

LANAgM4 – SQA Unit Code H5BK 04

Plan and manage grassland and forage crops for livestock grazing and conservation



Overview

This standard covers the need to plan and manage grassland and forage crops for livestock production systems. Forage management is a key area in determining the profitability of livestock enterprises.

This standard covers a variety of forage, grazing and conservation systems in use on livestock farms. The management of extended grazing systems, grass budgeting and grazing management.

This standard is suitable for farmers, farm managers, stockperson and farm advisers.

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Performance criteria

- You must be able to:*
- P1 produce a forage plan for grazing and conserved forages matching chosen production system
 - P2 plan and manage a grazing programme to meet the need of the livestock with your production system
 - P3 where necessary plan the establishment of a range of grass and forage crops
 - P4 manage the condition of the soil in accordance with the grass and or forage crop requirements
 - P5 plan a fertiliser programme for forage crops and or grass, taking into account requirements for crop growth, production requirements and value of animal manures
 - P6 use grass budgeting techniques including measuring grass covers and take action as required
 - P7 monitor outcomes of grassland and forage plan and compare to relevant benchmarks
 - P8 communicate agreed policy to those who need to be informed in an appropriate method
 - P9 provide necessary systems of record keeping and monitor appropriate use
 - P10 plan and manage programmes for the control of identified weeds, pests and diseases and monitor outcomes
 - P11 ensure working methods promote health and safety and are consistent with relevant environmental, legislation and codes of practice

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 how to plan the grazing and forage requirements of the livestock in your production system
- K2 the importance of ensuring the forage plan for grazing and conserved forage matches the chosen production system
- K3 how to use soil analyses results and make use of this information in planning fertiliser requirements for a range of production systems
- K4 how different soils will determine grassland and forage cropping policies
- K5 how to examine soil structure and the factors that have an effect on it
- K6 methods of managing soil for grassland and forage cropping
- K7 the advantages and disadvantages of the different types of forage crops/grass
- K8 different methods of establishing and managing a range of forage crops/grass
- K9 the functions of grass budgeting taking into account factors affecting grass availability, growth rates, quality and intakes during the grazing season
- K10 how to measure and interpret grass and forage crop cover throughout the grazing season
- K11 sources of information and guidance on varietal choice for both grasses and forage crops
- K12 possible pest, weed and disease problems and how to manage them
- K13 methods of planning and calculating annual forage requirements matching livestock enterprise requirements
- K14 cost benefit of preventing/controlling problems and how to seek and use specialist advice
- K15 the benefits of correct use of animal manures in reducing input costs
- K16 how to communicate policies to relevant key interest groups
- K17 the records necessary for compliance and for monitoring outcomes
- K18 the relevant environmental, legislation, regulations and codes of practice for growing crops and safe working methods under health and safety

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