

MEDIA VERSION NO. 3 | April 27th 2018

Teagasc Specialist TILLAGE CROPS REPORT



Headlines

- Spring barley planting has commenced in all parts of the country but progress is still slow due to a combination of broken weather and poor soil conditions. Better progress has been made in the very north of the country.
- A late spring, reduced cropping options and the fodder crisis has led to an increasing interest in tillage farmers growing forage crops for livestock farmers this year. Teagasc advises that a contract should be in place to protect both the grower and the purchaser. This contract should specify the type, quantity and quality specifications of the forage subject to the agreement. The contract should also specify an agreed price and payment terms, which should include a deposit, stage payments and a balancing payment at harvest.
- Winter crops have progressed well over the last ten days. Winter barley is at growth stage 33 and the majority have received a fungicide at this stage. Disease levels have remained relatively low. Advanced wheat is at third last leaf fully emerged stage and is ready for first fungicide.
- The DAFM has sought a derogation in relation to crop diversification (two/three crop rule) for 2018. The advice from the Department is that where alternative crop options are not available to allow farmers to be compliant with Crop Diversification rules, growers can make crop choices that best suit their current situation, even if this leaves them non-compliant with the Crop Diversification rules.

Next crop report Monday May 23rd

- All information is provided as a guideline only. The definitive information is on the product label which should be read and adhered to before using or recommending products.

Produced by the Crops Knowledge Transfer Department, Teagasc, Oak Park, Carlow

Photos of the Moment



Ensure spreaders are calibrated correctly when spreading fertiliser



Winter wheat at growth stage 31. Leaf 3 yet to emerge in many crops. Dissect plants for accurate diagnosis. A video on how to is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C1NTqQJ-HS8>



Spring barley planting is progressing. Increase target establishment for spring barley to 325 seeds/m²
Sowing rate for 50g TGW is 191kg/ha (12.1st/ac)



Increasing interest in growing forage crops this year. Consult the maize growers guide for contract details.

Winter Wheat

Crops are growing quickly at present given the warmer conditions however many crops are still behind normal. Septoria levels are relatively high in many crops and we can expect disease spread very quickly. Yellow rust is present in some varieties with reports in Torp and Garrus. Timing of the leaf 3 application will be critical to maximise the performance of fungicides.



Winter Barley

Fertiliser application and spraying of winter barley has been severely disrupted by poor ground conditions. Advanced crops are at growth stage 33 and the final split of nitrogen is now a priority if not already completed. Growth and development will accelerate over the next two weeks so crops need to be assessed for final growth regulation. Disease levels are low.



Winter Oats

As with all other crops winter oats are now growing strongly. Crops vary from GS32 – GS 33. Disease levels, especially mildew reasonably low with some crops reported as moderate. Front loading nitrogen applications will help to give higher hectolitre weights.



Winter Oil Seed Rape

Most crops are now flowering but are still behind where you would normally expect them to be at this time of year. Fertiliser applications and weed control are completed at this stage in most crops.



Beans

Some beans were planted in the midlands last week but the overall area sown this year is well back on previous seasons. It is now too late to sow beans for conventional harvesting. Beans sown in late April will not be ready to harvest until late September/early October. Earlier harvest through whole cropping (and using an inoculant) may be an option, if a suitable market is available.



Spring Cereals

Spring barley planting has been severely disrupted by the weather. Current estimates are that only 20- 25% of spring barley has been planted in Southern counties while 50 – 60% has been planted in the midlands and further North. It is now too late to sow spring wheat unless a forage option is available. Spring oats sown in late April/early May will result in a late harvest and will normally be of poor quality. Seed rates need to be increased for late sowing to compensate for quicker development in barley.



Potatoes

Planting of the main crop potatoes is now underway after significant weather delays in many areas. Ground conditions are poor in some areas so only the driest fields should be worked initially. Very few earlies have been planted on time and this will likely have an effect on the market in early summer.



Forage Crops

There is increasing interest in the growing of forage crops this year due to the current fodder crisis on livestock farms and the reduced cropping options available to tillage farmers due to unfavourable weather conditions this spring. Maize and fodder beet will be the most popular options but opportunities also exist for whole crop cereals and brassica crops. The key to successful collaborations between farmers is trust and an understanding of each other's requirements.



Maize

The area of maize planted is predicted to increase in 2018 as there is a growing demand from the livestock sector. Maize grew well in 2017 which resulted in good yields and quality. Sowing of 2018 crops under plastic will take place from now on in sheltered sites, while open crops will not be sown until after mid-April.



Fodder Beet

No beet has been sown to date due. Priority will be given to the completion of cereals but beet can be sown from now on.



Greening Update

The Department has put forward a strong case to the EU Commission seeking a derogation in relation to the Crop Diversification obligations for the 2018 Scheme Year. We are confident that the case being made meets the relevant standards, as set out in the Regulations, for such an exemption. A number of Member States have recently been granted such an exemption due to difficult weather in the autumn/winter of 2017.



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