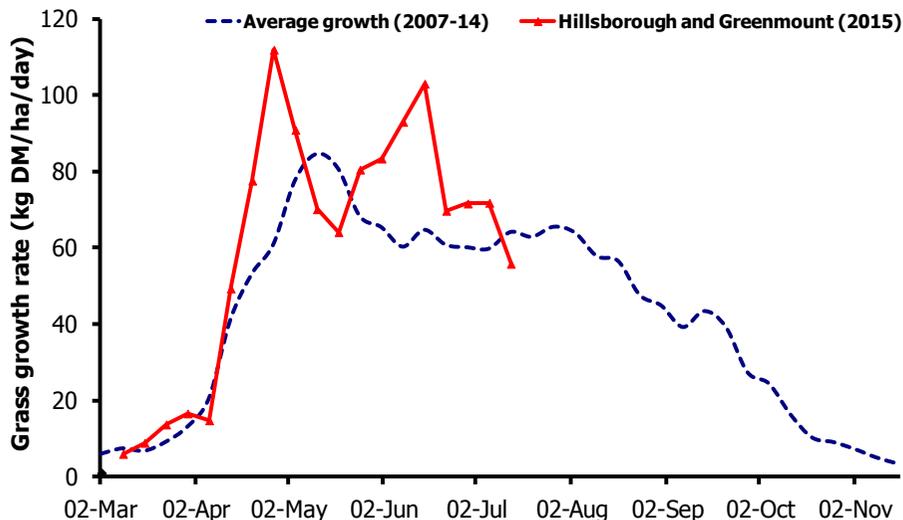


Grass Growth and Quality



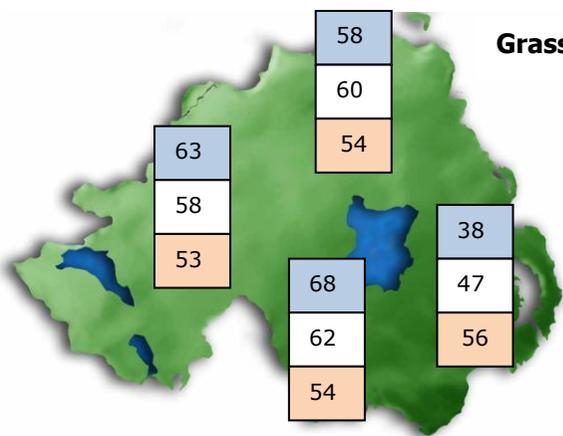
3-week Grass Growth (kg DM/ha/day)*	
Greenmount	46
Hillsborough	66
Downpatrick	34

*270 kg N/ha/year applied

Grass Quality	
Dry matter (%)	22.3
ME (MJ/kg DM)	12.4
Crude protein (%)	17.1
Sugars (% DM)	19.4

Grass growth predictions represent the average daily growth over a 21 day period

Grass Growth Predictions (kg DM/ha/day)



Current	
1 week ahead	
2 weeks ahead	

General comment: The range in soil moistures through early July has influenced the range in growth across the sites. However, heavy showers in the past week should see growth rates recover quickly in most areas.

Raymond and Stuart Gillespie manage a herd of 80 Holstein/Friesian cows near Ahoghill, Co Antrim. Average milk sold is just over 7,100 l/ cow/ year at a feed rate of 0.32kg/l with a focus on milk quality. The majority of cows within the herd calve down between July and November. The Gillespies have taken an increasing interest this year in producing more milk from forage and will extend laneways to improve access to the grazing area.



Grass supply

Average farm cover	2,810 kg DM/ha
Pre-grazing cover	3,700 kg DM/ha
Current grass growth	98 kg DM/ha/day
Herd grass demand	67 kg DM/ha/day

Grass wedge

Stocking rate	5.6 cows/ha
Rotation length	22 days
Estimated grass intake	12 kg DM/cow/day
Post-grazing target	2,000 kg DM/ha

Cow performance

Milk yield and quality	23 litres/cow/day, 3.46% BF, 3.35% PR
Concentrate feed level	4.1 kg/cow/day
Milk from forage	13.9 litres/cow/day

Management issues

Cows were turned out to grass in early April, but due to difficult weather/ground conditions were on/off grazing throughout the spring. Recently, 4.5 ha of the grazing platform were taken out for silage to manage average farm cover and post grazing topping is carried out to maintain grass quality. First cut silage was taken in late May and grass for second cut silage received 22 m³/ ha dairy cow slurry plus 80 kg fertiliser N/ ha. Second cut silage will be taken in mid July (weather permitting). Quality silage is a priority on this farm. Raymond and Stuart are participating in the National Spreadable Butter (NSB) project where cows are offered a specially formulated concentrate along with grass silage as a buffer feed at milking time. To date the milk produced has met the targets set within the project.

