

## Does early spring grazing stimulate grass production?



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## Content presentation

- Focus is on possible mechanism
- Not on our experiment and results

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## Motives for grazing

- Economics
- Society
- Product image and quality
- Animal welfare
- ...
- ...
- Using grazing as a tool to improve the grass sward and production  
Past: Mowing for optimal grazing  
Future??: Grazing for optimal mowing



## Discussion about grazing in farmer network on biodiversity

Saying from older dairy farmers:

“In spring cows have to “tug” the grass out of the ground with early grazing”



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## Possible mechanism:

Defoliation-induced root exudation which leads to N-mineralisation (Hamilton et al., 2008)

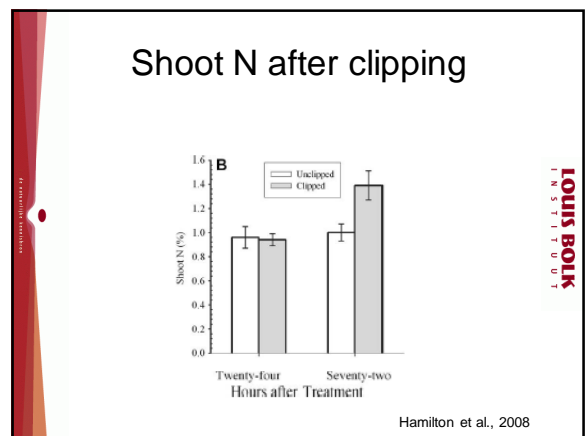
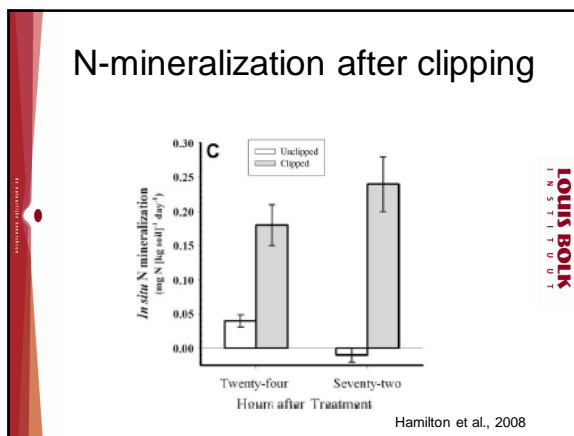
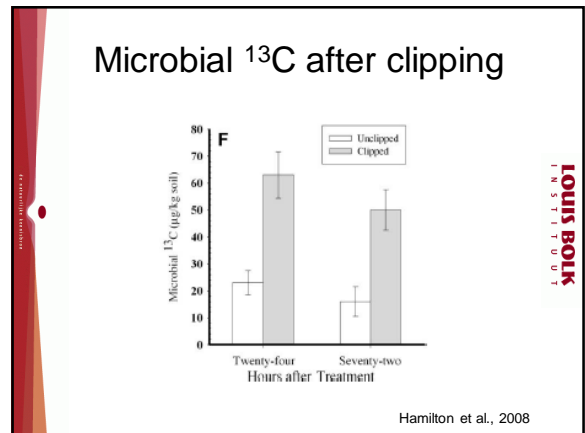
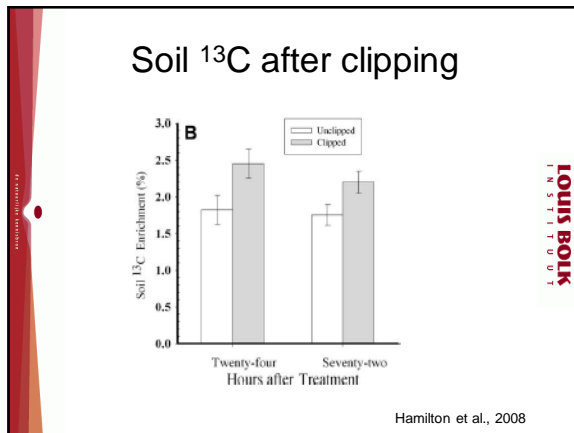


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Hamilton et al. (2008) simulated defoliation under the field conditions (Clipped versus unclipped) and measured soil and crop parameters



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### Our results on poster

In short: The stimulating effect of early spring grazing on soil nutrient mineralization appears to be too small to compensate the negative effects of early grazing on grass leaf area and photosynthesis capacity.