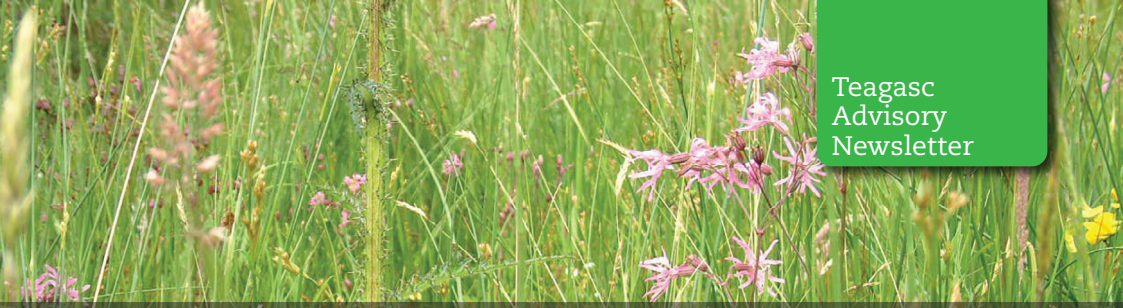

Teagasc Advisory Newsletter

# ENVIRONMENT

April 2021

## Dates for your diary

Edited by
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Countryside Management Specialist

- From April 1: Green Low-carbon Agri-environment Scheme (GLAS) fields for geese and swans can be grazed and machinery can be used with no restrictions, as the birds have returned to Iceland and Greenland for the summer.
- From April 15: close GLAS Traditional Hay Meadow areas.
- Since March 15: no topping of GLAS Traditional Hay Meadow or GLAS Low-Input Permanent Pasture.
- GLAS Wild Bird Cover: since March 15 animals allowed access (except areas of second-year kale) to help decomposition. Crops must be re-sown by May 31.

*Animals can help to decompose GLAS Wild Bird Cover crops in preparation for re-sowing by May 31.*

Teagasc
Agriculture and Food Development Authority

# Mandatory derogation requirements

## from January 1, 2021

| MEASURE | COMMENTS |
|---|---|
| **1. Compulsory liming programme**<br>Consult pages two and three of your derogation plan.<br><br>*Minimum of 25% of lime per annum to be spread. | a) Mandatory: a full-scale farm liming programme to be carried out on farm as per soil sample results (minimum of 25% in year one*).<br>b) Con-acre (one-year land) excluded only.<br>c) Lime applications must be recorded in your annual fertiliser records.<br>d) Invoices will be required on inspection.<br>e) Lime spread since date of soil samples will be taken into account. |
| **2. Low-emission slurry spreading (LESS)** | All slurry spread in 2021 must be spread by LESS equipment. Volume of slurry spread by LESS to be recorded on annual derogation records.<br><br>Farmers are required to have evidence of own machinery or provide contractor receipts. |
| **3. Reduction in crude protein percentage of meals at grass for cattle over two years** | Livestock with a 100% grass diet from April 1 to September 15. Maximum of 15% crude protein rations in this period. Crude protein percentage to be recorded on feed statements. |
| **4. Attendance at compulsory environmental training courses** | Two mandatory courses to be attended:<br>1. farming and sustainability course (five to six hours); and,<br>2. nutrient use efficiency/phosphorus (P) build up course (five to six hours).<br>Must complete both courses before December 31, 2021. |
| **5. Grassland management** | Two options:<br>a) for 2020, you must have completed a minimum of 10 measures on PastureBase Ireland and for 2021, a minimum of 20 measures on PastureBase Ireland; or,<br>b) attend a derogation grassland training course (five to six hours). Must complete course before December 31, 2021. |

| MEASURE | COMMENTS |
|---|---|
| **6. Inclusion of clover in grass seed mixtures** | When reseeding, you must include a minimum of 2.5kg per hectare of pelleted white or red clover seed in the mixture (1.0kg pelleted clover/acre). |
| **7. Exclusion of commonage/rough grazing** | Any lands declared as commonage/rough grazing on the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) application will be allocated a maximum of 170kg organic nitrogen (N) per hectare, with a resultant reduced allowance of chemical fertiliser. |
| **8. Improve farm biodiversity** | You must choose one of the following:<br>a) leave at least one mature whitethorn/blackthorn tree within each 300m of the hedgerow; or,<br>b) hedgerows shall be maintained on a minimum three-year cycle – no more than one-third of the total hedgerow may be cut in any year of this cycle; and,<br>c) cut in rotation rather than all at once, as this will ensure some areas of hedgerows on your farm will always flower. |
| **9. Slope farm roadways away from waters** | New measure which applies to all farmers regardless of stocking rate – reduce silt and overland flow of nutrients to waters. Waters are defined as any (or any part of any) river, stream, lake, canal, reservoir, aquifer, pond, watercourse, or other inland waters, whether natural or artificial, any tidal waters, any beach, river bank and salt marsh or other area which is contiguous to, and the channel or bed of anything which is for the time being dry (dry channels). |
| **10. Fencing (1.5m from top of bank) of bovines and drinking points from watercourses** | Watercourses identified on the 1:5,000 scale OSI map will be the watercourses used for the implementation of this measure. Maps of these watercourses are available online at: store.osi.ie/index.php/osi-place-map.html. All continuous blue lines as identified need to be fenced in 2021. |
| **11. Movement of water troughs to >20m from watercourses** | To prevent nutrient/organic manure enrichment. Watercourses as defined above. |
| **12. Organic N for dairy cows increasing to 89kg N/head/year (from 85kg)** | Will lead to the organic N per hectare on dairy farms increasing by 5% approximately.<br>Will this push you into a different organic N band?<br>Will this put you over the 250kg N per hectare upper limit in derogation?<br>Do you need to reduce farm stocking rate? |

## MESSAGE FROM ASSAP

*Effluent channel is either absent, blocked, or ensiled grass was filled out over the effluent channel.*

*Cracks in silage base must be repaired before use to make it leak-proof.*

# Is your silage storage fit for purpose?

Silage effluent is highly polluting and can cause fish deaths in watercourses and contaminate wells if not collected, stored and spread properly on land. Volume can range from 0-350 litres per tonne of grass. Now is the time to examine facilities.

- Clean slab thoroughly (power wash) to check. Repairs must be completed to Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) specifications for Concrete Silage Bases S128 and Resurfacing of Silo Floors S128A. See: www.agriculture.gov.ie.
- Store only the amount of silage that the slab or pit is capable of storing safely. Problems arise if ensiled grass extends onto or over effluent channels. Effluent must enter channels under the polythene cover. To prevent effluent flowing over pit walls, do not store silage too high over walls – slope the grass back at 45˚ from the top of the walls.
- Check effluent tank during silage making. Spread on land at a dilution rate of one part silage effluent to one part water or slurry. Do not spread if rain is forecast in the next 24 hours. Do not spread: within 5m of any watercourse (or within 10m where the field slope exceeds 10%); 20m from lakes or main rivers; and, 25-200m from a well or public water supply.
- Wilt silage for 24 hours before ensiling to reduce silage effluent. If in wet conditions, additional drainage pipes on the pit floor can help get effluent out, relieve pressure and reduce pit slippage.
- Bailed silage is generally drier, but any effluent must be collected, as with pit silage.



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