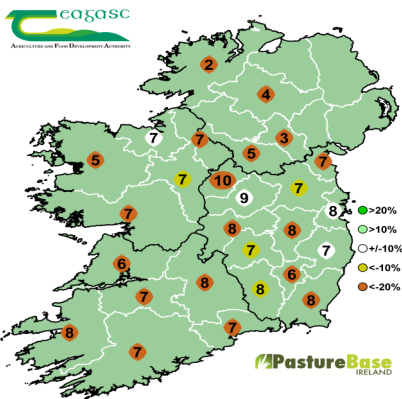


2nd March 2021

**PastureBase**  
IRELAND

AFC	Growth	Diet
925 Kg DM/Ha	9 Kg DM/Ha	8.5 Kg grass, 3.5 Kg meal, 2.5 Kg silage

Grass growth measurement  
Today's grass growth (kg DM/ha/day)



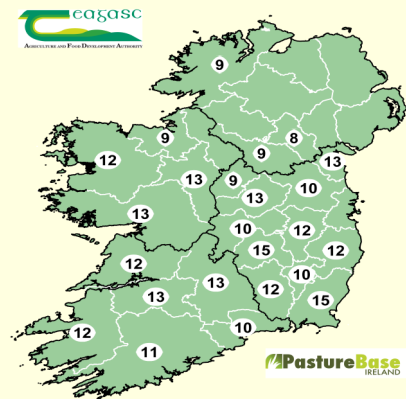
On the left: counties map showing **current** grass growth rates over the last week.

On the right: counties map showing **predicted** grass growth over the next 7 days from farms involved in Elodie Ruelle's MoSt grass growth model (55 farms).

Predicted Growth Rate:

- Ballyhaise 9 kg DM/ha
- South Wexford 11kg DM/ha
- Athenry 13 kg DM/ha
- Clonakilty 15kg DM/ha

Grass growth predictions  
Next week (kg DM/ha/day)



**Spring has sprung as settled conditions return**

After a very wet & unsettled February, dry conditions have returned this week and farmers around the country are returning animals to grass and turnout of animals fulltime to grass is now possible. Many farmers who target early turnout in February have been hampered by the poor conditions and may be 10-15 % behind their Spring Rotation Planner targets. The key message is its not about catching up, it about adjusting your grazing plan to ensure you have enough grass in April for the start of the 2nd round. If you are only beginning grazing in the last few days and "fly" around your farm, you will run out of grass! 30 days x 20kg DM/Ha growth in March = 600 kg DM/ Ha on 1st paddock on the 1st April. However, by delaying the 2nd rotation by an extra 14 days x 35 Kg DM/Ha growth= 490 Kg/DM/Ha. By managing and monitoring grass supply may mean an extra 400/500 Kg/DM/Ha grass availability on those paddocks.

- It is therefore very important to assess where you are and adjust your Spring Rotation Planner and Grass Budget. **Walk your farm and enter measurements on PastureBase Ireland weekly from now on.** This is critical to keep a check on Average Farm Cover.
- Avoid reducing your Average Farm Cover to under 500 Kg DM/ha during March at all costs. This will be detrimental to growth rates.
- With the dry week most farmers should turn some animals out fulltime with little silage in diet. Target to graze the more awkward paddocks, i.e. wet paddocks, long and narrow paddocks, paddocks with poor access or roadway only on one side.

**Grass Dry Matter %**

- Moorepark, Co. Cork**  
17% (1300 Kg DM/Ha)
- Grange, Co. Meath**  
22% (1250 Kg DM/Ha)
- Athenry, Co. Galway**  
20% (1250 Kg DM/Ha)

**Spring N Application**

The dry week has at long last satisfied all elements of our 1,2,3 of early Spring N application, (Soil Temperature, Trafficability & Forecast)

As it is still relatively early, Protected Urea is the product of choice. For farmers with no fertiliser/slurry out 30-35 units (40 Kg/Ha) is the advisable rate.

Farmers with 23 units (28 Kg/Ha) out in the form of Pro. Urea or cattle slurry should continue with spring plan and should follow grazed paddocks with **LESS @ 2500 gallons per acre or 23 units (28Kg/ Ha).** Consult your fertiliser plan.

**Planning Your Spring Grazing with PastureBase Ireland**

After a wet February, many farmers around the country are behind target on their Spring grazing plans. Not to worry! Join the Grass10 & Pasture-Base Ireland team on Zoom tomorrow Wednesday 3rd March at 7pm, as we discuss what changes farmers need to make so as to plan out grazing throughout March. Click here to register:-

[www.teagasc.ie/grass10](http://www.teagasc.ie/grass10)

Click here to view promo video:

<http://bit.ly/SpringGrazingPromo>



Webinar tomorrow!  
Register here

Looking to graze more in March?



