

# Heavy Soils Programme

## ***Farmer comments on Autumn 2017 and Ophelia Storm***

### **Rossmore, Tipperary**

I didn't suffer too bad ESB went for 24 hours and no damage done. Grazing conditions are very poor and cows are doing damage. Cows are in most nights and out by day unless it's very rainy. Will have to spread slurry when weather improves

### **Lisselton, Kerry**

No ill effects from storm. Cows still out fulltime. After morning milking cows stand in yard until 12 noon with no feed in front of them. Then they go to grass with an allocation of 5kgs, gap is left open and cows return to yard where silage 4kgs/head is waiting for them, they get 4kgs/day of soya hulls. After evening milking, cows finish off silage and head back to paddock where a further 5kgs of grass is allocated. Cows are usually in the yard for start of morning milking. Good roadways and spur roads essential for this system. 15 days grass left, weather permitting.

### **Athea, Limerick**

No damage from hurricane. Kept cows out by day apart from a few v wet days. In by night since mid Sept apart from about 10 nights. 6 or 7 night for 3hrs. Feeding 4kg + bales, 75 bales used. Good growth but ground condition is poor. On/off grazing. About 20 grazing's left if weather allows. AFC at 700 never went above 850.

### **Swanscross, Monaghan**

We got away pretty lightly here with the hurricane, just strong wind for a few hours but no power lines down or damage done. Autumn has been a real washout here with hardly 2 dry days in a row. At the moment fields are saturated and even since end of September they were. Still have some heavy covers to graze in the 2200-2400 mark, but will hardly get cows on them unless there's a lot of drying which doesn't seem likely. Cows are in at night nearly all of September and in day and night from October. Going to be a long winter...

## **Doonbeg, Clare**

Since the end of July grazing conditions have been poor to say the least. Plenty of grass but having trouble grazing it without poaching. Since mid-August to present day cows have been in a total of 19 days. This includes full time inside, in by night, on different occasions. 4kg per day of ration has been fed the last 2 months and a lot of the surplus bales have been used. On the plus side no damage done from Ophelia and cows are well up on milk solids year to date. Too much grass on farm at the moment. Cows on off by day and in by night. Will have to get AFC down before year end. Ground is a mess and poaching is unavoidable. May have to mole plough drained fields again next year as they are saturated. 1st November cannot come quick enough. At least then it will be normal to house stock unlike last few months. The story could be a lot worse of course so we still remain positive.

## **Kishkeam, Cork**

Got away lightly with storm here, just power out for 24 hours. First of silage fed to cows on Oct 10 when cows housed by night, in by night since. It's 3 hour grazing by day at the moment, doing our best to minimise damage. Grass cover peaked mid-September at 1100 average. Expect to have close to 90% grazed by November 1. Start of closing was September 25. Overall grazing/clean out has been difficult. Also with poor ground conditions, we were unable to travel with slurry in October, so some slurry in tanks, but should be ok till mid-January. Replacement stock on outside blocks, expect to house them early November

## **Castleisland, Kerry**

Ophelia has come gone no structural damage just a few trees down on the road in. Silage been fed since the middle of September about 120 bales fed to date and a little bit of zero grazing off new reseeds (which is still there 17ac 2500 -3000 of a cover) . On/off grazing 12hr blocks Hard to avoid poaching, poor utilisation of grass but milk holding ok. Looks like no grazing for the next couple of days until storm Brian passes over.

## **Ballinagree, Cork**

Some trees knocked with storm, without electricity until Wednesday, fortunate to have generator. Grazing conditions very marginal. Cows housed 7 nights and 3 days over the last number of weeks. AFC is on target. Slurry under control and will be helped by addition of new slatted shed which is in final stages of completion.

