

Grass Tips

MANAGING GRASS QUALITY

- Keeping quality grass in front of cows into June/July will ensure high yields of high solids milk. Get grass wrong and milk yield will drop as will protein percentage
- It is crucial to walk your farm and determine whether you are in a grass surplus or deficit
- If you are in a surplus, fields with a high pre grazing cover should be taken for bales.
- Fields with poor quality grass should be targeted for silage, thereby leaving higher quality grass for grazing.
- In some cases it won't always be possible to skip over all the stemmy grass that's on the farm. Topping could be an option to control post grazing residuals
- If topping, it is important to do it as soon as the cows leave the paddock after a 24-hour period to avoid topping too much re-growth.
- Pre-mowing is also an option, but this removes the cows' ability to select grass, so if quality is poor, you are essentially asking the cows to eat the poor-quality grass which won't be good for production
- If you are interested in learning to grass measure or if you are already grass measuring and want to improve your management and grass grown please contact our Dairy Advisor Gavin Hunt on 087-3453495

GRAZING INFRASTRUCTURE

- Consider improving your grazing infrastructure over the next few weeks
- Improving grazing infrastructure will allow more days at grass at the shoulders of the year, reduce damage to ground and increase grass utilisation levels
- Can you add more access points to fields?
- Do roadways need to be upgraded?
- Do new roadways need to be built?
- Are my water troughs big enough?

P AND K OFFTAKE

- Watch P and K off takes in surplus bales as it can lead to a reduction in soil indexes
- Approximately 3.2 units P/acre and 20 units K/acre are removed per 1000 kg DM/ha
- A strong paddock with 2000 kg DM/ha will remove 6.4 units of P/acre and 40 units K/acre
- Slurry is a good option to replenish fields. Where no slurry is available consider using a compound such as 0-7-30 (make sure you have a P allowance)
- A good rule of thumb to remember with surplus bales is that 3-4 bales per acre requires 1,000 gallons of thick slurry or 2,000 gal of watery slurry to replace the P and K removed
- Spreading Muriate of Potash at the back end of the year is also an option to replace K offtake

Full technical support will be available to assist farmers in making grassland decisions. If you are interested in availing of this service please contact Gavin Hunt on 087-3453495