How to manage

The 60-40 planner is an effective tool for grassland management in the autumn, writes Gordon Peppard.

\[ \text{CLOSE A SET AMOUNT EACH WEEK UNTIL THE WHOLE GRAZING AREA IS CLOSED AND ANIMALS HOUSED} \]

Get your grassland in order

The following checklist should be completed in the next few weeks to ensure that all animal groups are grazed to a dry matter level expected or required.

- A minimum of 40cm straw bed should be in place on the farm from grazed out grass.
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The grassland should be divided into enclosures, with a minimum of five areas per group. The grass should be cut for hay or silage, or grazed if there is not enough for both purposes.

The following steps should be taken to ensure that the grass is grazed as effectively as possible:

1. **Plan the grazing rotations:**
   - Divide the farm into five areas.
   - Grazing should start in the first week of October.
   - Areas should be grazed in rotation to ensure even growth and distribution of nutrients.

2. **Prepare the grassland:**
   - Mow the grass to a height of 40cm before grazing.
   - Apply lime or fertiliser as necessary to achieve the desired dry matter level.

3. **Monitor the grassland:**
   - Check the dry matter level at least once a week.
   - Adjust the grazing plan as needed to maintain the desired dry matter level.

4. **Adjust the grazing plan:**
   - If the dry matter level is too high, reduce the length of the grazing period.
   - If the dry matter level is too low, extend the grazing period.

5. **Monitor the animal health:**
   - Check for any signs of disease or poor performance.
   - Provide appropriate treatment if necessary.

Winter grassland

- **Plan the winter grazing:**
  - Divide the farm into five areas.
  - Grazing should start in the first week of October.
  - Areas should be grazed in rotation to ensure even growth and distribution of nutrients.

- **Prepare the grassland:**
  - Mow the grass to a height of 40cm before grazing.
  - Apply lime or fertiliser as necessary to achieve the desired dry matter level.

- **Monitor the grassland:**
  - Check the dry matter level at least once a week.
  - Adjust the grazing plan as needed to maintain the desired dry matter level.

- **Adjust the grazing plan:**
  - If the dry matter level is too high, reduce the length of the grazing period.
  - If the dry matter level is too low, extend the grazing period.

- **Monitor the animal health:**
  - Check for any signs of disease or poor performance.
  - Provide appropriate treatment if necessary.

FARMER WITH 120 ACRES OF GRASSLAND

**STARTING TO CLOSE PADDOCKS ON THE WEEK OCTOBER 5 - 11**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Target acreage</th>
<th>Field name</th>
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HERD MANAGEMENT: CASTRATION

Welfare considerations

This needs to be carried out by a vet who may also advise an appropriate booster at castration as there is a risk of tetanus infection. If using the rubber band to castrate calves, a local anaesthetic may be used once the house has dried out. It may have been supporting a good level of daily gain, but will have to be grown this year and early in the spring, including silage up to November 10. When closing the house for silage, the first paddocks/field should be closed each week. The following areas should be closed from November 10 to 10 of December that would have been grazed out and replaced or fixed where necessary. The Planner (see opposite) is designed to help farmers to manage the rotation needs to be in place for the winter and the silage season. The extra meal feeding can be divided into two parts: the first part should be given at the end of October, the second part at the beginning of November.

**Autumn grassland management plans need to be in place for the first week in October**

**FARMING INDEPENDENT**

The 10 Green Acres Calf to Beef programme participants have all been profiled in the Farming Independent over the past five months. Today we remind readers who they are, where they are located and the systems that they are operating. The following pages are an excerpt from each participant and over the next month the progress made on each farm will be reported. For further updates be sure to read about the farmers on the last Tuesday of each month in the Farming Independent.