



Farm system: animal welfare and fodder quality



1 Description of the innovation



- 1) New stable to increase animal welfare (Winner of animal welfare award 2017); in the new stable the place per cow was doubled even though the old stable still complied with the legal requirements; a paddock according to EU-organic requirements was added to the stable on the conventional farm
- 2) Focus on high quality silage: optimal timing of cuts, according to reference grass species; 24 hours from cut to silo; yield of 400 ha grassland ensiled within 3 to 4 days, to ensure high fodder quality; 4-6 cuts (high intensity compared to other farms in this region) Silos were changed from few large storage places to more smaller storage possibilities to allow more flexible management of grassland and fodder; thus also sufficient feed forward rate could be ensured.

Working conditions



Labour intensity

Animal health and welfare

Animal welfare - high quality of staple fodder

The new stable combines improvements in animal welfare and workplace design. Passageways for cattle were changed accordingly. Technical equipment has to be adopted to the cultivated area. Slurry application will have to be adopted to increasing requirements of the new fertilization act in Germany, since until now the farmer applied parts of the slurry in autumn to ensure clean fodder, even though the nutrient efficiency might be lower, compared to application in spring time.

2 Farm description

ENVIRONMENT

Soil types : Mainly sandy clay and loam
Climate: Temperate continental climate
Altitude: 470 m a.s.l. up to 620 m a.s.l.
Slope: up to 12 %

GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT

No grazing
5 cuts per year

STRUCTURE

Annual Work Unit: 45 AWU
Agricultural Area : 2400 ha UAA

Main forage area: 900 ha
Permanent grassland: 370 ha
Temporary grassland: 250 ha
Silage maize: 280 ha

Breeds: Holstein Friesian

Stocking rate:

Agricultural area: 0.7 LU/ha
Forage area: 1.7 LU/ha
Grassland area: 2.6 LU/ha

ANIMAL PERFORMANCE

11,500 l/year/dairy animal

WHY IT IS WORKING

Highly motivated staff; payment in correspondence with animal performance was a good motivation to ensure high silage quality. Flexible motivated people are necessary to ensure to cut the grass the best possible time. The technical equipment has to be adopted to the size of the cultivated area