High yielding herds, automatic milking and grazing – is it possible to combine?

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Problem

• Pasture intake is lower compared with silage intake
  – 3-5 times lower intake rate
  – Variations in pasture quantity and quality
Pasture growth in Uppsala region - variation between years

Figur baserad on data from Bodil Frankow Lindberg, 1989

kg DM/day & ha
Farmer Challenges

- The Sward
- Supplementary feeding
  Pastureing time
Part-time grazing

Research with part-time grazing + AM

- Daytime grazing (2 expts)
- Grazing morning & afternoon, 4 h+ 4 h (2015)
- Night grazing (2016)
Part-time grazing daytime 9-12 h

- **Group fed silage indoors**: silage ad lib 24h
- **Pasture group**: pasture ad lib daytime, silage at night
Part-time grazing daytime

Results year 1

• Higher milk yield (35.6 kg ECM) in pasture group (vs 33.3 for 24 h indoor feeding)

• Silage intake 9.8 in pasture group (vs 12.2 kg DM for 24 h indoor feeding)
Part-time grazing

Results year 2

- Same yield in both groups (~32.5 kg ECM)
- Silage intake in pasture group 6.2 kg DM (vs 11.5 kg DM)
Part-time grazing

Advantages

• Can give a higher milk yield!
• Decreases the area pasture needed

Disadvantages

• Disturbs the natural grazing rhythm of the animals
• Can be expensive to supply both pasture and silage
Challenges and issues to discuss

- Decision support systems?
- Advanced prognosis for pasture growth?
- Supplementary silage – when and how much?
- Part-time grazing?
High yielding herds, automatic milking and grazing – is it possible to combine?
Many farmers prove it is possible!

One example:

• Henrik Johansson
• Grazing and AM
• 11 000 kg ECM average
• 80 cows
Heading for pasture based feeding!