potash (0-0-50)/acre in late 2017.
- 60% of the farm has been reseeded in the last 5 years using varieties from the Pasture Profit Index.



Weed Control:

- Weeds are a problem: thistles, docks etc. need to be controlled. Look at the Teagasc recommended list for more information on selecting the correct spray: <https://www.teagasc.ie/media/website/publications/2016/Grassland-Weed-Control---Summer-2016.pdf>