

GRASS TIPS




Clover Event
 Tuesday 4th April | 11am
 Teagasc Darrara, Clonakilty, Co. Cork
 P85 AX52

Teagasc Grass10, Clover150 team, Grassland Researchers along with the Teagasc Advisory team will run a farm clover walk. Topics to be discussed include: the establishment and management of white & red clover and fertiliser application strategies to maintain clover and pasture.

When should I start the 2nd rotation?

- The 1st rotation should end at the start/mid-April.
- It is important to walk your farm and keep your eye on the few paddocks that were grazed first this spring.
- Watching the growth on these paddocks will determine whether you will speed up or slow down the start of the second round of grazing.
- You should begin the 2nd round when the grass is almost right for grazing, i.e. 1100 -1200kg DM/ha
- Target a cover of about 150-160kg DM/cow on the farm at the start of the 2nd round of grazing. The farm cover should not fall below 500kg DM/ha

Fertiliser

- Most dairy farms need to have 60-70 units of Nitrogen/ac applied by early April.
- The next target is to have 90-100 units of fertiliser N/ac applied by May 1st.
- Many farms are deficient in P and K (and sulphur) so applying compound fertiliser e.g. 18:6:12 + S (2 bags/acre) needs to be considered.
- Applying P and K will also help damaged pasture recover.

Don't forget Sulphur when ordering Fertiliser

When purchasing fertilisers in 2023 don't forget to ask for sulphur (S) in both grazing and silage fertilisers.

Recent research from Johnstown Castle shows that S has a major role to play in increasing N use efficiency (NUE), grass N uptake and grass yield while reducing N leaching.

For grazing fields apply 20 kg S/ha/year and for silage fields apply 15 to 20kg S/ha/cut. For grazing fields select a product such as 18-6-12 +3% S and apply between March to July. Research trials shows up to a 2.5t/ha yield response to S applications during this period. For silage, fields receiving cattle slurry (3,000gals/ac) apply protected urea + S (38% N + 7% S) to balance crop N & S requirements at closing time.

Table 1:- The benefits of sulphur applications in grass production
(Jonstown Castle, 2022)

Grass yield (t/ha)	+ 2.6t/ha
Nitrogen Uptake (kg/ha)	+ 38kg/ha
N leaching reduction (kg/ha)	-22kg N/ha
Nitrogen Use Efficiency (%)	+ 25%
Cattle Slurry S content (1,000gals)	0.6 unit S

Un-grazed high covers of grass?

- There will be situations on many farms where some of the paddocks will need to be skipped in terms of grazing as this will only delay the start of the second rotation.
- Some of these paddocks skipped have grass of very high cover (2000+kg DM/ha). These paddocks will need to be diverted to silage production but cut sooner rather than later.
- Paddocks that are skipped with a low cover of grass can be diverted to main crop silage.