

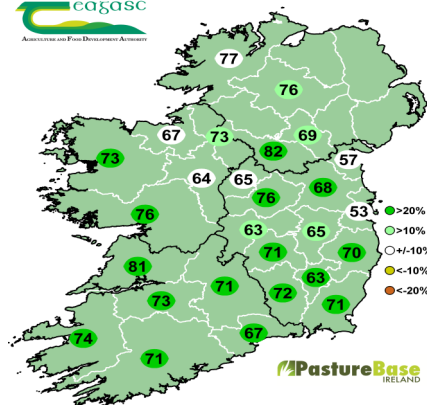
20th July 2021

PastureBase data from dairy farms:

PastureBase
IRELAND

AFC	Cover/LU	Stocking Rate	Growth	Demand	Diet (Grass + Meal)	Pre Grazing Yield
733 Kg DM/Ha	211 Kg DM/LU	3.5 LU/ha	72 Kg DM/ha	54 Kg DM/ha	15 Kg DM + 3 Kg	1530 Kg DM/Ha

Grass growth measurement
Today's grass growth (kg DM/ha/day)



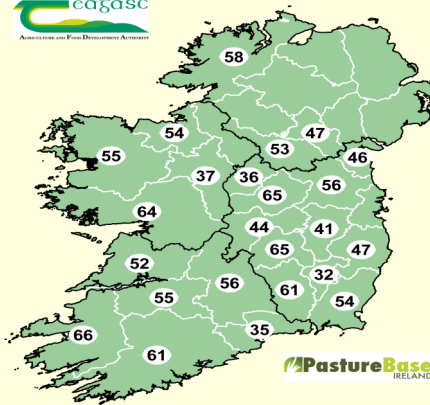
On the left: counties map showing **current** grass growth rates over the last week.

On the right: counties map showing **predicted** grass growth over the next 7 days from farms involved in Elodie Ruelle's MoSt grass growth model (55 farms).

Predicted Growth Rate:

Ballyhaise 60 kg DM/ha
Wexford 31-55 kg DM/ha
Athenry 63 kg DM/ha
Clonakilty 63 kg DM/ha

Grass growth predictions
Next week (kg DM/ha/day)



Plain sailing while the sun shines

James Hoey, farms near Dunleer, Co. Louth and began milking cows 5 years ago. All the farm has been reseeded since then and to date has grown 9.7 T DM/ha from 6.4 events, with pre-grazing yields averaging 1,340 Kg DM/ha. Stocking rate on the milking platform is 3.3 LU/ha.

"Growth isn't as bad as I thought, as we got a good kick from the last rain. Whilst the ground is hard, regrowths are still green, and everything available for grazing is good quality."

James says there is nice covers to graze for the next week and although the cover/LU is 146 kg DM/LU he's not worried just yet. He is on a 23-day rotation and feeding 2kg meal/cow. Cows are milking better than last year too.

"I'll leave things as they are for now and do a walk again on Saturday. I'll make a plan then to increase meal or zero-graze some silage ground if needed. I don't like doing it but it works OK.. Last time I set the Batt-latch to open at 3am and cows came in to eat before morning milking."

James is also delaying his next blanket spread of fertiliser until rain is forecast.



Grass Dry Matter %

Moorepark, Co. Cork

20% (1500 Kg DM/ha)

Athenry, Co. Galway

20% (1450 Kg DM/ha)

Hoey's Grass Data

AFC	570 kg DM/ha
Cover/LU	146 kg DM/ha
Stocking Rate	3.9 LU/ha
Growth	55 kg DM/ha/day
Demand	59 kg DM/ha/day
PGY	1,300 kg DM/ha
Milk Yield	1.65 kg MS/cow
Diet (Grass+Meal)	15 kg + 2 Kg

Grass10 Grazing Tips

Grass growth rates are very variable on farms due to a wide range of soil moisture deficits (SMDs) present. Data from the Agricultural Catchments Programme show potential evaporation (PE) from soil and plant surfaces ranging from 7-11mm per day over the past 4 days. High temperatures forecasted means this trend will continue and higher SMDs are anticipated which will lead to a decline in growth rates.

