

## Achieving Grazing Excellence Webinar Questions- 9/12/20

### 1) When should you start grass measuring? As soon as spring growth starts?

See table on the right, aim for 32 farm walks minimum in 2021. Establish opening farm cover towards the end of January.

Month	Target
Jan	1
Feb	1
Mar	2
Apr	4
May –July	4-6
Aug	4
Sept	3
Oct	3
Nov	1
Dec	1
Total	32-38

### 2) How do you calculate tonnage from silage fields which are cut for pit silage?

Best way is to use quadrant and shears to weigh grass prior to cutting

### 3) Paddocks that are only being recorded a few times per year? What is the best thing to do with them as they are throwing off annual tonnage?

If its silage ground try and get tonnage estimated before cutting and recorded on PastureBase. Otherwise if you are not going to measure consistently leave it out altogether off PastureBase.

### 4) Would it be true to say most of us do not appreciate the importance of setting out the stall in detail from Aug 1<sup>st</sup>?

Yes, autumn is the start of your grass growing year! What you do in the autumn has huge consequences for spring grazing. Build grass in August, extend rotation to a peak AFC that suits your farm and continue to walk your farm weekly. See autumn grass targets on the Teagasc Grass10 page on the Teagasc website.

### 5) Is it possible to add out farms to PastureBase accounts?

Yes it is, get in contact with [support@pbi.ie](mailto:support@pbi.ie)

### 6) How does a beef farmer extend the grazing rotation in autumn?

Before thinking about supplementation, silage ground should be coming back in for grazing so use high growth rates in early August to extend rotation. Try and find a balance between growths and demand that's comfortable for your farm.

### 7) Can you give some advice on having 2 groups of animals on farm and having the grass wedge working for both

Grazing multiple groups of animals can be difficult especially when there is 3 or 4 different groups of stock on a beef farm for example. Days ahead/

Cover per cow should still be correct. Look at the overall picture. It is very important to have time spent in paddocks correct, e.g if cows and in calf heifers in a dairy situation, try and keep heifers moving so max 3 day residency in a paddock so that you are not losing regrowth. Very important to use a back fence.

**8) Do you need to use a back fence to graze high covers in September regardless of ground conditions?**

Yes, to ensure good graze outs 12 hour allocations and a back fence is advisable

**9) Can you explain “back calculations” further?**

Example, we have a 100 cows during July being allocated 17kg grass + 1 kg meal.

Their grass demand per day is 100 cows x 17 kg= **1700 kg DM of grass.**

If we measured a 1.8 hectare paddock @ 1400 Kg/DM/Ha on our weekly grass walk, we expect that there will be 1.8 ha x 1400kg/DM/ha = **2520kg DM** grass available in the paddock.

2520 kg/DM grass in paddock divided by cows daily demand of 1700 kg DM grass = **1.5 days grass or 3 expected grazing’s in the paddock.** If the cows end up getting 4 grazing’s or 2 days in the paddock our pre grazing yield will have been much higher. The demand for 2 days would be **1700 Kg/DM/Ha x 2 days = 3400 Kg/DM** needed to feed cows divided by 1.8 hectares= **1900 kg/DM/Ha available in the paddock.**

Important to mention even the most experienced people can estimate covers wrong!

On a drystock / Beef/ Sheep use 2% of bodyweight to calculate demand.

Making use of the PastureBase planner will tell you the feed available.

**10) How are proposing to deal with Zero Grazing?**

Any zero grazed grass coming in should come in the form of silage on PastureBase. Establish the tonnes of Dry Matter coming in the load and divide by the number of cows.

**11) Any chance of getting more grass DM%s next year?**

Yes we are hoping to get DM% out from Teagasc Centres such as Moorepark, Ballyhaise, Athenry and Grange on a more regular basis. Keep an eye on the Grass10 Newsletter and social media during next spring.

