GrassCheck NI

afbi Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute ®

AgriSearch NI Driving Excellence & Innovation

Week Beginning 2 October 2017

Grass growth (kg DM/ha/d)   Mean soil temperature (°C)   Rainfall (mm/d)

Location	Grass growth	Soil temp	Rainfall
	27.5	12.2	3.5
	34.8	11.9	5.2
	23.2	12.1	2.8
	19.1	12.2	4.6
	22.4	12.1	4.5
	34.9	12.7	2.3

Grass growth rate (kg DM/ha/day) vs date

- Average grass growth (2007-16)
- Grass growth during 2017
- Predicted grass growth

Grass Growth	
(kg DM/ha/day)	
Dairy farm 7d average*	31.1
Beef farm 7d average*	36.8
GrassCheck plots#	
Previous 3 weeks	31.3
Forecast 7 days	27.0
14 days	25.7

Grass Quality		
	GrassCheck plots	On-farm
DM (%)	15.4	14.0
ME (MJ/kg DM)	11.1	11.3
CP (% DM)	22.4	21.6
WSC (% DM)	8.0	9.0

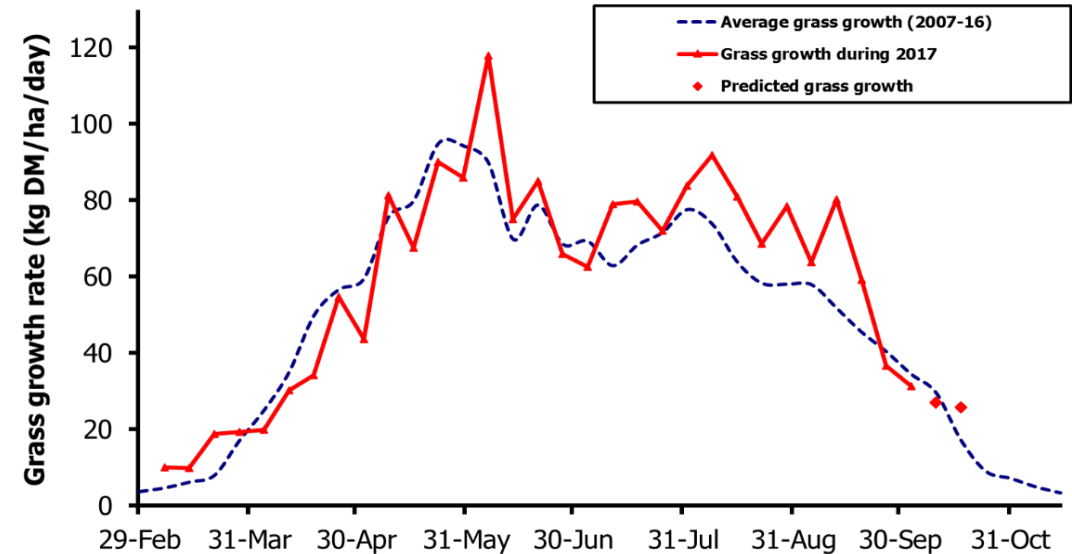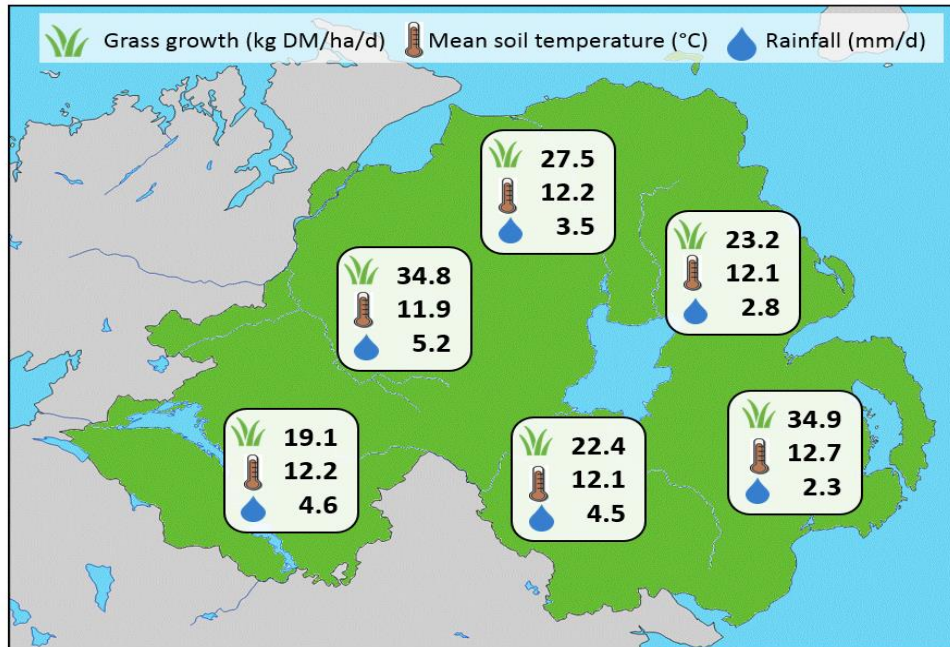*On-farm grass growth data supplied by AgriNet

GrassCheck plots receive 270 kgN/ha/year

f @GrassCheck

MANAGEMENT NOTES:

- September summary:
  - Good grass growth was evident in September with 1.34 t DM/ha produced across the GrassCheck beef and dairy farms during the month.
  - Grass quality remained high, averaging 14.2% DM, 19.7% CP and 11.1 ME.
  - Although sunshine hours and temperatures remained at average levels for the month, 145mm of rainfall was recorded (45% above the long term average). This created difficult grazing conditions and very high average farm covers have been evident on many farms in the last few weeks.
- Challenging conditions remain into October with 30mm of rain recorded in the past week, although grass quality remains good. Where grazing possible, on-off grazing strategies will help reduce surplus grass and ensure better spring growth.

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Department of **Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs** www.daera-ni.gov.uk

CIEL Centre for Innovation Excellence in Livestock