

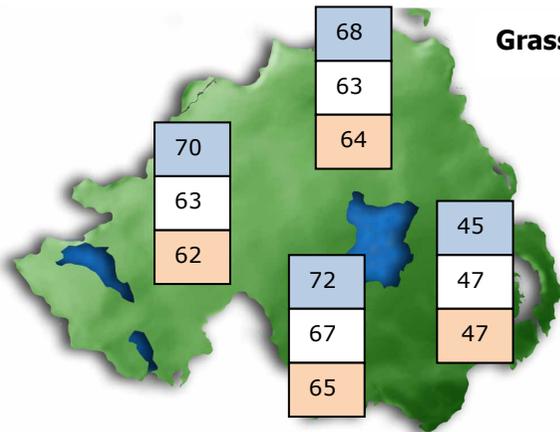
3-week Grass Growth (kg DM/ha/day)*	
Greenmount	65
Hillsborough	78
Downpatrick	42

*270 kg N/ha/year applied

Grass Quality	
Dry matter (%)	18.2
ME (MJ/kg DM)	11.7
Crude protein (%)	15.6
Sugars (% DM)	17.3

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

Grass Growth Predictions (kg DM/ha/day)



Current	
1 week ahead	63
2 weeks ahead	64

General comment: The warm and showery weather is providing excellent growing conditions across the majority of the sites. Monitor grass supplies closely and remove any surplus grass immediately to get the sward growing productively again.

John McElheran with sons David and Samuel farm 167 ha near Mosside North Antrim. Their 300 cow Holstein herd calve all year round. Increasing herd size and limited grazing platform have resulted in the herd being totally confined. Annual performance 2014/15 was 9000 litres at 4.04% BF and 3.22% protein on 3.0 tonnes concentrate equating to 2250 litres milk from forage. Zero grazing is being successfully adopted this year to improve feed efficiency and reduce costs by replacing silage and concentrates with fresh grass.



Grass supply

Average farm cover	2,755 kg DM/ha
Pre-grazing cover	3,730 kg DM/ha
Current grass growth	89 kg DM/ha/day
Herd grass demand	97 kg DM/ha/day

Grass wedge

Stocking rate	7.7 cows/ha
Rotation length	19 days
Estimated grass intake	12.6 kg DM/cow/day
Post-grazing target	1,800 kg DM/ha

Cow performance

Milk yield and quality	26.2 litres/cow/day, 3.74% BF, 3.14% PR
Concentrate feed level	5.7 kg/cow/day
Milk from forage	13.5 litres/cow/day

Management issues

The herd is split with stale cows on a full grass diet. Fresh and high yielding cows receive a silage based TMR at night in addition to fresh grass. Zero grazing commenced on 13th April and the area used will increase from the current 33ha following second cut harvested on 1st July. Fertiliser is applied after each grass harvest, either 50 kg N/ha (1.5 bags/acre 27%N) or 33 kg N/ha (1 bag/acre 27%N) along with 17m³/ha (1500gallons/acre) of dilute slurry, depending on weather conditions. Grassland management is being improved by using AgriNet via Mical Agri to monitor grass production.

