



Norrby gård - family farm



Anna & Tomas
Olsson



180 hectares



improvement of
grassland management

MAP AND EXCEL SPREADSHEET FOR PLANNING ROTATIONAL GRAZING

Tomas Olsson runs the farm Norrby in central Sweden. The farm has 1000 ewes lambing in January and April. The farm manages 180 ha arable land and 150 ha semi-natural grasslands. The paddocks are grazed during high season by 3–4 groups of 150 ewes and their lambs. In order to utilise the pastures optimally there must be a useful way of controlling and monitoring the grass growth in the paddocks. The key is to graze the paddocks in the right order and to gather knowledge and experience of how to use the pastures efficiently. The paddocks are prioritised according to their regrowth and the whole system is built for moving the animals easily between the paddocks. A big map on the wall in the farm office displays all the paddocks. The map is used to mark out the animal groups, which animals are grazing where and the date when they came to the paddock and when they left. The paddocks are also marked out as they are divided for strip grazing. There is also a smaller version of the map for field use, containing reference information for each paddock.

The grazing is documented in an Excel spreadsheet where the paddocks are colour-coded. Tomas measures the grass regrowth in the paddocks to be able to decide the optimal order in which the paddocks should be grazed. A paddock is grazed when the grass is 8–9 cm and left when the grass is 4 cm. Normally the paddocks are grazed 3–4 days. Tomas is always looking for methods for a more efficient grazing management with influences from Sweden and abroad. Thanks to improvements the pasture production has doubled from 5 to 10 ewes per hectare. The next step is to extend the use of digital solutions, both for production monitoring, such as plate meters or drone pictures, and for planning to be able to predict growth and prioritise paddocks on a longer time scale.

Author: Linda af Geijerstam, Svenska Vallföreningen

Farmer Interview

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZEm7V1oWMuI>

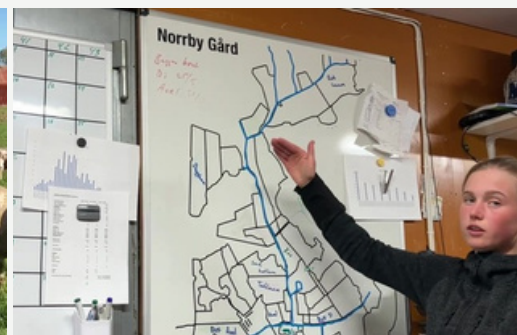


Photo credit: photos generated from farmer interview - Svenska Vallföreningen