

## **SAWFLY- Check your grazing brassicas!**

Current warm wet weather conditions and the plant growth stage of many brassicas at this time of year, means that grazing forage crops are susceptible to sawfly infestations. They are small black 'bald' caterpillar- like in appearance and are voracious feeders able to despoil a crop in a matter of days. It is worth checking the crop regularly even if you are not planning to graze for a while. If there are sawflies present, then consider the following options:

Graze immediately and revise winter feeding plans

Apply a chemical pesticide (e.g a chlorpyrifos product) to prevent further damage. Follow guidance on the label of the product used.

For organic farmers there are products ( eg natural pyrethrums) that *can* be used but a derogation must be granted from your certification body before doing so.

If the crop is grown under a Tir Gofal agreement, contact your Tir Gofal Project Officer to discuss early grazing or spraying options.

Check the cost of spraying to ensure it is economic to spray especially on organic farms.

Graze crop and sow another winter forage crop like grazing rye .

Grassland Development Centre Team, IBERS