

Teagasc Notes for week ending Friday 2nd October 2020

Tillage Focus – Mark Trimble, Teagasc, Kilkenny

Winter Cereals

The area of winter cereals sown in Ireland this autumn should to return to normal, around 150,000 hectares. Slow developing varieties with good disease resistance should be sown first. On land with grass weed problems and a history of BYDV, sowing should be delayed to reduce the risk. Plan for pre-emergence weed control where annual meadow grass is a problem, especially in winter barley.

P & K Requirements

Phosphate (P) and Potash (K) in the soil ensure that crops are well established in terms of rooting and tiller development before entering the winter period. Soils at Index 3 will have a good supply of P and K for crop establishment; therefore no P and K applications are needed until springtime. On Index 1 or 2 soils there is an allowance to apply chemical P after the 15th of September of 20kg/ha on index 1 soils and 10kg/ha on index 2 soils. It must be applied at sowing time and incorporated into the seedbed, this can be done up until the 31st October.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Adoption of IPM practices is a critical component of achieving good yields from autumn sown cereals. [BYDV](#), disease, lodging and grass weeds can significantly affect yield and the adoption of IPM practices can considerably reduce their impact.

Variety selection is central to any IPM plan, as disease and straw characteristics are can often be more important factors than top line yield. Selection of varieties from the [DAFM recommended list](#) ensures that the rating for these characteristics is reliable.

Seed rate will depend on the sowing conditions, [thousand grain weight \(TGW\)](#), date of sowing and the likelihood of pest damage. Beware of large variations in TGW in seed this autumn especially in winter barley. Check the label on the bags of seed for actual TGW before sowing.

BYDV can cause significant yield losses in winter cereals. Delaying sowing date may eliminate or reduce the need for [insecticide](#) application. A limited amount of seed of a BYDV tolerant variety KWS Joyau will be available this season. It is important to differentiate between resistant and tolerant varieties; BYDV resistant varieties are currently not available in Ireland.

Take-all inoculum declines after harvest but it is important that volunteers are eliminated as they can carry over the infection from one season to the next. Therefore delayed sowing reduces the disease in continuous cereals. High soil pH, poor soil structures, poor drainage and fluffy seedbeds all increase the risk of take-all.

Weed control needs to be planned taking field history into account. [Pre-emergence herbicides for winter barley](#) and winter wheat containing the active ingredients [Pendimethalin, Chlorotoluron, Flufenacet or Prosulfocarb](#) are essential for reliable control of annual meadow grass. Winter barley should be avoided in fields where brome species are present as there is no reliable chemical control. Delayed sowing will reduce brome and blackgrass establishment but fields with blackgrass should not be planted until the spring - if at all.

Derogation Farmers

As you will be aware there have been a number of changes to derogation regulations in 2020. **Two of the areas** most relevant to you at this time of the year are:

1. If you have lime to spread (min of 25% this year), have you made progress in getting that done? If the weather deteriorates, have you the capacity to get the work done?
2. What hedge cutting options have you signed up to? Two choices: a) Are you leaving mature whitethorns every 300 metres along each hedgerow **or** b) Are you cutting hedges over a three year rotation (i.e. only cutting 1/3rd per year)?. Have you informed your hedge cutting contractor ?

Its important that you **check your derogation plan NOW** and ensure that you meet the requirements of your plan before the end of the year. Non-compliance may lead to loss of derogation status for your farm.

Reducing the carbon footprint of milk production: Virtual Farm Walk and Webinar from Portlaw, Co Waterford.

Dairy farmers and anyone with an interest in sustainable food production are being encouraged to tune into a virtual farm walk and webinar which will be broadcast live from the Fitzgerald family farm in Co. Waterford, on Thursday 1st October. This event will highlight the many steps being taken by the Fitzgerald family to reduce the carbon footprint of their milk production and to improve sustainability on farm, and will provide an opportunity to share their experiences with the wider farming community.

Shane Fitzgerald, who farms 92 hectares with his father near Portlaw, in County Waterford, will host this virtual event, which is being supported by Teagasc, Glanbia Ireland, the European Milk Forum and the National Dairy Council.

The virtual farm walk and webinar takes place at 11.00am and will include contributions from:

Shane Fitzgerald, Host farmer

Zoe Kavanagh, spokesperson European Milk Forum and CEO National Dairy Council

Shane McElroy, Glanbia Ireland

Brendan Horan, Teagasc Moorepark

After the webinar, the Fitzgerald's in collaboration with the European Milk Forum will take over Teagasc Twitter and Instagram accounts to continue the discussion and share best practice with farmers and other interested parties.

To find out more and to register for the webinar visit www.teagasc.ie/sustainablemilkwalk