



Technical leaflet

Closing Off the Farm to Have Grass in the Spring– The Autumn Rotation

1 Description of the innovation

Autumn 60:40 Rotation Planner

The most important task any farmer will undertake on the autumn is to ensure that the farm is closed off properly to have an adequate supply of grass early next spring.

The Autumn Rotation Planner is a tool:

- to help keep grass in the diet of grazing animals for as long as possible
- to set up paddocks for grazing the following spring

The 60:40 plan is based on having proportions of the farm closed by certain dates. The target is to have 60% of the farm closed early.



Advantages

- Increase grass supply for the spring
- Increase grass growth over the winter period



Disadvantages

- Farmers need to plan to maintain a high average farm cover in the autumn





1 Description of the innovation

Date on which last round starts: _____

Table 1: Area available for grazing each week this autumn

	60%	40%
Date	Date 60% is grazed	Date all cattle are housed
Number of days	From start to 60% date <i>(a)</i>	From 60% date to housing date <i>(b)</i>
Hectares to be grazed	<i>(c)</i>	<i>(d)</i>
	(0.6 X total area)	(0.4 X total area)
Hectares per week	$(c \div a) \times 7$	$(d \div b) \times 7$



Table 2: Autumn grazing planner showing weekly targets (from Table 1)

Week Ending	Grazing area		Actual area grazed week end
	per week	Grazed (total)	

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The 60:40 plan is based on having proportions of the farm closed by certain dates. The target is to have 60% of the farm closed early.

Heavy Farms: Start Closing by 25th September with 60% (or more) of the farm grazed off by October 31st.

Dry Farms: Start Closing by 9th October with 60% of the farm grazed off by November 7th.

The target closing average farm cover is 550-600kgDM/ha (2.5 LU/ ha). Farms with a higher stocking rate should close with a higher average farm cover.

Guidelines

- 1 All paddocks should be grazed tight, to a height of 3.5 - 4cm
- 2 Use wet weather grazing techniques if ground conditions deteriorate (on-off grazing, strip wires)
- 3 Do not regraze closed paddocks



More information

- <https://www.teagasc.ie/>
- <https://www.teagasc.ie/crops/grassland/grass10/>