

# TILLAGE

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## Weed control

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*Target control of annual meadow grass in autumn to avoid issues later in the season.*

Autumn herbicide application is the most reliable way to control annual meadow grass (AMG) in winter wheat and barley.

Applying residual herbicides in autumn up to early tillering in AMG offers the best chance of success (Table 1). Control becomes less effective as AMG starts to tiller.

Post-emergence spring options used in wheat are not as reliable as before, with AMG showing resistance to some herbicides.

Testing in Teagasc has identified resistance to some herbicides (e.g., ALS-Pacific Plus). AMG thrives in open crops, especially in wet seasons (as seen in many fields last year) highlighting the importance of timely autumn control.



### MONITOR FOR THE PRESENCE OF SLUGS.

The risk of damage  
threshold in winter  
cereals is

**4** slugs  
per trap.

Where a pre-emergence herbicide has not been used, apply a broad-acting one early post emergence. Beware of herbicide resistance and take steps to minimise its

risk. Most cases of weed resistance occur where herbicides with the same mode of action have been used repeatedly in the same field. Always use full label rates.

**Table 1: Pre- or early autumn post-emergence herbicides (winter wheat and winter barley).**

Active	Trade name*	Rate (L/ha)	Target key weeds controlled
Flufenacet plus DFF plus metribuzin	Firebird Met	0.5L barley 1.0L wheat	AMG, charlock, chickweed, groundsel, common speedwell, mayweeds, pansy, fumitory
Flufenacet plus DFF	Firebird	0.3L	AMG, common speedwell, mayweeds, field pansy, groundsel
Pendimethalin plus DFF plus chlorotoluron	Tower	2.0L	AMG, charlock, chickweed, poppy, field pansy, mayweeds, speedwell, fumitory
Pendimethalin plus picolinafen	Flight	4.0L	AMG, charlock, chickweed, common speedwell, poppy, corn marigold, fat-hen, field pansy, mayweeds
Prosulfocarb plus DFF	Defy plus Diflanil 500	2.0L plus 0.1L	AMG, rough-stalked meadow grass, speedwell, chickweed, cleavers

\*Alternative options to these products are available that can offer rate flexibility and savings to growers.

## Slugs

Slugs were a major pest problem last season. While sowing conditions have been better this year, it is important to monitor for slug damage. Fields following oilseed rape or those with a history of slug damage are most at risk.

Where you suspect slugs, lay down traps using a plastic bag or slate with muesli underneath to attract them. Monitor the traps daily to quantify the populations. If you see four or more slugs per trap on average, treatment is warranted on emerging or struggling crops. Slugs are most active at night, so the best time to check traps is early in the morning.



Monitor for slugs where you suspect a problem.

The only cultural control option is rolling, if crop and ground conditions are suitable. Chemical control will be based on products containing metaldehyde or ferric phosphate. It is important to use the recommended rate on the label. Applying reduced rates reduces the number of baiting points, resulting in poorer control. It is better to apply one full label rate than a reduced rate twice.

# BYDV

Recent Teagasc barley yellow dwarf virus (BYDV) experiments on the early planting of winter barley have shown that:

- early sowing increases BYDV risk;
- later sowing gives similar or better yield than early sowing where BYDV is a risk; and,
- selecting a tolerant variety reduces risk of yield loss to BYDV when sown early where BYDV is present.

Other important factors to consider when assessing BYDV risk are mild weather and whether a ‘green bridge’ is present or not, as volunteer cereals and grasses are host species for the grain aphid.

Insecticide application should be targeted. Cereal crops emerging in November are at a much lower risk of



Check your headlands for aphids as they are more likely to land there.

BYDV than those that emerged in October. Check if aphids are present in the crop. Look at the headlands. Aphids are three times more likely to land near headlands than further out. If they are present, apply an insecticide at the 2-3 leaf stage of the crop (Table 2).

Table 2: BYDV risk and control.

Sowing	BYDV risk	Control action
Early sown (not recommended)	High	Pyrethroid at 2-3 leaf stage and pyrethroid early November
October sown	Medium to high	Pyrethroid early November
Emerging after November	Low	Control needed in mild winters, where aphids are plentiful, or in high-risk areas

## Teagasc tillage podcast

For all the latest tillage news the Teagasc tillage podcast is available on the Teagasc website, Apple Podcasts, Spotify or by scanning the QR code here.



## Fertiliser planning

The fertiliser register is in place, so get your nutrient management plan together for 2025. Firstly, ensure you have enough soil samples for the land that you are farming.

### Soil sampling:

- no phosphorus (P) soil test report, no P allocation;
- take soil samples every 2-4ha (max. 5ha) to a depth of 10cm and take a minimum of 20 cores per sampling area; and,
- soil samples are required every four years.

### Lime

A large percentage of tillage soils have a lime requirement:



Take soil samples and plan fertiliser for 2025.

- identify fields that have a lime requirement and plan applications over the coming months; and,
- apply lime based on a recent soil test and don't exceed 7.5t/ha in a single application.

## Signpost Tillage Programme farm walk

Location: Tom Tierney, Ballinafagh Farm, Prosperous, Co. Kildare, W91 A218.

Tuesday, November 19 from 11.00am to 1.00pm.

Topics will include: soil assessment and

remediation; direct drill establishment systems; cover crop management; hedgerow and farm biodiversity tips for tillage farms; and, simple measures on tillage farms to improve water quality.

## Be winter ready

Think about how severe weather might impact your work and take action. The Irish Government's Be Winter Ready campaign focuses on ways to minimise disruption to farming during severe weather. In severe weather, tasks like milking, feeding livestock, and deliveries to and from the farm can become very

difficult. Planning and preparation will help to minimise disruption. For more information visit: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/9e1358-preparing-your-business-for-severe-weather-stay-winter-ready/>.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY