

# Newsletter May 2020



## Silage Making

- By Seán Holian (Dairy & Grassland Specialist)



When making silage in the coming weeks, all farmers regardless of enterprise should aim to make a well preserved, palatable feed with a high DMD (dry matter digestibility). Silage can account for up to 40% of the total diet on farms, therefore highlighting the importance of making good quality silage to maximise output and performance over the winter months.

Silage quality (DMD) falls rapidly after the heading-out date – by approximately 0.5% per day. In first-cut silage, the heading-out date will typically be between 20th – 30th May. Leaving silage ground to bulk up that extra week is often counter productive as quality suffers. For second and third cuts, cutting date will depend on closing date and fertiliser application date.

When possible, cut the grass in the middle of the afternoon, as this is when grass sugars are at their highest and the dew is fully

evaporated. Allow grass to wilt for 12-24 hours.

**If unsure about nitrate and sugar levels in grass before cutting, a sample can be tested in your local J Grennan & Sons branch or by your local technical sales rep.** In grass samples where sugars are low or nitrates are high, POWERSTART should be considered.

**POWERSTART** silage additive will drive performance as it massively improves palatability of the silage leading to higher intakes. POWERSTART is the only additive to contain Aber F1 bacteria which can access both the simple and complex (stored) sugars in grass.

**POWERSTART** works by:

- Having the correct bacteria to produce more “sweet” lactic acid and less of the “sour” acetic and butyric acids.
- Increasing palatability & maximising intakes.
- Ensuring rapid fermentation, locking in more nutrients & maximising quality.
- Trials have shown 27% increase in weight gain of beef cattle.
- Convenient to use... just add water and go!

**POWERSTART** is available in 100 tonne packs. Each pack contains 4 sachets. Each sachet will treat 25 tonnes of silage.

For more information contact your local J Grennan & Sons Branch or representative.

## Foliar Magnesium for Grain Fill

-By Hilda Dooley (Crop Specialist)

### Why?

Magnesium (Mg) and Sulphur (S) are as essential as Nitrogen in the production and movement of carbohydrates (via the process of photosynthesis) in the plant. Photosynthesis occurs throughout a plant's life, so Mg and S are essential from the beginning to the end of your crop's life.

### How?

Rotational soil application of Kieserite (Mg + S) is the best way to maintain good levels of Mg. However, if you have not already been applying Kieserite, foliar applications of Magnesium should be applied to your cereal crop. Sulphur on the other hand is likely to have been added with your usual compound fertilisers, so if the crop has already had 25-30 units/ac, it is in safe hands.

### When?

Flag leaf and ear are the main contributors to grain fill. Application of a product like Epso Combitop (costing around €2/ac) at the T1 and T2 spray timings will enhance the production and movement of sugars towards the important flag leaf. Application of a product like MgK+ (costing around €3.25/ac) should be made at the flag leaf fully emerged (T2) spray and at the ear fully emerged timing, and it will help in the movement of sugars from the flag leaf to the ear for grain fill.

For more information please talk to your Grennans Rep or phone Hilda on 057 91 33584.

## A World Without Bravo:

- Paul Mooney (Crop Specialist)



The main thing to remember is that Bravo can be used up to May 20th which means Winter Barley and Winter Wheat should all receive their normal dose.

Bravo has played an essential role in disease control on Barley and Wheat crops for over 30 years in Ireland. Its real benefits only became apparent in recent years when disease resistance to many leading fungicides threatened our crops. Its strengths were Ramularia and Septoria control, adding a yield benefit of up to 0.5t/hectare on average in Wheat and Barley crops.

### Where do we go from here?

We must be more precise about our spray timings and robust about our rates going forward. Always use mixtures of fungicides in order to combat resistance. Ramularia develops when crops become stressed. Proline has a minor effect on Ramularia but outside of this we need to develop ways of minimising stress on crops like the use of trace elements in fertiliser mixes. Maybe the use of Seaweed Extract, and definitely the use of varieties, will minimise stress. The new Revysol chemistry from BASF has made up for some of the Bravo loss.

## “What the farmers say”



“I’ve been using Grennan’s Elite Breeder 14 Dairy Nuts for the past 2 years. I’m very happy with it. My scan results have been very good since I started using it & solids have held well also, so I’ll be staying with it.”

