Grazing management in an automatic milking system

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Introduction

• System Layout
• Objectives
• Grazing Management
  • Spring
  • Summer
  • Autumn
• Overall performance
Farm Layout

Section A
00:00 to 08:00
8 hours

Section B
08:00 to 16:00
8 hours

Section C
16:00 to 00:00
8 hours

3-Way Grazing (ABC) System
Objectives

- Grow large quantities of grass
- Utilise as grazed grass
- Long grazing season

- Optimise milking frequency
  - Milk 80 cows per robot
  - Milking frequency 1.5 times/day
Objectives

- Grass – Main component of diet
- Grassland management is vital

Only 300 - 400 kg/cow/lactation
Grazing Management - Spring

• Grazing start date: 1st - 10th February

• Supplementation
  • ~ 3kg/cow/day
  • Reduced as grass growth ↑

• Grazing techniques during bad weather
  • On/off grazing
  • Back fencing
Grazing Management - Summer

- **Cow Diet**
  - Grass - 17.5 kg DM/cow/day
  - Concentrate - 0.5 kg/cow/day

- **Farm walked weekly**
  - 3 grazing blocks managed independently
  - Grass surpluses identified
  - Removed as bale silage
Pre Grazing Herbage Mass
1200 - 1500kg DM/ha
Post Sward Grazing
Height 4 - 4.5cm
Summer Grazing – Daily Management

• **Grass allocations**
  • 2 sections allocated in morning – B + C
  • 1 allocation in afternoon – A

• **Paddock Sweeping**
  • Occurs in morning (Block B+C)
  • Afternoon (Block A)

• **Grazing performance monitored daily**
  • Cows back graze if post height >5cm
Grazing Management - Autumn

• **Manage grass**
  • Ensure extended autumn grazing

• **Supplementation**
  • Only where necessary

• **Grazing season finish**
  • 21\textsuperscript{st} – 30\textsuperscript{th} November
2014 Performance

• Days at grass: 283 days
• Average post grazing sward height: 4.93cm
• Grass Grown: 14.8 tonnes/DM/ha

• Milk yield: 4,400 L/cow
• Milk solids yield: 380kg/cow

• Concentrate supplementation fed
  • 365 kg/cow
Thank You & Questions