

Teagasc Signpost Programme Newsletter

Issue 9 - April 2022

In this month's newsletter the climate action focus is on securing silage stocks for next winter in the context of high fertiliser prices. The newsletter outlines a blueprint for incorporating clover successfully into a grassland sward. Check out the Signpost farmers that are featuring in the Farming Independent and Mark Plunkett gives us a short tutorial on soil health and what farmers can do to improve soil health. The decision support tool this week is calibrating the fertiliser spreader. Michael Hennessey, Head of Tillage KT provides us with some guidance on optimising organic manure use on tillage farms. We get a research update on the impact of optimising soil phosphorus level can reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We have 2 useful podcasts - how dairy farmer Bryan Daniels is farming sustainably on an intensive system and tillage farmer Don Somers explains how he is making savings on fertiliser costs this week.



Incorporate Clover - Win Win Solution to Economic & Environmental Sustainability

Incorporating clover in grassland swards has the potential to reduce costs, improve profitability and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

[How Does It Work? - Click here to find out](#)



Dermot Heaney

We have had a few problems in recent weeks but that's farming for you. I have had a couple of cows with bloat, some cows with milk fever and cell counts up a little higher than where I'd like to see them but that may have been due to a



John Crowley

Drilling commenced on the 20th of March with spring beans and this was closely followed by my main crop which is spring malting barley. Ideally, I would like to get my malt crops drilled in early March to try and decrease grain protein levels, but the



Olivia Hynes

Lambing period in February was extremely busy & stressful. With 3 storms in the month, the ewes & lambs had to be kept in for 5 days which led to its own problems. With the recent good weather the sheep sheds are empty and

problem with the parlour a few weeks back.

[Read more here](#)

weather was not suitable this year.

[Read more here](#)

the ewes & lambs are in one group now .

[Read more here](#)

Climate Actions for April

Each month, we present climate actions that farmers can take to reduce gaseous emissions. These actions will be practical and timely. See below climate actions for the month of April.



Check that you are on target to have 66% of the farm grazed by 17 March for drier farms (10-14 days later on heavier farms)

Book a milk recording for your farm

Turning out your maiden heifers 6-8 weeks pre breeding will help them reach their target breeding weight

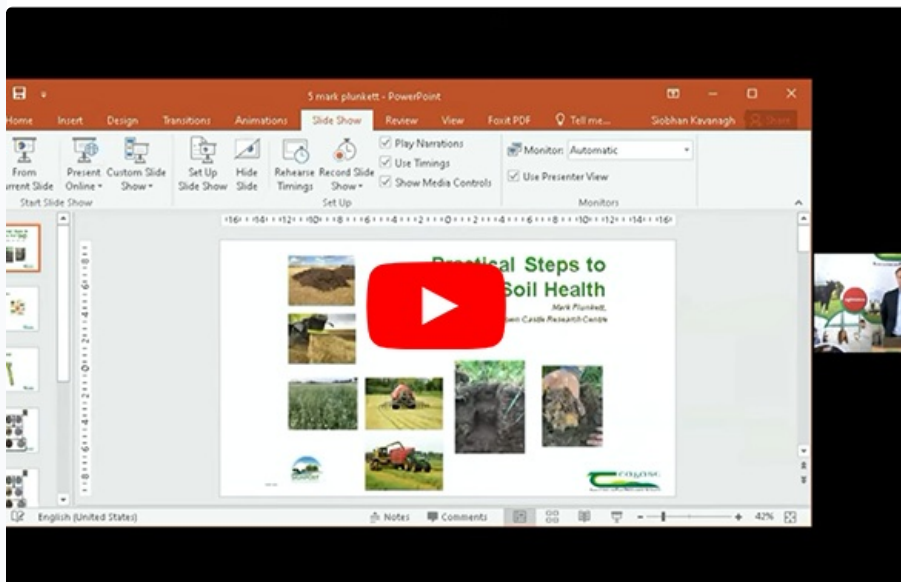
Using slurry this spring on silage ground can contribute a significant proportion of your P&K requirements

Don't forget 1,2,3 for colostrum management

For tillage crops, apply 1st N split when soil, crop & weather conditions suitable

Practical Steps to Improving Soil Health

Mark Plunkett, Teagasc Soil & Plant Nutrition Specialist provides us with a short tutorial on soil health and what farmers can do to improve soil health on farm.



