

Derrypatrick Farm Notes week beginning 14/08/2017

General details

Post-emergence spray (Pastor Trio) was applied to reseeded paddocks on Tuesday of this week. Although rain-fall in 2 hours, there was no rain for the remainder of that day following application. Therefore, we are confident of achieving a satisfactory kill of the weeds present that included chickweed, docks and thistles. This herbicide was applied 5 ½ weeks post-sowing and is arguably the most important job carried out on a new ley.

Total rainfall for this week was 30mm with 60% of this falling on Monday. As a result, ground conditions began to soften and cows were beginning to “dirty” paddocks. As mentioned in last week’s notes, our aim is to build grass supply for the autumn and consequently, pre-grazing sward height will be higher than that during mid-season grazing. To date, it has been an excellent year for achieving target post-grazing sward heights i.e. 4cm. However, it is important to try and get the balance correct in achieving adequate grazing in a paddock and limiting ground damage as was the particular case early this week. Rotation length is increasing at present and paddocks grazed this week will not be grazed again for another 24-28 days. However, if damaged, this period may be extended and have a negative effect on the number of times this paddock is grazed prior to closing for the winter.

Autumn grassland management for The Derrypatrick Herd has an added challenge with the aim of establishing clover in 50% of the farm. In order to aid establishment, target pre-grazing covers are 1,100-1,300 kgDM/ha. As mentioned above, pre-grazing sward heights are greater in the autumn than mid-season and it is essential we extend our rotation while continuing the establishment of clover in the designated paddocks. Three paddocks received clover for the second time last week, these paddocks received clover at the end of May in dry weather and clover failed to germinate.

Supplementation to beef heifers and steers has not commenced. The timing of concentrate supplementation for both heifers and steers, will be determined by grass quality/supply, weather conditions and subsequently, animal performance. Current animal performance and current grass quality/supply has encouraged us not to introduce concentrates.

Grassland management

- Farm cover: 700kg DM/ha
- Growth: 58 kgDM/ha/day
- Demand/ha: 42 kgDM/ha/day
- Days ahead: 16
- Fertiliser following grazing: CAN (1bag/acre)

Weekly planner

- Power-wash & disinfect sheds
- Spread CAN to help build grass supply
- Monitor performance of beef animals
- Vigilant of calf health during period of broken weather



Picture 1. Example of weeds present in reseed 5 weeks post-sowing



Picture 2. Example of weeds present in reseed 5 weeks post-sowing



Picture 3. Reseed 5 weeks post-sowing



Picture 4. Reseed 5 weeks post-sowing