



GRAZING MANAGEMENT

GETTING THAT FIRST ROUND RIGHT



Spring Grazing Management

The Spring Rotation Planner is a tool used by farmers to plan out their first grazing rotation. A plan will ensure that grass is grazed early enough to allow time for re-growth for the second rotation and to ensure grass does not run out before we start the second rotation. If you do not have enough grass on that area you must feed extra meal and/or silage.

You need to get good clean outs on the first rotation to set up top quality swards for the rest of the year and farmers should aim to graze to 4 cms.

The 1st rotation should end on the first week of April

Targets

Date	% of total farm area grazed
1st February	Start grazing
1st March	30% grazed
17th March	60% grazed
5th April	Begin 2nd rotation

**these targets need to be adjusted by 7-10 days (later) for heavier or later farms*

Get calved cows out to grass as early as possible

It is important keep grass in the diet of dairy cows as much as possible during February. There are many reasons for this but primarily it is to:

- Increase Milk Price (higher Fat & Protein composition)
- Lower the cost of milk production
- Grow more grass and increase grass quality in subsequent rotations

When ground conditions are difficult, then practices have to be put in place to keep grass in the diet of the cow without causing serious damage to the land

Each extra day at grass = €3.50/cow/day

Wet Weather Management

- On/Off grazing
- Multiple entry and exit points to paddocks
- Grazing low covers in difficult conditions
- Target most sheltered and driest paddocks
- Strip grazing or block grazing to ensure minimal damage from poaching
- Use of spur roadways