DROUGHT ACTION PLAN

Act Now to Keep Grass in the Diet for As Long as Possible

The weather forecast indicates **at least another 10–14 days without significant rainfall.** With the possibility of a longer dry period, grass growth is expected to decline so action should be taken now to stretch grass supplies and maintain herd performance.

All farmers should aim to extend the grazing rotation to 25 days, regardless of current grass availability.

What can you do to extend the grazing rotation to 25 days?

✅ 1. Remove extra stock from the grazing platform (calves, heifer, culls)

✅ 2. Increase the amount of ration fed in the parlour (max 8kg 14% Hi-Maize; max 7kg Supergraze)

✅ 3. Introduce buffer feeds (eg. one option: 50:50 soya hulls & palm kernel at €285/tonne)

✅ 4. Introduce good quality silage

✅ 5. Zero-graze from outside blocks

Example Herd - *80 cow herd, currently feeding 15 kgs of grass and 3 kgs of ration with 8 days of grass in front of cows*

Option	Kg DM grass / day	Ration in parlour	Palm Kernal/ Hulls	Silage / Zero grazing	Total Intake Kg DM	How much is grass demand reduced by?	How much grass is in front of cows now?
1	10 kgs	8 kgs	-	-	18 kgs	33%	12 days
2*	8 kgs	4 kgs	6 kgs	-	18 kgs	47%	15 days
3	6 kgs	6 Kgs	-	6kgs	18 kgs	60%	20 days
4**	4 kgs	8kgs	-	6kgs	18 kgs	73%	30 days

Option 2*: access to hay/straw necessary

Option 4**: cows housed by day, grazing at night

Key Management Points

💧 ***Water-*** ensure plenty water is always available (a cow will drink 4 litres of water for every 1 litre of milk she produces).

🌱 ***Grass Utilisation-*** use a strip wire to control grass intake and minimise the amount of grass left behind

🚜 ***Zero Grazing-*** aim to have each load used within 24 hours (grass will heat if left longer)

Please contact Donal, Tim, Lorna or the Mill for any queries