



Feeding system of dairy cows based only on grassland and grass-legume mixtures, no maize is cultivated on the farm



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1 Description of the innovation



Feed base in the farm is based only on permanent and temporary grasslands in the form of wilted silage, haylage and hay. Feeding of dairy cows, according to farmer own experiences and conscious decision, is carried out in the low input farm system. Feed dose is composed of fodder obtained from grasslands and grass-legume mixtures with a small addition of concentrate feeds.



Added value:

Economic results

Labour intensity (time per year)

Animal health and welfare

Farmer's strategy

The idea of feeding animals only with fodder from grasslands was created as a result of many years of observation and experience of the farmer. According to the farmer, feed from grasslands compared to maize silage is definitely better: it allows for a significant cost reduction in milk production, improves the welfare and health of cows, allows to obtain stable milk production using lower labour expenditures. At the same time, the farmer underlines that obtaining good-quality feeds from the grasslands is connected with the continuous care and accuracy of the technological process of fodder production. The switch to feed production exclusively from grasslands was connected with the replacement of all of the machines adapted to work on grassland (all machines are equipped with wide tires), which allows a quick and efficient gathering of wilted sward from the meadows, especially in case of unfavorable weather conditions. The farm has a double set of harvesting machines to perform the technologies of conserved feeds in the event of a mechanical failure. The farmer also points out the important fact that alfalfa cultivation in pure sowing or in mixtures with grasses on arable lands is much better in crop rotation than the use of maize.

2 Farm description

ENVIRONMENT

Soil types:

Peat, Clay

Climate:

Warm-summer humid continental

Altitude:

92 m a.s.l.

Slope:

0%

GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT

All of the grasslands are exclusively mowed.

The sward is conserved by wilted silage, haylage and hay making.

STRUCTURE

Annual Work Unit: 3

Agricultural Area: 32.2 ha UAA

Main forage area: 30.5 ha

Arable land area: 5.5 ha

Permanent grassland area: 25 ha

Temporary grassland area: 5.5 ha

Other forage area: 0 ha

Average stocking rates:

- agriculture area 1.4 LU/ha
- main forage area 1.4 LU/ha
- grassland area 1.4 LU/ha

ANIMAL PERFORMANCE

Dairy cows: 35

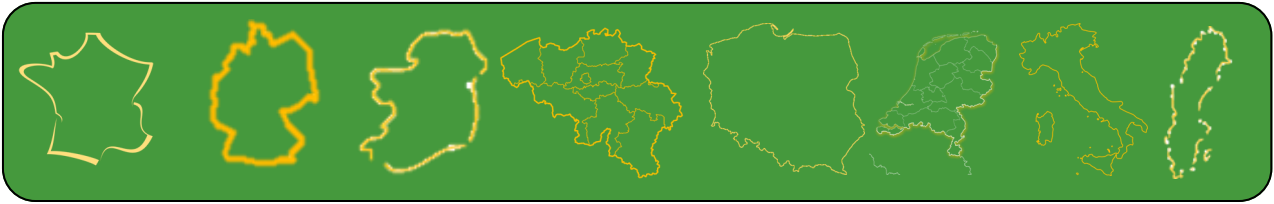
Total livestock units: 44 LU

Milk production per head: 7200 (l/year)

WHY IT IS WORKING

The specificity of the habitat in which the feed base of the farm is located (peat soils) predisposes the production of fodder from grasslands. Thanks to this, the farm has lower total and unit costs of feeds production. Improvement of animal welfare due to nutrition based only on grassland-based feeds and a small amount of concentrates feeds results in lower costs of the herd rearing and veterinary care. The rentability of milk production in the farm is on the same level, as confirmed by the farmer, as in high input system.

Country shapes



Domains of innovation



Machinery, tools



Forage mixture



Forage conservation technique



Grazing management system



Legume management



Animal feeding management



Animal type (breed)



Product processing



Marketing



Farm system



Landscape

Main types of animal

