

Dealing with Current Weather Conditions

July 2024

Grass

Over the last few weeks, grass supplies have tightened on many farms, this needs to be reversed. For many this will involve “holding cattle up” on one field by feeding silage to allow grass to build. Do not graze everything bare – grass grows grass.

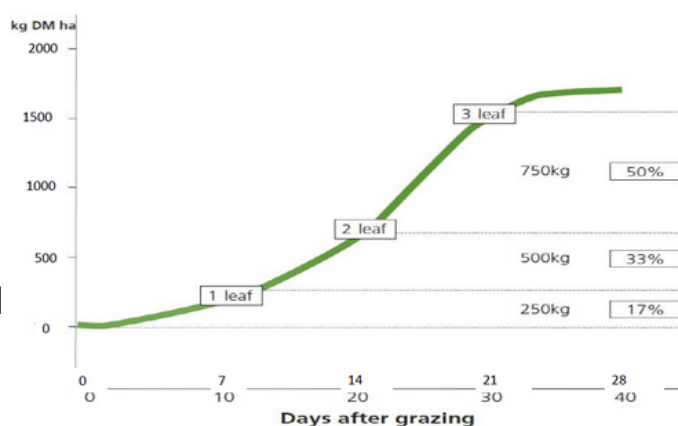
- Apply fertiliser now that rain has come
- Apply 25-30 units of Nitrogen per acre plus sulphur (S)
- If you have an allowance, spread a compound e.g 1.5 bags 18-6-12/acre
- If you have slurry, spread it
- If covers are low, hold cattle on one field to allow covers to build ahead
- Do not top fields, this will slow regrowth's and it is a waste of grass
- When grazing, graze tight, do not waste grass

Fodder budget

There are several tools to complete a fodder budget for next winter. Scan the QR codes below to complete online, or complete on the reverse of this sheet. The online versions allow more interaction.

Assess what you will need, what you think you will grow, what is the deficit and how can you fill it.

- Add in all stock
- Add in a buffer, the winter may be long and we still have the rest of the summer to deal with



As much grass grows in the last 7 - 10 days as in the first 14 - 18 days

Scan the QR code to complete the Simple Fodder Budget



Scan the QR code to complete the PastureBase Feed Budget



Reduce demand

- Minimise the number of grazing groups
- Creep feed spring calves, this will allow you to wean early if necessary
- Have all autumn calved cows weaned
- Scan and cull any cows not in calf
- Consider selling some cattle earlier than planned
- Wean any sheep on the farm and tighten up ewes
- Sell any cull ewes

Reduce demand for silage next winter

- Weigh your cattle and select suitable animals for earlier finishing
- Feed 5kg of meal on grass if cattle are within 100kg of finish
- Do you have arable land where you can sow forage crops?
- Can you rent a catch crop?
- Can you purchase extra fodder locally?

Be careful if meal feeding at grass, trampling is a real danger. Consider feeding under a wire, fencing off an area while filling troughs, advantage feeders



Winter Fodder Requirements 2024 - 2025					
	A	B	C	D	(A x B x C or D)
Animal Type	No. Stock	No. months (Include 4 – 6 week buffer)	Pit silage required t/animal	No. Bales per month	Total Silage Required
Dairy Cow			1.6	1.75	
Suckler Cow			1.4	1.70	
0 -1 year			0.7	0.90	
1 -2 year			1.3	1.35	
> 2 year			1.3	1.70	
Ewes			0.15	0.17	
Total pit silage and/or silage bales required					

Contact your advisor to discuss any of the above options