



Grazing management with suckler cows and regional marketing of beef products

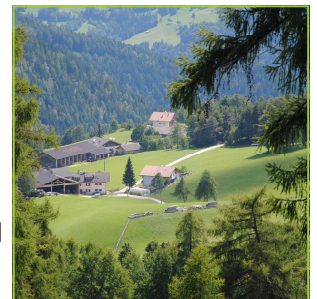


Schornhof/Markus Lintner

1 Description of the innovation



The organic farmer of the “Schornhof” keeps suckler cows and beef cattle of the races Grauvieh and Original Braunvieh on his dairy cattle farm since 2006. The cattle are kept on hay meadows and on ecologically valuable, extensive pastures without import of off-farm forage. The practiced grazing management system is a flexible rotational stocking. The agricultural area of the farm is 50 ha, of which 24 ha are used for forage production, consisting of 11.4 ha leniently grazed larch pastures (no fertilisation additionally to the animal dung) and 12.6 ha grassland combining mowing (1-2 cuts) and grazing. The animals are grazing from the end of April until the middle/end of October. In this period, they do not receive any additional forage. In the winter months, they only get hay from the own meadows. Breeds suitable for a grazing management on moderately steep slopes are crossed with a beef breed for meat production.



The meat of the 16 fattened oxes and -heifers is marketed under the regional label “BioBeef”. The marketing is done by the cooperative “Bioregio”, a group of 23 South Tyrolean organic mountain-farmers, conducting suckler cow keeping. The beef is slaughtered after 10-11 months by a butcher and divided up into mixed meat packages. The main customers of this packages are private persons, hosting companies and public facilities. The silage-free feeding with only hay is a mandatory criterion for the cooperative members.

Added values:

- Reduction of the labour intensity
- Livestock production quality (taste, nutritive value)
- Animal health and welfare



Farmer's strategy:

- Processing products (pasture-based meat)
- Short marketing chain
- Curiosity in the subject/technique, personal motivation about seeking for a nutrient cycle closed within the farm



2 Farm description

ENVIRONMENT

Main soil types: sandy loam, limestone

Climate: temperate continental climate

Average altitude (m a.s.l.): 1400

Average slope (%): 17

GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT

Grazing: Yes, partially combined with cut use

Grazing management type: flexible rotational stocking

Grazing duration (months/year): 6

Number of cuts on mowed areas: 1-2 cuts/year

Forage conservation type: hay

Average fertilisation rate: \approx 96 kg N/ha; slurry in the areas surrounding the farm buildings; only animal dung on the ecologically valuable, extensive pastures

STRUCTURE

Annual Work Unit: 1.5

Agricultural Area (ha UAA) : 24 ha

11.4 ha pasture

12.6 ha mowed pasture

0.05 ha arable land (vegetables, crops, potatoes)

ANIMAL PERFORMANCE

Breed name:

Grauvieh

Original Braunvieh

Limousin (bull)

Total Livestock Unit (LU): 27

Average stocking rate (LU/ha UAA): 1.1

Average acquisition rate roughage: 0%

Reasons why this innovation is working on the farm

The whole family shares the aim of a sustainable, closed nutrient cycle within the farm.

The farm fulfils the requirements for grazing management (size and topographic features, water supply on the grazing areas) and uses animal breeds suitable for grazing under the given farm conditions

Country shapes



Domains of innovation



Machinery, tools



Forage mixture



Forage conservation technique



Grazing management system



Legume management



Animal feeding management



Animal type (breed)



Product processing



Marketing



Farm system



Landscape

Main types of animal

