

Teagasc Notes for week ended Friday October 4th 2019

Grass

With farmers building grass towards a peak at the end of September, the average farm cover across farms on Pasturebase is 979 kgs of dry matter (DM) per hectare (ha). Growth has been holding well at 56 kgs/ha/day with the demand for grass at 44 kgs/ha/day. Heavy rain over the last week means grazing conditions are more difficult especially in heavy covers of grass of 1,800 to 2,000 kgs DM/ha. The objective of every farm should be to maximise the amount of grazed grass in the diet this autumn- saving money and silage stocks. The challenge is to ensure that paddocks are grazed out well while also avoiding poaching damage. Walk the paddock before letting livestock in to graze. Make sure ground conditions are sufficient for grazing. Use a strip wire and back-fence to allow grazing to take place (12 hour blocks for dairy cows, 24 hour blocks for beef and sheep). A back fence can be used to prevent stock walking over areas previously grazed as this reduces grass re-growth and damages soil structure. Where stock are grazing heavy covers and doing damage, they should be moved to lighter covers where they will move through quicker and do less poaching damage. In poor conditions it is vital to make sure animals have an appetite going out to graze and bring them back indoors when they are finished grazing to avoid poaching. Multiple access points into paddocks can minimise the amount of poaching taking place at gaps. Multiple water points also allows more flexibility when grazing

Winter Cereals

When soils are dry there is a temptation to plant crops early, but September planted crops have higher lodging pressure and are more susceptible to take-all and other diseases, weeds and pests.

Growers should establish the TGW of all seed lots before sowing as there can be large differences within the same variety. Later sown crops generally have lower establishment, lower over-winter survival and also lower tillering capacity.

In Winter wheat the average establishment figure for a Mid-October sown crop is 75%. Winter wheat can compensate for low plant numbers with spring plant counts of 100/m² giving economic yields. In contrast to wheat, the yield potential in winter barley is directly related to grains/m². Pay particular attention to crop establishment especially with later sown crops. Aim to establish 250-300 plants/m² which will tiller to produce 1000-1200 heads/m² at harvest. For accurate seed rates for each variety contact your Teagasc Adviser.

BYDV

BYDV is a significant risk to autumn planted cereals, particularly winter barley, especially now that the seed treatment, Redigo Deter, is no longer available. Cultural control is now critical for the control of BYDV as only one chemistry group (pyrethroids) is available. Delayed planting in the autumn is the key cultural control option.

Upcoming Events

Teagasc, in conjunction with IFAC, will host a Succession & Partnership Event on the farm of Tom and Tommy Murphy Ballycahane Portlaoise Co. Waterford on Thursday the 3rd October at 11am. There is a very interesting story to be heard on this farm in relation to putting a succession plan in place, what was required to set up the partnership and the advantages it brings to the farm business and the people involved. All are welcome.

Teagasc, in conjunction with Glanbia and AHI, are hosting a Cell Check event on the farm of Thomas and Christine Curran, Churchquarter, Cappagh, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford on Wednesday the 9th of October at 11am. Rule changes to antibiotic use on dairy farms is coming in the next few years and we need to be ready for it. The days of blanket use of antibiotics at drying off are numbered. This event will feature a practical demonstration of how best to dry off cows, present Irish research and

farmer experience of selective dry cow therapy as well as an update on the future of antibiotics. Find out at the event how you can get a free dry cow consult for your farm.

Join Teagasc for the Green Acres Calf to Beef Farm Walk on the farm of Thomas & Peter O'Hanrahan, Kiljames, Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny on Thursday the 10th of October at 2.30pm.