- Many farms are experiencing over 50% of paddocks ready to graze now due to recent growing conditions. Drier farms should identify 2-3 poorer quality ones to skip, but not bale out where SMD are high, these can be grazed next week if necessary or removed as surplus bales if rain forecast.
- Where declining growth anticipated hold Cover/LU up to 240 kg DM/LU. Above this means some paddocks will be around 2,500 kg DM/ha at grazing, these are better off removed now as bales, ready for autumn build up in August.
- On heavier soils where growth will remain strong, keep pre-grazing yields to 1400 Kg DM/ha and cover/ LU at 160-180 Kg DM/LU or 12-14 days ahead.
- Walk the farm weekly to monitor growth rates (every 5 days where growth is high).
- Avoid topping/pre-mowing when entering high SMD, this will only slow down regrowths.
- Delay fertiliser applications until rain is forecast, and check livestock to ensure they have water and shade.

PastureBase data from sheep & beef farms:

20th July 2021

AFC	Days Ahead	Stocking Rate	Growth	Demand	Pre Grazing Yield
788 Kg DM/Ha	20 days	2.8 LU/ha	60 Kg DM/ha	40 Kg DM/ha	1710 Kg DM/ha

Commercial Dairy Farming Without Fertiliser N

Dr. James Humphreys presented his findings from Solohead dairy research farm in relation to farming with lower levels of fertiliser N on the Signpost webinar series. Fertiliser N accounts for 19% of GHGs emitted from dairy farms.

The use of clover, low emission slurry spreading (LESS), and protected urea on high (280 kg N/ha) fertiliser N systems can reduce GHG by 16% versus the national average.

The current work at Solohead is to investigate to what extent can dairy farms go beyond this reduction. Establishment of grass-clover swards is a primary focus to benefit from biological nitrogen fixation (BNF).

In 2020, Solohead used 110 Kg N/ha which supported a stocking rate of 2.4 LU/ha. This is a 28% reduction in GHG emissions.

The table on the right has more details in terms of reductions in GHGs and ammonia. It is important to highlight that the trend to lower N increases net margins, but there are many challenges. View webinar at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wz-0K9UKI>

Greenhouse gas & ammonia emissions & profitability

Fertilizer N (kg/ha)	280	110	0
Stocking rate (LU/ha)	2.50	2.40	2.35
Herd EBI	165	165	195
Cows/farm	126	120	117
GHG (kg CO ₂ eq./L)	0.88	0.75	0.69
Including sequestration	0.81	0.68	0.62
GHG emissions (t/ha)	12.3	10.1	9.5
Ammonia (kg/t milk)	4.00	3.17	2.81
Relative GHG emissions (%)	-16	-28	-34
Milk sales (€)	250,894	240,467	239,932
Total sales (€)	275,443	263,859	262,842
Total variable costs (€)	97,709	83,224	77,428
Total Fixed costs (€)	107,635	103,050	102,875
Net margin (€)	70,098	77,585	82,540
Net margin (€ per ha)	1,402	1,552	1,650

GFOY Update - Pat Collins Cattle (Non-Suckling) Grassland Farmer of the Year 2020

"Rain has increased growth a lot. This has suited me as bulls can stay out grazing another week before the finishing period. Having enough grass has saved me time during a busy harvest period. We make up our own ration using mainly home-grown crops."



Taking Care of Reseeded Paddocks

Michael McGuigan is a suckler to beef farmer based in Longwood, Co. Meath. He has been focusing on growing his herd by growing more grass. Reseeding is helping him achieve this.

Michael first grazed this reseeded paddock on July 2nd at 800 kg DM/ha. To keep grazing it light, Michael then went back to graze it 11 days later (13/07). It was at a cover of 1,100 kg DM/ha. It is important to look after reseeds like this for better establishment and tillering. This will ensure it pays for itself and gives a return. (See picture on left).



We want your feedback!

We would ask all our readers to please click on the link below or scan the QR code and complete the survey on the weekly Grass10 Newsletter as we are always looking for ways to improve the newsletter. Thanks!

<https://bit.ly/Grass10Survey>



Rotation No.	7th rotation
AFC	830 Kg DM/ha
Days Ahead	9 Days Ahead
Growth	117 Kg DM/ha/day
Demand	93 Kg DM/ha/day
Stocking Rate	4.8 LU/ha
PGY	1,500 Kg DM/ha
Fertiliser	Following with just over 1u N/ ac per day
Annual Tonnage	8,700 Kg DM/ha