

April Agronomy Update

NEWS

- DAFM have scrapped the 3-crop rule for the 2024 season, but rotation obligations must be met by 2026.
- Food Vision Tillage group are requesting €60 million support funding for the Tillage Sector.

Weather

Dublin airport recorded over 100mm of rainfall in March. The lack of drying has contributed to the frustration of farmers nationwide. Remember that April is a great month for growth and despite conditions crops will continue to progress as temperatures increase.

Spring Sowing

Keep the seeding rates up, especially for sowing spring barley. Aim to sow 350m² seeds to establish 300m² plants. Always take note of the Thousand Grain Weight (TGW) of the variety you're using. Incorporate fertiliser into the seedbed to promote establishment and drive early growth.

Crops sown from late March may require an aphicide application, especially in coastal or areas with a history of Barely Yellow Dwarf Virus (BYDV). It is recommended to apply an aphicide at the 3-4 leaf stage for optimum effect.

Be mindful of varieties this spring, remember to contact your Drummonds Agronomist with queries regarding fertiliser requirements and recommendations in managing unfamiliar varieties.

		Spring Barley		Spring Wheat		
Sowing Date		Late March	Mid April	Early March	Early April	
Target Plants/m ²		350	350	350	375	
% Establishment		85%	85%	80%	85%	
TGW		kg/ha		kg/ha		
Check individual labels for TGW	44	181	181	193	194	
	46	189	189	201	203	
	48	198	198	210	212	
	50	206	206	219	221	
	52	214	214	228	229	
	54	222	222	236	238	
	56	231	231	245	247	
	58	239	239			
	60	247	247			
	TGW		st/ac		st/ac	
	44	11.5	11.5	12.3	12.4	
	46	12.1	12.1	12.8	12.9	
	48	12.6	12.6	13.4	13.5	
50	13.1	13.1	13.9	14.1		
52	13.6	13.6	14.5	14.6		
54	14.2	14.2	15.1	15.2		
56	14.7	14.7	15.6	15.7		
58	15.2	15.2				
60	15.7	15.7				

Winter Barley

Get the main split of nitrogen on by GS31, before stem extension in order to encourage tillering. Plant Growth Regulators (PGR) applications along with trace elements:

- Winter barley is highly sensitive to stress, be cautious with early applications of PGR. These should only be considered when the temperature is above 8 degrees celsius. PGRs can help reduce apical dominance, encouraging the plant to develop stronger roots and more tillers.
- Apply anti-gibberellin PGR's such as CeCeCe before GS31 to shorten the internode length of the plant. Additional regulation is needed on hybrid barley varieties, and where farmyard manure has been applied in previous years.
- Watch crops closely for manganese and other nutrient deficiencies. We recommend including a foliar phosphorus fertiliser along with trace elements to boost root health and crop vigour. Manganese deficiency is identified by yellow streaking along tyre tracks in fields

- There have been levels of Net Blotch seen in crops around the north east, a fungicide application at GS30 will account for any early levels of disease.



Manganese deficiency in field



Net Blotch on Barley plants

Winter Wheat

1/3 of the total Nitrogen split should be applied by GS30 in winter wheat crops. It is recommended to apply the first PGR application to crops at GS31 (first node detectable).

Herbicide applications – wild oat and brome control should be prioritised in winter wheat crops.

Considering weather patterns have been wet and mild, disease pressure can quickly build up in crops. A TO fungicide application may be considered to prevent diseases such as Septoria creeping into the canopy as plants progress through their growth stages. Our trials have found sulphur to provide fungicidal benefits when included in a TO application, contact

your Drummonds Agronomist for advice on sulphur applications as not all products provide the same function.

Spring Beans

The last sowing date for spring beans should be mid April.

Incorporate fertiliser into the seedbed when drilling Spring Beans. Drummonds Agriphos is an excellent natural source of P & K for developing plants. It provides an immediate source of nutrients such as calcium and magnesium to drive growth and anchor roots into the soil.

Aim for 30-35 plants/m² but increase this to 40 when sowing beans late.

Pre-emergence residual herbicides are essential on spring bean crops.

Oilseed Rape

Evaluate a Green Area Index (GAI) for each crop. The higher the green area in a crop, the more nitrogen it has taken up and ultimately less chemical N it should require. Each GAI unit equates to 50 kg/N.

The first fungicide and PGR applications should be timed in early April. PGR's such as Caryx should be used before the green bud stage. Growth regulation is important for creating an even canopy and boosting backwards crops. Prothioconazole fungicide products should be used at 0.4 – 0.5l/ha to combat Light Leaf Spot and Phoma Stem Canker. Following the mild, humid weather we've had disease pressure should be monitored.

Spring Beans				
Target Plants/m ²	25	30	35	
% Establishment	85%	85%	85%	
	kg/ha			
TGW	500	147	176	206
	550	162	194	226
	600	176	212	247
	650	191	229	268
	700	206	247	288
	750	221	265	309
Check individual labels for TGW	st/ac			
	500	9.4	11.2	13.1
	550	10.3	12.4	14.4
	600	11.2	13.5	15.7
	650	12.2	14.6	17.1
	700	13.1	15.7	18.4
	750	14.1	16.9	19.7



Creep Feeding Lambs

When it comes to having a profitable sheep enterprise, it is crucial that your lambs get off to the best possible start. In the first 7-10 days of their life, lambs rely solely on the ewes milk, and thereafter they begin to consume small volumes of solid foods. Three weeks after lambing, the ewes will hit peak milk yield, therefore it is important to continue feeding meal to ewes in order to prevent body condition losses.



