

## Plan and manage grass and forage harvesting and storage

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### Overview

This standard covers the need to plan and manage grass and forage harvesting and storage. Grass and forage management is a key area in determining the profitability of livestock enterprises.

This standard covers the varied grass and forage systems in use on livestock farms, especially dairy farms, and is for those conserving large quantities of forage. It includes harvesting, storage and crop utilisation.

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

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### Performance criteria

*You must be able to:*

1. plan and manage the harvesting and storage of grass and forage crops, minimising crop losses and maintaining quality
2. plan and schedule grass and forage harvesting activities
3. assess the grass or forage crop and ground conditions to confirm suitability for harvesting
4. identify and confirm the availability of the resources required for the successful harvesting and storage of grass and forage crops
5. communicate the harvesting and storage plan to those involved with its implementation
6. establish measures to maintain the required levels of hygiene and bio-security and confirm that they have been implemented
7. establish measures for the recycling or disposal of waste and by-products, in accordance with relevant legal and organisational requirements, and confirm that they have been implemented
8. confirm that working methods maintain health and safety and are consistent with relevant legislation, codes of practice and organisational requirements
9. confirm that those involved in the harvesting and storage of grass and forage crops are using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)
10. monitor the harvesting process and adapt plans where required, for example, due to crop condition or the weather
11. manage the transportation of the harvested crop from the field using suitable equipment
12. manage storage facilities for the harvested crop in accordance with the environmental requirements
13. evaluate the use of silage additives in promoting forage quality
14. monitor and assess the volume and quality of grass and forage crops held in storage and relate these to livestock requirements, taking appropriate action where required
15. confirm that records are maintained and stored as required by the relevant legislation, codes of practice, quality assurance requirements and organisational policies

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### Knowledge and understanding

*You need to know and understand:*

1. the importance of planning and managing the harvesting and storage of grass and forage crops, to ensure profitability of the enterprise
2. how to evaluate the cost benefit of the various methods of harvesting including, for example, the use of contractors and machinery rings
3. the factors that could impact on crop quality or crop losses during harvesting
4. the conditions that indicate the crop and ground is suitable for harvesting
5. how to determine the human, financial, material and capital resources necessary for the harvest and storage of grass and forage crops
6. the methods of communicating harvesting and storage plans and procedures to those involved in the implementation
7. the methods of maintaining hygiene and bio-security and the reasons why this is important
8. the relevant legal and organisational requirements for the handling, transport, storage, recycling and disposal of waste and by-products
9. your responsibilities under relevant environmental and health and safety legislation, codes of practice and organisational requirements
10. the importance of confirming that the correct personal protective equipment (PPE) is used when harvesting and storing grass and forage crops
11. the transport requirements for moving the harvested crop into storage
12. the storage requirements for different grass and forage crops and how these facilities should be maintained
13. how to interpret any analyses of harvested crops
14. the types and application of silage additives and when their use may be cost effective
15. the factors that cause poor storage and how these will influence the quality of the conserved grass or forage crops
16. how to manage grass and forage crops while in storage
17. how to plan and calculate the quantity of grass and forage in

- storage at any given time
18. the requirements for reporting and recording and the period of time for which records should be retained

## Glossary

### Forage crops that are harvested include:

- forage rye
- chicory
- lucerne
- clover
- sainfoin

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