

BEEF AND SHEEP PRODUCERS CHECKLIST

Planning your grazing and winter fodder

Concentrate until the end of August on:

- Growing as much grass as possible.
- Using it as efficiently as possible.
- Planning stock numbers to carry through next winter.

Make plans, discuss options with an adviser, and take action as soon as possible.

Tick which of the following you can do:-

INCREASE FODDER SUPPLY

Sow fertiliser after each grazing (little and often).

If pH is low, consider lime application before applying further nitrogen.

Target available slurry to silage area.

Purchase additional standing grass or wholecrop.

Where applicable sow a forage crop (kale or rape) on land with poor under performing swards.

Take two medium cuts instead of one large bulky crop.

Keep in mind:

Slurry application via Trailing shoe / dribble bar delivers better Nitrogen utilisation.

Ensure fertiliser application meets crop requirements, especially P and K for silage crops. Take care sealing silage pits and consider double wrapping silage bales to minimise waste.

USE FODDER MORE EFFICIENTLY

Take out grass paddocks / fields with covers of 3500 kg DM/ha for silage as round bales.

Give grazing priority to growing stock (store cattle and weaned lambs) / cows and calves. Ideal grazing height 4cm for sheep and 10cm for cattle.

Use a leader / follower system. Follow growing cattle or weaned lambs with dry cows or weaned ewes.

Graze the youngest more productive swards with young cattle and weaned lambs.

PLAN NOW TO REDUCE FODDER DEMAND

- Sell forward store cattle.
- Weigh and select store cattle 450-500kg for intensive finishing.
- Market stock once in adequate fat class.
- Wean calves earlier, supplement calves and offer best grazing. Cows fed to body condition.
- Wean lambs early, supplement feed and offer best grazing. Sell culls immediately. Feed ewes to body condition.

ANIMAL HEALTH

- Keep on top of worm and fluke treatments. Review your plan with your veterinary practitioner.
- Consider treating young stock with minerals / trace elements particularly weaned lambs.
- Ensure vaccination protocols are up to date, especially for clostridial diseases and pneumonia. Review your plan with your veterinary practitioner.

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

- Look carefully at relative costs for each option considered.
- Pre-empt cashflow problems. Forecast ahead for 4 to 6 months. Discuss potential problems as soon as possible with your lenders.
- Benchmark your business. Use data produced to make better informed decisions.

Contact your local Beef and Sheep Development Adviser to discuss your situation.

Contact details for CAFRE

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