Lambs aren't born with a functioning rumen, so introducing meal early will help with lamb development. At Drummonds, we offer a 18 % protein, Lamb Creep Ration, specifically designed for newborn and growing lambs. This performance ration is packed with high levels of nutritious ingredients including flaked maize, hi-pro soyabean meal and barley, all formulated to optimise lamb growth rates.

Target a lamb growth rate of 300g/day across the flock which is over 2kg liveweight gain per week. This performance will ensure that a lamb born on 1st March will weigh 34kg liveweight on 10th June (14 weeks of age). Farmers should aim for an average of 1.7 lambs reared per ewe lambled down and to have 80% of lambs available for sale at 16 weeks at a carcass weight of 18-21kg.

Once lambs are eating 250 grams of concentrate feed daily (measured over three consecutive days) they can be weaned onto ad lib concentrate diets without any significant growth check. With a feed conversion ratio of typically 4:1 in young lambs, it definitely pays to creep feed.

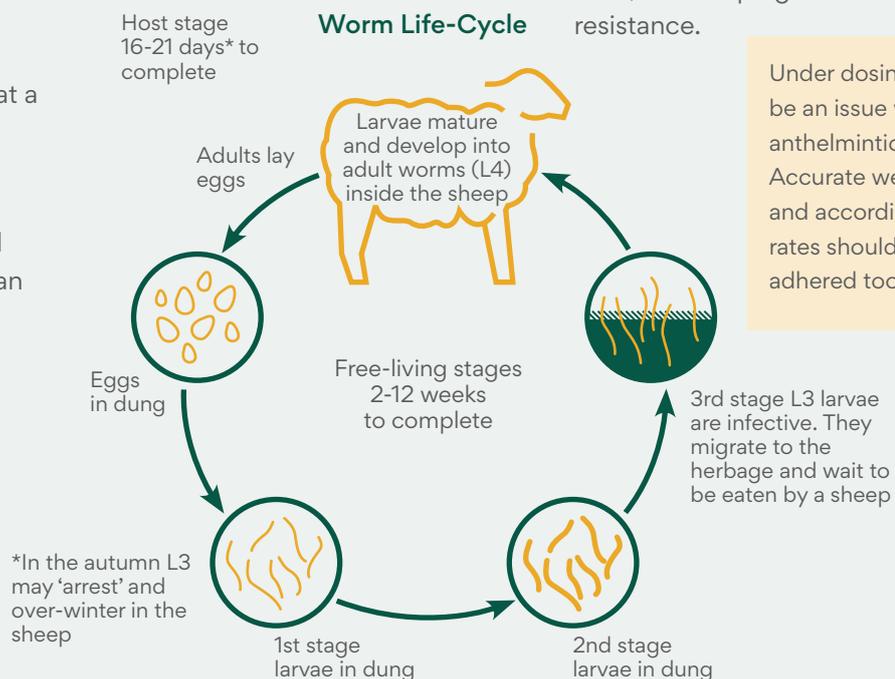
BENEFITS OF CREEP FEEDING

- **Early Finishing:** studies have proven that lambs which have been creep fed can finish 28 days earlier than non-creep fed. This ensures lambs are available for the early season sale prices.
- **More available grass:** in most cases lambs compete with ewes for grass. Having lambs moved on earlier will leave more grass pre and post mating, benefiting litter size and ewe body condition score.
- **Reduced labour:** earlier weaning and drafting reduces handling.
- **Reduced vet costs:** earlier drafted lambs require less dosing and fly strike treatments.

WORMS: A HEALTH ISSUE IN SHEEP

Worms are one of the most significant causes of reduced performance in sheep, with lambs being most at risk due to the lack of immunity. Clinical signs are scouring, weightloss and anaemia due to the lining of the gut being damaged. Severe infestations can be fatal. Even sub-clinical infestations can reduce growth rates by over 50%. Roundworms (nematodes) such as stomach lung and gut worms are generally the biggest threat to sheep. It is best practice to dose ewes post lambing to boost immunity. Lambs should be dosed at 6, 9 and 12 weeks. Faecal egg counts should be taken to identify the specific worms causing problems on your farm, thus helping to reduce antibiotic resistance.

Under dosing can be an issue with anthelmintic resistance. Accurate weights and according dose rates should be strictly adhered to.



April Offers

Ends 30th Apr 2024



ONLY
€420
inc. VAT

Sturdy Lamb Creep Feeder



ONLY
€47
inc. VAT

**Loaded Geared Reel with
400m Wire**



ONLY
€19.80
inc. VAT

**10 White Pigtail Metal posts
6.5mm**



ONLY
€205
inc. VAT

**Forcefield B50 Fencer
with Free Battery, 25 Insulators,
Electric Fence Tester, Earth Spike
& Output Leads**



ONLY
€183
inc. VAT

13ft Galvanised Gate



ONLY
€58.50
inc. VAT

**2.5mm Mild steel Barb wire
200m**



ONLY
€140
inc. VAT

**1/2" Heavy Gauge Hydro Piping
150m**



ONLY
€267
inc. VAT

**JFC Saber Solar Floodlight
40w**



ONLY
€114
inc. VAT

**JFC mini Saber Solar Floodlight
15w**



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