Grazed Grass

- Stocking Rates & 2016
- Early Spring Grazing Management
Background & 2016

- 2014 & 2015: good grass yrs
- 14 tons DM/ha
- Average Milk Price: 32c/litre
- 31c/litre is B/E price for Importing Feed
- 2016 Brings Lower Milk Price

- So Grazed Grass has to be Focus
Grassland Challenge – Improve Production and utilisation

- 1t/ha increase in grass utilisation is worth €10,000-12,000 to a 40ha farm
## Research Study on High Profit Farmers

**Study location:** National  
**Time frame:** 2009 - 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>HPDF Ave</th>
<th>ePM Ave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Net Profit (c/Litre)</td>
<td>19.82c/l</td>
<td>11.64c/l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Profit (€/Dairy Ha)</td>
<td>€2914/Ha</td>
<td>€1256/Ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yield (Kgs MS/cow)</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cow No.</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stocking Rate (LU/Ha)</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=30
Stocking Rate: Where is farm at?
What are Indicators?

➢ Reasonable Indicators:

➢ Silage: Too much Or Too little?
➢ Level of Imported feed?
➢ Level of Rented Land?
➢ Length of Grazing Season?

➢ Strongest Indicator:

➢ Grassland measurement
### What Stocking Rate can my grass support?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t Concentrate DM/cow</th>
<th>Pasture grown, t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why Improve Soil Fertility

✓ Lime, P (Phosphorus) and K (Potash)
✓ Extra 3 Tons Grass DM/ha in deficient soils
✓ Worth over €400/ha
✓ Improves Nitrogen Fertiliser Efficiency
Lime:

- 65% of Soils Deficient
- Spreading Lime on Deficient Soils:
  - Free P & K
  - Free N
  - Lime 2 ton/acre on 100 acres costs €5k
  - Get 20% increase in grass production

× Rent 20 acres @ €250/acre costs €5k
How to Grow 14 Tons Grass DM/ha

YOUR GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT SKILLS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growth Period</th>
<th>Grass grown (kg/ha)</th>
<th>Rotn. Length (days)</th>
<th>No. of Rotations</th>
<th>Growth (kg/ha) required/day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Feb to April 6</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Oct to Nov 15</td>
<td>1350</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Sep to Oct 1</td>
<td>1650</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 6 to Sep1</td>
<td>1625</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 7 to Aug 5</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14000</strong></td>
<td><strong>287</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Secret to Growing 14 tons of Grass

✓ Between April 6\textsuperscript{th} & August 6\textsuperscript{th}
✓ 122 days
✓ 6 rotations
✓ Rotation Length  20 days
✓ Graze 1400 kg DM/ha
✓ Average Growth of 70 kg DM/ha/day
✓ LEAF! LEAF! LEAF!
Utilising the Grass Available

- **Below 1200 kg DM / ha**
  - restricts growth
  - Restricts intake

- **1200 – 1500kg DM / ha**
  - Max growth
  - Max intake
  - Max utilisation

- **Above 1500 Kg DM / ha**
  - Restricts growth
  - Restricts intake
  - Restricts utilisation
Early Spring 2016
Early Turnout

Assuming any level of Normal growth:

“ALMOST ALL FARMS HAVE ENOUGH GRASS TO TURNOUT COWS OUT FULLTIME AFTER CALVING”
Early Turnout

✓ Worth €2.70 per cow/day additional profit
✓ Average Herd:
   ➢ (70 cows & 50% calved by March 1st)
   ➢ 35 cows @ grass 60 days = €6000
✓ Lower Costs
✓ Higher Milk Price
✓ More Grass Grown on the Farm
February & March 2016

✓ Grazing Plan

✓ Slurry Plan

✓ Nitrogen Fertiliser Plan
## The Spring Rotation Planner

### Example SRP for a 40 ha dairy farm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Total area grazed by week end (%)</th>
<th>Cumulative area grazed (ha) / week end</th>
<th>Pregrazing Herbage Mass on April 5th (kg DM/ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st to 7th Feb</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th to 14th Feb</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>700 - 1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th to 21st Feb</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22nd to 28th Feb</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st to 7th Mar</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th to 14th Mar</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>400 – 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th to 21st Mar</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22nd to 28th Mar</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>100 - 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29th Mar to 4th Apr</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
For the plan to be successful, the following is required:

Spring Rotation Plan – Farmer Name

Farm Area - __Ha; 30% Grazed = __Ha; 66% - Grazed = __Ha;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Total area grazed by week end (%)</th>
<th>Cumulative area grazed (ha) /week end</th>
<th>Pre-grazing Yield Mass for start of second rotation (kg DM/ha)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>100</td>
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Slurry Plan

- Need to have
  - Right Weather
  - Fields with low amounts of grass
- Target Slurry with most water
- Target late/last closed fields & Outfarms
- Need to start grazing early to clean fields off
- Maybe contractor is better option
  - Umbilical systems/Trailing Shoe
  - You won’t have time
Why Nitrogen (N) Fertiliser is NEEDED

- There will be no spare Nitrogen soon!!!!
  - Land is saturated – Nitrogen loss
  - So Much Grass: Plant has taken extra
  - After grazing: Sward will be white
- So Nitrogen required

- “Plenty of grass” is a TRAP!!!!

The Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority
February & March 2016

 Nitrogen Fertiliser Plan

✔ 70-80 units N/ac applied by APRIL 1\textsuperscript{st}
  ✔ Including slurry N

✔ 40 Units N/ac applied by MARCH 1\textsuperscript{st}

✔ Urea is product of Choice

✔ 18:6:12 in March if poor soil fertility
Spring Grass Production on Farms 2015

The Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority
GRASS GROWTH: Difference between following N Recommendations and not following recommendations

- Tipp
- Ncork
- N Cork
- Mid Cork

The Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority
Early Spring Grazing Farm Walks

Early turnout and the use of proven grazing technologies will increase performance and reduce costs.

On Farm Demonstrations of practicalities of early spring grassland management

Monday 25th January
Peter Hynes, Aherla, Bandon, Co. Cork

Tuesday 26th January
Teagasc Curtins Research Farm, Fermoy Co. Cork

Wednesday 27th January
Michael Ryan, Deansgrove, Cashel, Co. Tipperary

Thursday 28th January
Oliver Looney, Burnfort, Mallow, Co. Cork

All Events start at 11.00 am – 12.30 pm

Come along to the event nearest you.
Summary

➢ Stocking Rate 2016
➢ Not A year to Stretch the Limits!!
➢ Don’t Carry Unproductive Stock!!
➢ Early Turnout
➢ €2.70/cow/day extra profit
➢ But need to turn Cows Out & spread N