Denis Condon, Screggan, Tullamore  
– Milking 140 Cows off 2 Lely Robots

## 4 Way Copper Buckets



20kg Molassed Mineral & Vitamin Block. For all Calves, Weanlings, Beef Cattle and Cows, but particularly suitable for livestock grazing on High Molybdenum / High pH / Low Copper / Peaty Soils.

- Contains high levels of all essential minerals and vitamins.
- Contains maximum permitted levels of Copper.
- Contains 4 different forms of Copper.
- Contains 40% Protected Copper.

## Crop Update

– By Paul Mooney (Crop Specialist)

As a result of excellent sowing conditions, spring crops have emerged perfectly. They are currently receiving weed sprays, and most should be due their T1 disease spray in mid-May. This spray must be Proline based and include a good partner that is strong on net blotch, e.g. Comet. The dual pack of Decoy + Comet is

an ideal T1 spray. On varieties with a greater lodging risk or soils where lodging is a concern, apply growth regulator with the T1. Growth reg at this stage should break apical dominance, leaving you with a more even crop and will encourage rooting which will give the plant much better anchorage in the ground.

## Clostridial Diseases of Cattle & Sheep

– By Aideen Fleury (Animal Health Specialist)

Clostridial diseases are in the top 3 most common causes of sudden death of sheep and cattle. They accounted for between 5-10% of animals presented to regional Vet labs for postmortem in 2019. They are caused by a bacterium that lives in many different environments, e.g. the soil, animal tissue etc. They can lie dormant in the form of spores that can survive for many years. Stress factors ranging from dystocia, castration, dehorning, feed changes or heavy parasitic loads can trigger their rapid multiplication and spread causing rapid death. Infection can occur in sheep of all ages and in cattle between 3-24 month. Infection has been seen in

calves as young as 6 weeks.

There are 10 major clostridial diseases, they all present with different clinical signs, but all have the same general outcome- i.e. Sudden death.

*The most common clostridial diseases in cattle include:* Black leg, Malignant Odema, Black disease, Botulism, Tetanus and Enterotoxaemia.

*The most common in sheep are:* Pulp kidney, Lamb dysentery & Braxy.

**Vaccination with Tribovax 10, available at all J Grennan & Sons Stores for less than €1/Head, it is the only known prevention.**



Sheep	Cattle
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1ml injection from 2 weeks old</li> <li>• Subcutaneous injection (under skin)</li> <li>• Primary course is 2 x 1ml injections 4-6weeks apart</li> <li>• Booster every 6-12 months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2ml injection from 2 weeks old</li> <li>• Subcutaneous injection (under skin)</li> <li>• Primary course is 2 x 2ml injections 4-6 weeks apart</li> <li>• Booster every 6-12 months</li> </ul>

## Grassland weeds - To spray or not to spray

– By Hilda Dooley (Crop Specialist)

	Infestation rate <sup>1</sup>	Reduction in grass DM utilisation <sup>2</sup>	Value of lost grass DM	Cost of chemical control	Economic benefit of chemical control – year 1 <sup>3</sup>
Dock	10%	400kg/ac	€72/ac	€15-36/ac	€57-36/ac
	5%	200kg/ac	€36/ac	€15-36/ac	€21-0/ac
Thistle	10%	400kg/ac	€72/ac	€8-18/ac	€64-54/ac
	5%	200kg/ac	€36/ac	€8-18/ac	€28-18/ac

1 10% = 10 docks in 35 m<sup>2</sup> or 20 thistles in 40 m<sup>2</sup>; 5% = 5 docks in 35 m<sup>2</sup> or 10 thistles in 40 m<sup>2</sup>. 2 Assuming a potential 10t Grass DM/ha. 3 Benefits vary depending on the weed spectrum and product used. The real economic benefits of using a more persistent product will be seen in Year 2 and 3 when you have extra grass but don't have to spray.

Key management decisions for weed control

- Control young weeds in re-seeded pastures – most economical and long-lasting benefits
- Control established weeds during the vegetative stage of growth – usually too late when gone to flower
- If weeds have gone to flower,

top and allow re-growth before spraying

- Allow enough time for a chemical to reach the roots
- Remember:** using the more persistent products will mean you avoid having to spray annually and will reduce the number of times the grass has been checked, as well as giving longer lasting weed control.