

GRASS TIPS



Measure grass twice this week

- The grazing goal for the next 90 days is to **graze covers 1300-1400 Kg DM/ha** to optimise profit from grazing, (currently 200-300 Kg DM/ha too high across all enterprises).
- Higher growth rates mean increased grass supply. Measuring grass supply once per week is not enough in these conditions.
- At least 3 grass measures in 2 weeks or ideally twice per week is recommended.
- Target AFC 600-700 Kg DM/ha across all enterprises and rotation length 18-21 days.
- Target cover/LU 160-180 KgDM/LU on dairy farms & 12-15 days ahead
- Match demand to grass growth. PBI showing growth surpassing demand - need to make grazing decisions and act this week.

Use projected planner to make grazing decisions

- Grass growth predictions indicate surplus grass. What is you plan to ensure animals graze 1300-1400 Kg DM/ha?
- Use the projected planner on PastureBase with predicted growth rates.
- This will predict your AFC 7 days from now to give you confidence in your decision making.
- Remove surplus grass this week. Ensure to replace P & K offtakes with slurry or compound, (about 4 bales/ac = 1,000 gal/ac LESS).
- Allow 24-36 hour breaks for ad-lib grass and reduce concentrate and ensure covered for grass tetany.

Plan to correct grass quality

- Challenging grazing conditions has led to poor graze-outs and lower sward quality. Opportunity to correct this starts this week.
- It is important feed is not wasted, so removing surplus grass by baling is the best solution. However not everywhere can be baled this week!
- Grazing paddocks at lower covers (1100-1200 Kg DM/ha) will help sort some of the problem.
- Identify paddocks for mowing next rotation. Avoid topping or pre-mowing. This will waste feed and reduce animal performance.

Is your farm at the optimum summer stocking rate?

- Many farmers will be looking to maximise the area of 1st cut silage this year to build fodder reserves.
- Aim to stock grazing block where the demand (kg DM/ha) is in the region of 60-65 Kg DM/ha to allow for removing surpluses and correcting grass quality. (Check PBI for your farm growth rates).
- Where a LU is eating 16 Kg DM Grass per day, this will mean a stocking rate of about 4 LU/ha ($65/16 = 4$).
- In general, drystock farms will have lower a stocking rate and more winter feed reserves
- Complete a fodder budget to calculate winter requirements