



Fodder Census Results September 2018

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Overall Results

Total number of farmers surveyed

913

80% Teagasc
20% other

Feed Balance

Average demand on farm	836 tonnes
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Average deficit on farm	-92 tonnes
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Deficit	11%
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National deficit	2.5-3m tonnes of silage
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(Survey July 2018 = 28% deficit, 8 m tonnes)

Length of Winter

Average	140 days
Dairy	130
Suckler	150
Young stock	140

70% of respondents said that they included a reserve of 4 weeks.

Deficit by Region

	% farmers short	% shortage
South East	56	24
South (East Cork)	58	23
Tipperary	52	22
North East	35	13
Offaly WestMeath Cavan		
Monaghan	35	16
Galway Clare	31	17
North West	30	15
South West	31	13

Enterprise

On farms where there is a deficit.....

Drystock

17% deficit

Dairy

18% deficit

Will you sell a surplus of feed?

25% of farmers said Yes

Selling Stock

Has sold stock to alleviate a deficit	29%
Intend selling stock to alleviate a deficit	42%

Preferred option

	% of respondents
Buy meals	55
Buy meals & silage	32
Buy straw & meals	8
Other	5

Feed Type

	Preferred Option (% of respondents)
Straights	6
Manufactured	63
Combination	31

Finances

	% of respondents
Has the farmer has quantified extra cost?	29% Yes
Has the farmer agreed funds to cover extra costs?	40% Yes

Feed Space & Bedding

Has the farmer adequate feed space?	82% Yes
If not, will you take action?	25% Yes
Have the farmer enough bedding	82% Yes

Will you change stocking rate in 2019?

	% of respondents
No	80%
Increase	3%
Decrease	17%

Summary

- National deficit is ~3 million tonnes of feed
- Worst hit areas are South East, & South with 55% of farmers having a deficit of ~ 22%
- Estimated winter length is relatively short @ 140 days
- The extent of the deficit is the same on dairy & drystock farmers at ~ 17-18%
- 42% of farmers are prepared to sell stock to fill a gap
- There will be limited silage mobilising around the country
- 31% of farmers say they will use a combination of straights & manufactured feed
- 60% of farmers have no agreed funds to cover the extra cost
- Bedding & feed space appear to be addressed on many farms but...
- 80% of farmers will not change stocking rate in 2019

Key Messages to Farmers

1. Revise the fodder budget regularly through the winter
2. There will be limited silage available to buy nationally..... farmers will need to stretch silage from the start of the winter
3. Individual farmers need to do the budgets if deciding to sell stock
4. Farmers need to agree funds to cover extra cost
5. Check feeding space to allow restricted silage & meal feeding

Fodder Related Activities for Autumn 2018

Circulation of key messages through the winter

Grass 10 Events – includes fodder clinics

Monitor farm walks – includes fodder clinics

Ploughing Stand (booklet)

Local seminars / mart events

Fodder & Feed Week – Week of the 8th October
Joint events with other organisations

Emphasis on visits & one-to-one consultations

Texting

Local radio slots / local radio adverts

Social media & website