**Planning Your Spring Grazing with PastureBase Ireland**

Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March | 7pm

Join the Grass10 & PastureBase team on the night and hear:

- Update on Spring grass supply and February grazing from PBI
- Practical advice on how to make the Grass Wedge, Spring Rotation Planner and Grass Budget work for you on your farm
- Tips and advice from Grass10 team on managing grass throughout March

Hear from special guest's heavy soils dairy farmer **Sean Barry** from Co. Limerick & beef farmer **JP Hammersley** from Co. Tipperary as they discuss how they will manage grass on their farms throughout Spring using the tools on PastureBase



Or visit [www.teagasc.ie/grass10](http://www.teagasc.ie/grass10)

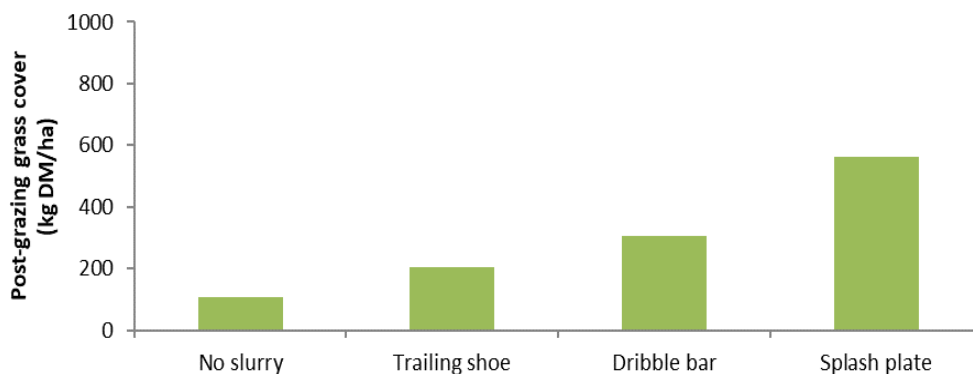
2nd March 2021

## Graze more grass using LESS

(From William Burchill, Teagasc/Dairygold Joint Programme)

LESS machines have the ability to significantly reduce grass contamination with slurry compared to the splash-plate. This allows for a shorter interval between slurry spreading and grazing which is important during times of the year when grazing rotation lengths are short. Slurry can be applied to covers of up to 1,200 kg DM/ha with trailing shoe, whereas with the splash-plate we are confined to the paddocks with low grass covers to avoid grass contamination. This allows for more targeted slurry spreading to paddocks that need the slurry nutrients the most e.g. silage ground and fields in index 1 and 2 for P or K. The ability to spread slurry into higher grass covers also increases the area of the farm that can be spread with slurry in early spring when ground conditions allow. This has the advantages in terms of increasing the amount of slurry that can be spread which can help to free up slurry storage during this period and increasing the amount of N capture.

Recent demonstrations carried out by Teagasc has shown that cows prefer to graze pastures spread by either trailing shoe or dribble bar compared to splash-plate. For the demonstration, slurry was spread on three grass plots at a rate of 3,000 gal/acre using splash plate, dribble bar and trailing shoe on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2018. Cows were given access to the three plots 21 days later for a 2 hour grazing period. The cows could move and selectively graze which ever plot they preferred. The cows grazed the most grass from the trailing shoe plots followed by the dribble bar and then the splash-plate (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Post-grazing grass covers on field plots spread with slurry using different slurry application methods. Grass cover was 1,200 kg DM/ha at time of slurry spreading and grazing occurred three weeks after slurry spreading. Inset pictures shows level of grass contamination at time of slurry spreading.

## GFOY Update - Caroline Walsh (Dairy Category & Overall Winner)

"With 90% of the cows calved to date we were lucky the weather turned just in time last week to get cows out grazing. We are catching up on spring targets quickly. I will walk the farm again tomorrow & graze heavier covers later in week if ground conditions are still good."



## First Round of Grazing Begins on Sheep Farms

With lambing commencing on many farms, so to does grazing. Here are some tips from Philip Creighton, Teagasc Athlone.

Paddock	Date grazed	% of Farm Grazed
1	19/03	20
2	27/03	40
3	02/04	60
4	08/04	80
5	15/04	100

Date	25/02/2021
AFC	1142 Kg DM/ha
Growth	6 Kg DM/ha/day
Demand	16 Kg DM/ha/day
% Grazed	17%
PGY	800 Kg DM/Ha
Fertiliser	45u N/ac (56 Kg N/ha) on most of MP (including N from LESS)
Cow Diet	8 Kg DM Grass + 6 Kg Meal + 2 Kg Silage

- ◆ Apply best management for ewes & lambs but also for grass.
- ◆ Rotation length 40 days, should begin with 25 days grass ahead.
- ◆ 5 paddocks per sheep mob (see table above): these paddocks should be grazed by date shown & sheep moved on to allow regrowth. This is very important to have grass for the 2nd rotation.
- ◆ Start grazing heavier grass covers on paddocks near the yard for ease of management.
- ◆ Batch smaller mobs into larger ones when lambs 2-3 weeks old (early April). This will allow quicker graze outs and more recovery time. More recovery means more grass and less meal feeding.
- ◆ If grazing ahead of targets, introduce supplement to slow down.

**Need help getting set up on PBI for grass measuring in 2021?**

Email [support@pbi.ie](mailto:support@pbi.ie) or call 046-9200965