GRASS TIPS

Consider the "3 checks" for managing pasture throughout March

The " 3 checks" are aimed at keeping as much pasture as possible in the diet during March while managing the transition from the 1st - 2nd rotation

1. AFC - Complete an AFC on PBI and review. The aim is to not dip below 550-600 Kg DM/ha or 200 Kg DM/ LU in early April
2. % grazed - There is huge variation throughout the country depending on land type & grazing infrastructure. Make a plan. 40ha farm, 45% grazed = 18 Ha grazed = 22ha in 28 days (10th April) = 0.8 Ha per day or 5.5 Ha per week
3. Grass cover on 1st grazed paddocks - This is the main guide to when you can start your 2nd rotation. You need 700 Kg DM/ha regrowth on 3 paddocks on 17th March if you plan on starting 2nd rotation in early April. If you don't- readjust!

Adjusting your grazing plans depending on % grazed

- Grazing conditions have been difficult again with further rainfall particularly for the south of the country which is leaving conditions challenging
- In the infographic below, we discuss 3 different groups of scenarios based on % grazed
- Complete an AFC and make a plan for managing the remaining proportion of 1st rotation grass on your farm

Readjusting your 1st grazing rotation

Sulphur- A very important nutrient

- As you order chemical fertiliser for grazing and silage in the coming weeks, do not forget about Sulphur
- Research shows that S has a major role to play in increasing N use efficiency (NUE), grass N uptake & grass yield while reducing N leaching
- For grazing fields, apply 20 kg S/ha/year (16 units/acre/year) by July 1st. Select a product such as 18-6-12 + S/Protected Urea + S, and apply between March to July. Research trials shows up to a 2.5t/ha yield response to S applications during this period.
- Silage fields Apply 15 kg S/Ha/cut (12 units/acre/cut) for silage fields. If receiving cattle slurry @ (3,000gals/ac) apply protected urea + S (38% N + 7% S) to balance crop N & S requirements.

Sulphur - A very important nutrient

Table 1:- The benefits of sulphur applications in grass production (Johnstown 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%