



Local Barley at its best!

On July 15th there were great harvesting conditions for this crop of Joyau Winter Barley. It is just across the road from our mill, and we have watched this crop grow all season, it didn't have far to travel to get across Brett's weighbridge.



Autumn planning

Soil testing

During the harvest it is important to keep a record of poor performing fields and establish the cause of the problem. Check that soil samples are up to date; fields should be sampled every 3 – 4 years at least. This is even more important now, considering the high cost of fertiliser.

Crop rotation planning

The loss of plant protection products has increased the importance of crop rotation on tillage farms. Having a spread of crops and varieties to suit your farm is vital in spreading the workload and risks involved in crop production. At present there is a big interest in planting Oil Seed Rape as forward prices are high, which forecasts a positive crop margin for the coming season.

Cover crops

There is an excellent opportunity to establish cover crops in fields that have been harvested and are not due to be sown until the spring. We have a full range of cover crop seeds available.

Nitrates regulations (green cover)

Changes to the Nitrates Regulations means the establishment of a green cover through natural regeneration techniques on tillage ground is necessary to fulfil BPS requirements.

The regulation states: "Shallow cultivation or sowing of a crop is now required within 10 days of baling/chopping of straw post-harvest. Where shallow cultivation or sowing of a crop is required it must still take place within 14 days of harvesting."

The amendment exempts the need for shallow cultivation in the following cases:

- Where root crops or late harvested crops have been harvested (crops typically not harvested before late September)
- Where a cereal crop or beans has been harvested after 15th September or where a cereal crop has been under-sown with another crop
- Where a winter cereal crop, oilseed rape or beans is due to be sown on the land by 31st October



HARVEST UPDATE

As harvest 2022 commenced we had excellent weather conditions and many crops have now been successfully harvested. Winter Barley yields started off quite variable, but improved as harvest progressed. Winter Oil Seed Rape and Winter Oats are now being harvested. Crop yields are excellent and grain quality is good. Hopefully the good weather continues for the remainder of the harvest. At Brett Brothers we would like to wish all our growers a safe and bountiful harvest.



Wedding Bells

Congratulations to our Ruminant Support Specialist, Dr. David Lawrence, and his beautiful wife, Jennifer Draper, on their recent wedding. They celebrated their special day with family and friends in the gorgeous and tranquil surrounds of west Cork. We wish the newlywed couple many years of good health and happiness together.



PLANNING FOR THE WINTER



What fodder is required on your farm?

With recent poor grass growth many farmers have fed silage or grazed their second cut silage. It is important to know your silage requirements for the winter and how much fodder is on farm to date. The following table provides a good indication of your silage requirements for the winter. It is important to remember that the figures outlined below can vary depending on the quality of the silage and the weight, size and condition of the animal.

Silage requirements:

Animal Type	A	B	C	
	No. of stock to be kept over winter	Length of winter in months	Pit silage needed (tonnes/ animal/month)	Total tonnes of silage needed (multiply A x B x C)
Dairy Cows			1.6	
Suckler Cows			1.4	
0-1 year old			0.7	
1-2 year old			1.3	
2 + year old			1.3	
Ewes			0.15	
*Total tonnes of pit silage needed				

*To convert tonnes to number of bales multiply by 1.25

Silage in Pit:

Length x breadth x settled height (metres) ÷ 1.35 = total tonnes in pit

Silage bales:

Number of bales x 0.8 t/bale = total tonnes of baled silage

The requirement to plan ahead to secure feed is more important than ever, because the cost of filling silage shortages will be more expensive with rising input costs. If you find yourself in a deficit situation it is important to act now. There are a number of options you can take to reduce the deficit:

- Sell un-productive stock e.g. sell lame or high cell count cows
- Cut surplus grass for bales where possible
- Offer additional meal to weanling stock to reduce silage demand
- Buy extra fodder (hay/straw/maize silage/beet)
- Consider a forage crop (rape/kale)

It is important to evaluate how your silage will feed out. Take into account the dry matter (DM), dry matter digestibility and energy content of the forage. Silage at 20% DM will affect how much the animal will eat compared to silage at 30% DM. Get silage tested in order to determine the feeding value and quality. If you require help completing your fodder budget, contact your local Brett's Sales Representative or Ruminant Support Specialist.



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