

17th July 2018

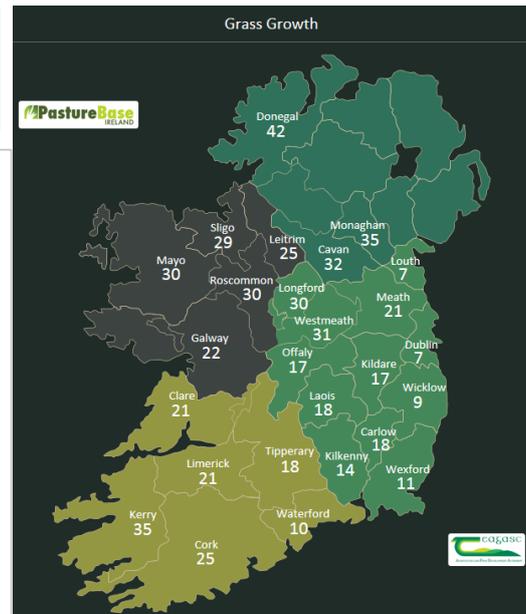
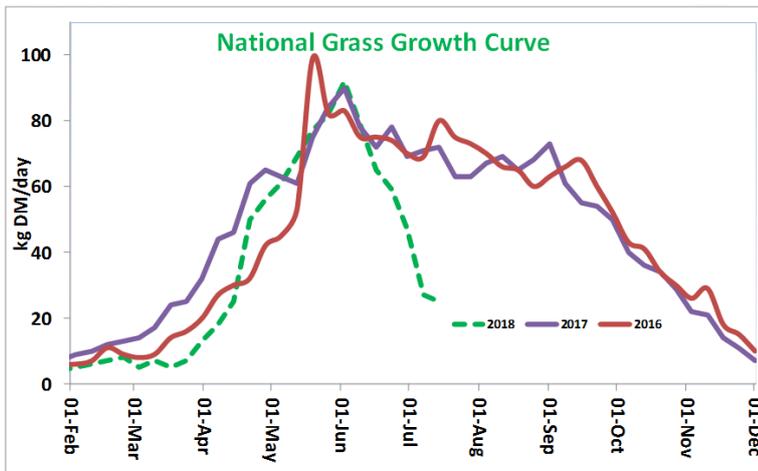
**Current Pasture Performance PastureBase Ireland:** [www.pbi.ie](http://www.pbi.ie) Micheal O'Leary



	Farm Cover (kg DM/ha)	Cover/LU (kg DM/LU)	Stocking Rate (LU/ha)	Growth (kg DM/ha)	Demand (kg DM/ha)
<b>Average</b>	453	138	3.32	25	28

### Allocation per Cow:

**8.5kgDM Grass, 5kg Concentrates, 4kgDM Silage**



- The 5 year average growth rate for this week is 70kg DM/ha/day.

### Dry Matter Content of Grass Samples Taken on Teagasc Farms this Week:

	Teagasc Curtins (DM%)	Teagasc Grange (DM%)
<b>Average</b>	26.65%	30.5%
<b>Min.</b>	25.9%	27.4%
<b>Max.</b>	27.4%	33.5%

### Drought Message:

- Continue to measure grass on your farm and maximise utilisation.
- Hold rotation length at 30+ days to maintain a level of grass in the diet.
- Every farm should maintain grazing residuals of 4cm.
- Any livestock that are not being kept for next year should be targeted for culling.
- Graze silage ground with a strip wire and back fence.
- Carry out a fodder budget for next winter. If you are short silage, you may have to supplement alternative feeds other than silage to stretch your silage reserves. Be proactive.**
- Try and source winter feed now– hay, straw etc.

### Nitrogen Message:

- Farms suffering from drought:** Where growth has stopped and where fertiliser has been applied with no breakdown, nitrogen spreading should cease.
- Heavy soils still growing grass:** Nitrogen should still be spread on farms that are still growing grass to maximise growth rates. Any fertiliser being spread should include sulphur.

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### Options to Reduce Demand for a Sheep Enterprise:

- Wean lambs as soon as possible.
- Draft lambs when fit.
- Sell cull ewes early.
- Tighten remaining ewes on small area – feed to maintenance.
- Supplement 300-500g/day concentrates to lambs.
- Supplement hay or silage to weaned ewes if necessary.
- Where fodder supplies are limited, feed concentrates to lambs first to reduce demand.



### Options to Reduce Demand for Suckler Cows & Calves Enterprise:

- Wean autumn born calves.
- Wean spring calves early this year (minimum 250kg). Lighter weanlings should be forward creep grazed (raised wire) and supplemented with concentrates.
- Silage or hay should be used to supplement cows at grass to slow down the rotation (30+ days). Where winter fodder supplies are in a deficit, alternative feeds may have to be supplemented e.g. concentrates, straights etc.
- Under-performing cows (empty cows, late calvers etc.) should be culled.



### Weekend Rainfall

- Many areas got much-needed rainfall over the weekend. Not enough in most cases.
- Rainfall levels across Teagasc farms on Sunday 15th July:

Location	Athenry	Ballyhaise	Gurteen	Moorepark	Johnstown Castle	Oakpark
Rainfall	16.5mm	10.3mm	2.9mm	5.7mm	1.5mm	1.2mm

### Winter Feed:

- Cut any standing second cut silage now.
- Apply slurry with a trailing shoe on land that was cut for 2nd cut silage.
- Try and source winter feed locally– hay, straw etc.
- Consider animal numbers for next autumn/winter.
- Continue to discuss options with your local Teagasc adviser and discussion group members.



### Key Drought Messages for Future Plant Growth:

- In a drought, spring tillers die and the remaining tillers are stressed. The period following drought is critical to allow autumn tillering to occur, otherwise pastures will thin out over autumn, production will be poor, and weeds will invade.
- Plants that are still alive but growing slowly due to lack of moisture can quickly recover, green up, and be back into production.
- Dormant plants where above-ground parts have died back, but buds at ground level are surviving, can begin tillering from these buds when rain falls. New green shoots can be seen in the base of dead pasture within 1-2 weeks after rainfall, but recovery in terms of pasture growth rates will still be some weeks away.

**Fodder Budget Link:** <https://www.teagasc.ie/media/website/publications/2018/Fodder-plan--Winter-2018.pdf>