

## Grass Watch Report

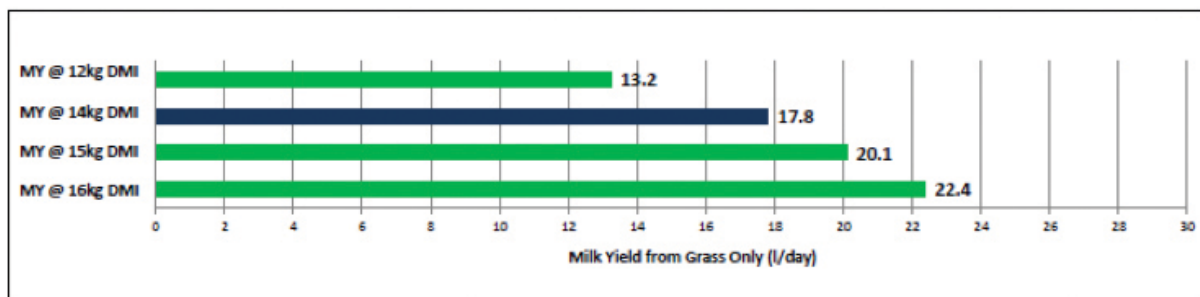
Over the last number of years, we have partnered with Trouw Nutrition Ireland as a participant in Grass Watch. We have a specific Bretts Monitor Farm supplying a weekly grass sample, grassland management data and milk performance. This information is fed into a database with 14 other dairy

farms in the Republic of Ireland and the aim is to create useful reports. If you would like to receive this Grass Watch report on a regular basis, please email [grasswatch@brettbrothers.ie](mailto:grasswatch@brettbrothers.ie)

This year, the level of protein in grass is significantly lower than previous years,

with some farmers reporting milk urea levels below 15 which is extremely low and limits milk yield. Using the results, we can accurately predict the milk yield that will be supported by various grass dry matter intakes which will then allow us to give clear feeding guidelines depending on expected milk yield.

**Predicted Milk Yield From Grass Only: Based on Average of all Monitor Farms Grass Energy**



	Compound required (kg/d)		
	12kg DMI	14kg DMI	15kg DMI
20 litres	3.3	1.1	0
22 litres	4.3	2.1	0.9
24 litres	5.3	3.0	1.9
26 litres	6.3	4.0	2.9
28 litres	7.2	5.0	3.9
30 litres	8.2	6.0	4.9

## Summer Grass Management

Wetter farms finished their first round in May and drier farms finished their third round of grazing in May. This highlights the difficulty and variation of grazing on farms this spring. If we have learned anything from the first half of this year it is that every farm is unique, and farmers need to revisit what is the best plan for their own farm. Heavy farms naturally need to carry higher conserved forage stocks and plan for wet springs and autumns. This will have a significant impact on the stocking rates of these farms. Earlier farms with higher stocking rates need to

examine their infrastructure if grazing has to feature in the early spring or late autumn. In many cases silage ground has not been grazed and was put straight into silage. At this stage most of early silage ground has been fertilised for second cut which will be due in early-mid July, leaving the farmer the option of taking a third cut where possible. To date there have been limited opportunities to take out high quality surplus bales, so availability of high quality forage needs to be considered on farms going forward.

# Dairy Cow Performance

Grass quality throughout May 2018 was poorer than May 2017, as grass was on average 5 % lower in protein according to our grass watch programme. The intense periods of sunshine led to increased levels of sugar, while cold frosty nights and an east wind led to a stop, start growth pattern in late April - early May. As a result, cows continued on high oil lush grass which led to compromised butterfat production in the middle two weeks of May along with low milk urea in many cases. Reducing the acidity will improve fibre digestion and improve the level of dietary oils available for butterfat synthesis. Our **Supreme Breeder Cubes** are proving an excellent solution to stabilising the rumen and improving butterfat content. They contain Acid Buf and Actisaf Yeast which help to mitigate the negative effects of lush grass. Customers report that cows are more settled, resulting in better graze outs, improved dung consistency and a rise in milk yield and milk constituents.

## General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Customer Self Service (CSS)

Respecting your data is important to us. We are taking steps to ensure we comply with the new EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that relates to how personal information is stored and processed. Over the next few weeks we will be asking you to confirm that the contact details we have for you are accurate. Most customers receive service texts and trading customers receive postal mailings of technical newsletters. This will continue as part of our service to you. We are launching a new online Customer Self Service (CSS) portal that will allow you to access your Bretts account information, download invoices and reports. The CSS will also give you control of your contact details and the opportunity to opt in for any non-service texts and emails (Eg. grain price offers, special offers).

## PRODUCT FOCUS

### Bretts Grass Seed Range



Our newly packaged grass seed offers two excellent options that have been shown to provide dense, palatable swards with improved intake and animal performance. **Gold Sward** is our most popular and versatile seed mixture as it can be used as a grazing or cut and graze mixture. Clanrye and Drumbo are diploid varieties with high ground cover selected to aid poaching. Dunluce and Kintyre are tetraploids with good quality grazing and silage, autumn growth and sward density. **Gold Sward Extend** is suitable for intensive farms that are focused on grass growth and quality. Abergain and Aberchoice are well established as two top end varieties that provide exceptional quality, ground cover and yield. Kintyre and Drumbo provide a dense sward with good spring and autumn growth.

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