



# AMS and long-distance grazing



## Hotze Bosch

### 1 Description of the innovation

In the Frisian village Swichum live Hotze Bosch and his son Hilse a dairy farm with 133 dairy cows and 60 young cattle. The Bosch family company uses 97 hectares of clay soil, of which are only 40 hectares available for grazing the dairy cows. The cows are milked with 2 Lely milking robots. Grazing is very important for the Bosch family, during the pasture season no grass is fed to the cows inside, only some maize silage. An attempt is made to take the cows out of grass during the pasture season they will graze 14 kg ds.

An extra challenge is the walking distance combined with the robots. The cows have to walk sometimes more than two kilometres for the paddock. This is no obstacle for the farmer, in the combination of meadows and robotic milking. Tasty grass outside and only water in the barn ensure that the cows are happy to come to the land and the robot during the day. Also on rainy days the farmers succeed in getting the cows to take up sufficient grass in the country and to maintain sufficient milking's. According to them, this is more due to the 'training' of the cows and the young stock >4 months.

Furthermore, the farmers have developed their own covering system for grass and maize silage. This is a system that can mechanically open and close a pit. The system consists of a large roller that hangs over the entire width of the trench silo and can hydraulically roll the silage carpet. This makes it easy to cover the pit, within half an hour and by one person. Thanks to this system, farmers can plow all the grass easily into a trench silo throughout the year. This has the advantage that no ration changes take place during the winter period. The farmers mow on the house plot in the service of grazing, because of this they try to mow every 10 days. By mechanically covering the grass silage, this involves little extra work.



#### Farmer's strategy

The challenge of the farmer is the automatic milk system and grazing during day and night.

Achievements: 14 kg ds fresh grass for grazing

Failures: cows walk maximum 2 kilometres

Results: Good system for the combination milking system and (long-distance) grazing



## 2 Farm description

### ENVIRONMENT

Soil: Clay

Climate: Temperate oceanic

Altitude:  $\pm$ sea level

Slope: flat

### GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT

Grazing: Yes

Grazing management: Strip stocking

Length of grazing periode: 6 months/year

Main composition grassland: Perennial ryegrass

### STRUCTURE

**Agricultural Area** 97 ha UAA

*Permanent grassland* 97 ha

**Production method** Conventional

**Stock** 133 dairy cows

60 young stock

**Breed** Holstein-Friesian

**Milk production** 9300 kg/year

**Annual Work Unit** 1,7

### WHY IT IS WORKING

The innovation is successful on this farm because:

- The farmer have more milk from fresh grass though graze his cows also on long distance paddocks.
- Mowing for grazing is easier because he has a automatic covering system for roughage storage
- To see the automatic covering system working, watch the movie in this link: <https://youtu.be/SxltXIDZI70>