How to Calibrate a Fertiliser Spreader



Fertiliser Calibration Fact Sheets

Making sure that fertiliser is not wasted has never been more important than this year. Learn how to calibrate a fertiliser spreader using this fertiliser calibration sheet

[Click Here to View Fact Sheets](#)

Fertiliser Calibration Tool

Use the sliders below to calculate the flow rate from your fertiliser spreader for a given application rate. This is needed when calibrating your machine.



[Click Here to Use the Calibration Tool](#)

Calibrating the Fertiliser Spreader



It is very important that you calibrate the fertiliser spreader to ensure the correct rate of fertiliser is going out. In this video Francis Quigley demonstrates the steps to checking the spreader is functioning correctly and how to calibrate it

[Watch Video Here](#)

Impact of Tillage Crops on the Environment



Reducing the impact of tillage crops on the environment largely revolves around the reducing nitrogen inputs. Nitrogen accounts for approximately 80% of all greenhouse gasses (GHG) from tillage production. Where chemical nitrogen can be reduced, then GHG emissions will fall.

[Get the full advice here!](#)

Research Update

Optimal soil phosphorus reduces fertiliser derived N₂O emissions

A new scientific paper from Teagasc has shown that getting soil phosphorus (P) levels right through a fertiliser programme can significantly reduce emissions of nitrous oxide (N₂O), a potent greenhouse gas.



[Read Update Here](#)

IPCC Fact Sheet - Climate Change Impacts & Risks

The Intergovernmental panel on climate change (IPCC) issued a stark warning to the world on climate change in the most recent IPCC report: Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability Report, issued in late February. The authors of this latest report, state that Human-induced climate change is causing dangerous and widespread disruption in nature and affecting the lives of billions of people around the world, despite efforts to reduce the risks. People and ecosystems least able to cope are being hardest hit.

SIXTH ASSESSMENT REPORT
Working Group II – Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability

ipcc
INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Fact sheet - Europe
Climate Change Impacts and Risks

Climate change impacts and risks
Our current 1.1°C warmer world is already affecting natural and human systems in Europe (*very high confidence*). Impacts of compound heatwaves and droughts have become more frequent (*medium confidence*). Largely negative impacts are projected for southern regions. {ES-Ch13}

Key Risks
Four key risks (KR) have been identified for Europe, with most becoming more severe at 2°C global warming level (GWL) compared to 1.5°C GWL in scenarios with low to medium adaptation (*high confidence*). From 3°C GWL and even with high adaptation, severe risks remain for many sectors in Europe

To learn more about the impact in Europe click here

The Environment Edge Podcast



Bryan Daniels, former grassland farmer of the year, chats about the sustainability measures he is carrying out on his farm. It highlights how a productive dairy farm can meet sustainability challenges.

Listen in here

The Tillage Edge Podcast



This week's Tillage Edge podcast continues the series looking at farmers who are working closely with Teagasc in the Signpost Farms programme and other initiatives. Don Somers, a farmer in Wexford, and his advisor John Pettit, joined Michael Hennessy to discuss Don's farm practice. Don has costed out various fertiliser practices and has identified that changing to protected urea on winter crops will return savings of close to €39/ha or close to €3,000 over the farm. He is running a min-till establishment system for the past few years and has worked hard to build fertility over the last 8-9 years. Don has a very good handle on his soil's fertility and yields coming from the fields as he will use yield mapping data to feed into fertiliser prescription maps.

Listen in here

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