



Harvest 2026 – Farm Safely

With the harvest of 2026 upon us our Agronomy Team are pleased to report that crops are looking very well with good yield potential. Hopefully growers are blessed with sunshine and good harvesting conditions. It is a busy time on farms and in our branches so we would like to advise everyone to remain vigilant and be safety conscious at all times.

We encourage all drivers of vehicles delivering grain to our branches to wear a high visibility vest and to be careful in the yard with lots of moving machinery. We wish all our cereal growers a safe and successful harvest.

Rearing Replacement Heifers

A good heifer rearing programme is key to improving the longevity and productivity of replacement stock entering the herd. Achieving target growth rates ensures that heifers:

- Reach puberty on time
- Exhibit normal reproductive cycles
- Conceive at the desired age of 15 months
- Maintain pregnancy to term
- Calf down at 24 months to start their 1st lactation.

Key Targets:

- Average Daily Liveweight Gain (Birth to Calving): 0.7-0.8kg/day (approx.)
- Aim for calving at 22-24 months of age at optimal Body Condition Score (BCS) $\approx$ 3.0

Table 1 shows the target weight gains, assuming 520 and 600kgs of mature body weight.

Age in Months	Target % Mature Liveweight	Target Weight for a 520kg Cow (Kg)	Target Weight for a 600kg Cow (Kg)
9 Months (Puberty)	40	208	240
14 Months (Breeding)	60	312	360
24 Months (Calving)	90	468	540

Finishing Beef Cattle

Grass supply can often run tight coming into July and the quality of grass can deteriorate. For farms with forward cattle, it may be worth considering introducing supplementary feed with the intention of finishing them off at grass. As cattle grow so does their energy demands which increases the demand for grass. Supplementation at this time of year is recommended to speed up the finishing of cattle, improving carcass grades and to help achieve target fat scores.

Grass proteins at present are running over 20% so the ideal complementary feed should be a high energy/low protein cube. Our **14% Beef Elite Cubes** or our **13% Beef Grass Finisher Cubes** are ideal. Where grass quality and quantity are adequate a feeding rate of 3-4kgs/head/day is advised. In situations where grass quality is poor and quantity is in short supply, feeding levels can be increased gradually to 6kgs/head/day.



Product Focus: Heifer Rearer Cubes 18%

Bretts Heifer Rearer Cubes are the ideal follow on from **Ultra Calf Cubes 18%**. They are expertly formulated with the sole purpose of growing replacement heifers to achieve target weights at the critical stages of puberty and breeding. This ensures that an in-calf heifer calves down at the optimum BCS before entering the main herd, supporting longevity and productivity.

Bretts Heifer Rearer Cubes are rich in calcium and fortified with phosphorus to promote bone growth and development, laying the foundation for a strong frame and encouraging the onset of puberty and reproductive cycling. They are specifically formulated to support growth and development. Research has shown that high protein diets promote proper mammary development while preventing fatty tissue deposits in the udder helping to maximise future milking potential.

Why Reseed?

High fertiliser and fuel prices are proving to be a challenge in terms of reseeding for 2026. It is important to note that grass is the most competitive source of feed available to livestock farmers. Our advice is to continue with a reseeding plan and target poor performing paddocks to optimise the productivity of your grassland.

Benefits

- Higher grass production – especially in the critical shoulders of the grazing season, spring and autumn
- A reseeded paddock is up to 25% more responsive to available nutrients such as nitrogen compared to an older pasture
- Reduced weed infestation in reseeded pastures; 10% docks = 10% less grass
- Improved silage quality = Improved animal performance in terms of liveweight gain or milk yield.

For more information on our Grass Seed Range see our website for our Grass Seed Brochure.

Teagasc – Farming for a Better Future Open Day

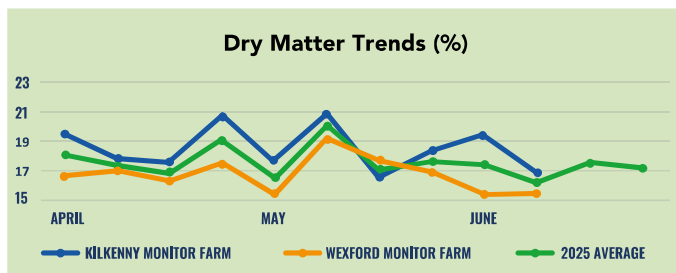
Some of our team attended Teagasc “Farming for a Better Future” Open Day at Johnstown Castle, where a range of topics were showcased, with a particular focus on soil health and water quality.

Demonstrations covered existing technologies for reducing gas emissions, protecting biodiversity, building soil carbon and improving grassland management – with some very useful points being made at their grazing demo.

A practical session on “Knowing your soils” outlined how farmers can assess their soil texture and structure using visual clues such as the sand, silt and clay content which help identify drainage characteristics, organic matter levels and compaction risks.

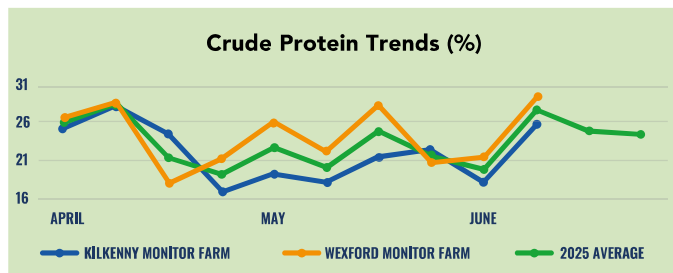
There was a focus on spreading Lime to optimise soil pH which was recognised as one of the most effective ways to improve soil health, nutrient crop cycling, and reduce gaseous emissions.

Grass Watch Update



Grass growing conditions for spring and early summer have generally been favourable across both Kilkenny and Wexford Monitor Farms, with weather patterns influencing grass growth and composition. Adequate soil moisture and mild temperatures have supported grass growth in recent weeks.

In Wexford, crude protein concentrations have been running above the 2025 average, reaching close to 30% on several occasions. This suggests that grass has remained in an active vegetative growth phase throughout much of the spring and early summer. Dry matter in grass is always closely related to weather conditions.



On our Kilkenny Monitor farm dry matter concentrations have frequently been above both Wexford and the 2025 average. This is consistent with slightly drier growing conditions and lower rainfall at times. Crude protein concentrations have fallen below the 2025 average through parts of May and early June before rising again in mid-June as growth conditions improve.

Overall, the weekly grass samples highlight how local weather conditions influence grass growth and quality showing how every farm is different. It is important at this time of year to continue walking your grass and know what grass you have ahead of your cows.

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