



## HARVEST 2020

A week of idyllic weather guaranteed a great start to harvest 2020, however broken weather conditions are now making it difficult to keep combines and balers moving ahead. Winter Barley yield results are variable, however, well established crops that were sown in favourable conditions last autumn, have yielded beyond expectations.

In general, Winter Oat crops are showing good yield potential. Winter Barley straw yield is back on previous years and tillage farmers are reporting there is a lot of interest from livestock farmers to secure bedding and fodder supplies. We continue to remind everyone involved in harvest at this busy time, to be mindful of their own safety and of those around them.

### OTHER QUESTIONS OFTEN ASKED:

#### What type of feed should I use?

- Teagasc research has shown that energy rather than protein is the limiting factor with late summer grass, so a high energy, high cereal feed is recommended.
- We note that with outdoor feeding many customers prefer a cube to reduce waste and minimise attracting birds to the feeding troughs.
- We recommend Eurobeef Cubes or Beef Elite Cubes and if your preference is for a Coarse Ration, Brett's Coarse Beef is ideal for finishing cattle and forward stores.

#### How much should I feed in late summer?

- If grass is plentiful, with good grazing conditions, the economic benefit to replacing good quality grass with concentrates is small. However, we know from our Grass Watch reports in recent years that energy in grass falls off in mid-August and feeding 2-3 kg/day will give an economic response with current beef prices.
- With good grass, we recommend feeding 3 kg to a 600 kg animal but if grass supply is scarce or of poor quality, it is justifiable to feed up to 5 kg per liveweight gain.
- Good quality grass in late summer/autumn is a better value forage than silage, therefore finishing animals off grass with some concentrate supplementation, is more economical than housing forward cattle for intensive indoor finishing.

## FINISHING CATTLE ON GRASS

As we approach late summer and the demand for finishing cattle is strong, many customers are considering selling forward cattle straight from grass. The key is to aim for high-digestible grass, to maximise the liveweight gain of animals and Table 1 below demonstrates the potential gain from grass in ideal conditions, where grass supply and quality are good. Pre-grazing covers of 1200-1600 kg DM/Ha are desirable.

**Table 1: Expected Daily Liveweight Gain for 2nd summer grazing from grass only (kg per day)**

	Bulls	Steers	Beef Heifers
Suckled Beef	1.25-1.45	0.85-1.05	0.8-1.0
Dairy Beef (Friesian males)	1.10-1.30	0.80-1.00	Not applicable

**Source:** Teagasc

Many customers ask our Technical Team **'Should I feed meal to grazing beef animals?'** and the answer depends on a number of factors:

- How much grass is available?
- Is the quality of the grass sufficient for high performing stock?
- What is your target finishing date?
- Is there a market for your stock?
- Safety of feeding large groups of animals outdoors needs consideration and this mostly applies to young bulls.



## Can you afford not to reseed this autumn?

This autumn is an ideal opportunity to reseed, given the improved grass growth rates and since many farmers had difficulty reseeding during the dry, late spring of this year.

There are many benefits to reseeding and missing an opportunity to reseed will ultimately lead to poorer livestock and financial performance.

Newly sown leys are far more responsive to chemical fertiliser (up to 25% greater response to Nitrogen) and can grow an additional 3-5 tonne of grass dry matter per year, allowing for more grazing rotations. New sown leys produce higher quality grass, leading to improved milk production and livestock performance.

The financial cost of reseeding is between €270 and €330 per acre and should be recovered fully within two years. The subsequent years will improve farm profitability, due to improved early and late season grass growth. This extra growth will reduce the requirement for additional land or allow to increase the stock carrying capacity of that land.

Brett's have formulated two grass seed mixtures to suit almost any scenario.



## PRODUCT FOCUS

### Gold Sward Extend

Gold Sward Extend is a high-quality grass seed mixture with equal inclusion of tetraploids and diploids and 1 kg of white clover. AberGain is consistently a top variety on the Pasture Profit Index (PPI) and has delivered exceptional performance on farm since it first became available. AberGain is matched with Ballintoy, as both have significant similarities in both quality and seasonal growth. AberChoice is a well-known variety that remains the top late diploid on the PPI and offers good summer and autumn growth, with high quality and good silage yields. This mix is ideally suited for any farm looking to maximise their grassland performance.



### Gold Sward

Gold Sward is an intensive cut and graze grass seed mixture, made up of 40% tetraploids and 60% diploids, with 1 kg of white clover. AberGain and Ballintoy are the two late heading, tetraploid varieties included. Drumbo is a popular diploid variety, well proven on farm, with exceptional quality, seasonal growth and ground cover. AberGreen is the highest yielding variety on the PPI and has excellent silage and quality traits. Gold Sward is ideal for pasture that is sown for more challenging conditions, heavier land, or multiple silage cuts.



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