

## Fodder Crops *By Paul Mooney (Crop Specialist)*

Fodder crops grazed in-situ are now common place in Ireland. Fodder crops played a huge part in alleviating the fodder crisis on many farms last year. Provided crop husbandry is good, fodder crops offer considerable savings.

An early sown crop of Kale can yield 10-12 tonne of Dry Matter/Ha. A heavy first cut of silage will do well to deliver 8 tonnes DM/Ha.

There are a few simple points to adhere to:

- Best suited to light stock.
- The earlier you sow, the better (1 extra day in July could deliver more yield than the whole month of October).
- Try have crops grazed off by the end of the year in order to minimize structural damage to soils.
- Pick a dry site or if site is low-lying graze it first.

Brassica crops are highly responsive to fertilizer, particularly Nitrogen.

### Kale

- Sow kale from June to mid-July.
- Broadcast seed at 3kg/acre or direct drill at 1-2kg/acre.

### Redstart (Cross between Kale & Rape)

- Sow from July to mid-August.
- Broadcast seed at 3.5kg/acre or direct drill at 2-2.5kg.

### Fodder Rape

- Usually sown from August to September.
- Broadcast at 3-4kg per acre.
- With a good back-end to the year and good husbandry, this crop can generate a large bulk of material in a short space of time.



## Trace Mineral Deficiencies

*By Sean Holian (Mineral Specialist)*

With the grazing season now in full swing, livestock mineral deficiencies are becoming prevalent across the country. It can be hard to strike the balance between trace mineral deficiency and toxicity in ruminants. Sodium is the only mineral that cows self-regulate, meaning they will only seek Sodium when they are deficient, and this is quite rare.

Live weight gain, milk yield & overall health will suffer if a mineral deficiency is present. Don't forget, there is also a price to pay if minerals are over supplied. All animals have to process and excrete excess minerals in the diet. There is an energy cost to this, so it is important to get supplementation levels right. Excess molybdenum in soils, especially prevalent across the midlands, acts as an antagonist and makes minerals such as Copper unavailable to the animal. A Copper deficiency in the diet will lead to reduced performance, appetite & fertility.

### Nugget 4-Way Copper

**Buckets** deliver high levels of four different forms of Copper, ensuring sufficient uptake in the diet. 40% of the total Copper is protected, preventing it from being mopped up in high molybdenum situations.



## Dairy Update *by Solan Kelly (Dairy Specialist)*

Since their introduction last month, Fat Max Dairy 13 Nuts have been successful at farm level tackling 'The Milk Fat Drop' by improving overall Rumen health. Milk Fat % has stabilised. The consistency of dungs has improved & intakes have also improved, helping increases in milk yield and protein content.

It is critical to manage Rumen health over the next few months. A healthy Rumen is crucial to both breeding & pregnancy retention. Dare I say it, we have almost become too good at growing/managing grass without considering the needs of the Rumen. A common downside to growing big yields of grass is the distinct shortfall of fibre it can cause.

While concentrates containing high levels of the right fibre, Rumen buffers & yeast massively help to improve rumen function, the introduction of small quantities of straw, silage or hay are also very beneficial when it comes to controlling Sub-Acute Ruminal Acidosis (SARA).



## “What the farmers say”



Ger Brennan & his son Alex  
Dairy Farmer in Strokestown,  
Co. Roscommon.

“

*I've been using Grennan's Dairy Nuts for many years now. I've always been impressed with the quality of the ingredients used in their feeds. I'm very happy with milk solids & fertility within the herd and I firmly believe Grennan's feed is a major part of our success story.*

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## Blow Fly Strike

by **Shane Gonoude** (Animal Health Specialist)

**CLIK**  
EXTRA

Blowfly strike can be a devastating & deadly issue in sheep at this time of year. It has serious welfare implications for affected animals & carries significant economic costs for affected flocks.

If untreated, blowfly strike can get out of control very quickly. In warm, wet weather blowfly eggs can hatch within 12 hours & larvae can develop into fully grown maggots within days. When one case of blowfly strike is seen, you will often see several more strikes within days. Prevention is the best form of control both financially & for flock health.

A targeted narrow spectrum treatment which acts on specific parasites will guard against the rise of resistance and allow for control of blowfly strike. CLIK EXTRA, CLIK & CLIKZIN are the only products to benefit from FleeceBind. This is a technology that binds the formulation strongly in place and provides constant, full fleece protection. FleeceBind even works when applied to damp wool.

### CLIK EXTRA

- 19 weeks prevention

### CLIK

- 16 weeks protection

### CLIKZIN

- 8 weeks blowfly protection
- Just 7 days meat withdrawal



To find out more, contact a member of our technical team.

## Rearing Heifer Calves At Grass

by **Joe Naughton** (Calf Husbandry Specialist)

Aim to wean Holstein Friesian (HF) heifer calves off milk at 100kg & 10-12 weeks of age. The target weight for Jersey x HF calf at 10-12 weeks is 75kg.

The aim is to have the calf eating 1.5kgs- 2kgs of meal at weaning.

Top quality grass needs to be made available to calves & if possible, rotationally graze calves ahead of cows.

From August onwards, calves can be block grazed if needed & moved less frequently but a rotation will provide best results.

### Targets: 1st Summer (3-9 months)

- Target weight: 40% of mature body weight at 9 months - Holstein Friesian 240kg. Jersey x Holstein Friesian 190kg.
- Heifers should receive 1-3kg of a high quality calf/heifer developer nut while at grass. This may need to increase to 2-3kg if grass quality/availability deteriorates or weather deteriorates.
- Liveweight gain of 0.8kg/day

All of above is geared towards calving the heifer down at 2 years.

Benefits of achieving a 2 year old calving are:

- Increased number of lactations for the cow
- Higher levels of production (yield, milk solids etc)
- Reduced cost of production
- Reduced replacement rate
- Maintain compact calving

