



Grazing Management – Annual Ryegrass Practice Audit

This checklist enables farmers to compare their pasture management to targets and assess their performance in key aspects of pasture management.

	Target	Best practice	Change?			When can I change?	
			Yes	Need to review	No. Not right for my business	Now	Later
Grazing management	Grazed at 2 ½ - 3 leaves / tiller Post-grazing residual: 5 cm (1,000 kg DM/ha) Utilise 80% of pasture on offer	You walk paddocks every week, taking measurements of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pasture cover in all paddocks ○ Pre and post-grazing covers with a rising plate meter or an automatic, ATV-mounted pasture meter 					
		Paddocks are grazed at 2 ½ - 3 leaves / tiller, and prior to canopy closure (If canopy closure occurs before 2 leaf stage, N application is reviewed)					
		Cows are removed from paddock before they graze down below 5 cm					
		If post-grazing residuals are too high, dry cows or young stock are used to utilise the excess pasture or topping is considered					
		Cows are not given access to a paddock or section of paddock for more than 2 days					
		When strip-grazing a large paddock for more than 2 days, a back fence is used to stop cows re-grazing the 2-day growth					
Pasture allocation	Allocate pasture based on current growth rate, to match pasture demand	Grazing interval is set using the current leaf emergence rate (LER) in each paddock					
		The maximum area to be grazed each day is then calculated, and the order of paddocks to be grazed determined based on leaf stage and pasture cover					
		Total kgs DM that cows must harvest each day to maintain the grazing interval set is calculated.					
		Checks are made that the quantity of pasture DM to be harvested and the number of cows are as per the feed plan					
		Daily adjustments to pasture area allocated are made if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ post-grazing residual is higher or lower than target ○ daily milk yield falls for no obvious reason ○ excessive wastage of supplementary feeds is occurring 					



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Cow intake	Cow intake per day: > 9-12 kg DM	Cows' daily time budget provides at least 8 hours for resting and at least 4-5 hours for each grazing					
		Pasture's NDF content at grazing is less than 45%					
		Diet is well balanced, especially for protein. Types and feeding levels of supplementary feeds are adjusted as pasture quantity and quality change					
		Nitrogen is only applied to a paddock immediately following grazing or within 1-2 days of the next grazing, to minimise risk of nitrate toxicity					
		Drinking water is readily accessible to cows at all times					