
Overview

This standard covers the need to plan and manage grass and forage crops for livestock grazing and conservation. Forage management is a key area in determining the profitability of livestock enterprises.

This standard covers a variety of forage, grazing and conservation systems in use on livestock farms, including the management of extended grazing systems, grass budgeting and grazing management.

This standard is suitable for farmers, farm managers, enterprise unit managers, stockpersons and farm advisers.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. produce a plan for grass and forage crops, matching the chosen livestock production system
2. seek specialist advice where required
3. plan and manage a grazing and conservation plan that meets the requirements of the livestock in your production system
4. plan the establishment of a range of grass and forage crops
5. manage the condition of the soil in accordance with the grass or forage crop requirements
6. plan a fertiliser programme for grass or forage crops taking into account requirements for crop growth, production requirements and value of livestock manures
7. use grass budgeting techniques including measuring grass covers and take action as required
8. identify and confirm the availability of the resources required to implement the grass and forage crops plan
9. communicate the grass and forage crops plan to those involved with its implementation
10. establish measures to maintain the required levels of hygiene and bio-security and confirm that they have been implemented
11. confirm that working methods promote health and safety and are consistent with relevant legislation, codes of practice and organisational requirements
12. monitor the outcomes of the grass and forage crops plan and compare the outcomes to the relevant industry benchmarks
13. manage grazing and conservation plans for the control of identified weeds, pests and diseases and monitor the outcomes
14. confirm that appropriate records are maintained and stored as required by relevant legislation, codes of practice, quality assurance requirements and organisational policies

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. how to plan the grazing and forage requirements of the livestock in your production system
2. the sources of information and guidance on varietal choice for both grass and forage crops
3. the importance of confirming that the plan for grazing and conserved forage matches the chosen livestock production system
4. how to use soil analysis results and make use of this information in planning fertiliser requirements for a range of production systems
5. how different soils will determine grass and forage cropping plans
6. how to examine soil structure and the factors that affect it
7. the methods of managing soil for grass and forage cropping
8. the advantages and disadvantages of the different types of grass and forage crops
9. the different methods of establishing and managing a range of grass and forage crops
10. the functions of grass budgeting, taking into account factors that affect grass availability, growth rates, quality and intakes of new livestock during the grazing season
11. how to measure and interpret grass and forage crop cover throughout the grazing season
12. possible pest, weed and disease problems and how to manage them
13. the cost benefit of preventing/controlling problems with grass and forage crops and how to seek and utilise specialist advice
14. the actions to take to improve the long- and short-term livestock performance from grazed grass and forage
15. the methods of planning and calculating annual forage requirements to match the livestock enterprise requirements
16. the benefits of the correct use of livestock manures in reducing input costs
17. how to determine the human, financial, material and capital resources necessary to achieve the grass and forage crops plan
18. the methods of communicating the grass and forage crops plans to those involved in their implementation
19. the methods of maintaining hygiene and bio-security and the

reasons why this is important

20. your responsibilities under relevant environmental, health and safety, codes of practice and organisational requirements
21. the requirements for reporting and recording and the length of time for which records should be retained

Glossary

Forage crops could include:

- brassicas e.g. kale
- stubble turnips
- swede
- forage rape
- forage beet
- forage rye
- forage pea/bean
- chicory
- lucerne
- clover
- sainfoin

LANAgM4

Plan and manage grass and forage crops for livestock grazing and conservation



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