

Experimenting with rotational grazing

Ed Langrish, Northiam, Kent

Ed farms in Kent with his father, where they have over 4,000 Romney and Romney cross ewes and also buy in store cattle. Ed is a member of the Kent Grazing Club discussion group and hosted their recent meeting.

The group visited a 36 hectare (90 acre) block of rented land that was being grazed with 300 ewes with singles, 100 ewes with twins and 20 store cattle. The block consisted of permanent pasture and three recently re-seeded fields. Ed used dryland mixes for two of the re-seeded fields and they were starting to be dominated by cocksfoot.



He uses this block to experiment and he's rotationally grazing the twin and single groups separately. Priority grazing goes to the twins, with the singles and the store cattle being used to maintain quality. The store cattle are also the pressure valve, as if grass growth is declining the store cattle can be removed to reduce demand.

Current demand was calculated at around 31 kg DM per ha ($1120/36 = 31$) and it was estimated that grass growth was around that figure, see chart for details of intake requirements. It is likely that grass growth has increased because the lack of moisture was limiting growth early in May.

Class of stock	% of body-weight	Weight (kg)	Intake (kg DM)	Number	Total
Ewes (twins)	4	70	2.8	100	280
Ewes (singles)	3	70	2.1	300	630
Store cattle	3	350	10.5	20	210
					1,120 kg

The group suggested that Ed needs to focus on nutrient management and evaluate whether additional nutrients would be cost-effective, especially on re-seeds. He is also going to weigh lambs so the impact of rotational grazing can be evaluated.

The main summary points of the meeting were the need to understand how to maintain quality in grass for weaned lambs, to plan for dry times and when to take action.

The next meeting of the Kent Grazing Discussion Group is on 6 July.
 Contact nerys.wright@ahdb.org.uk if you are interested in joining the group.

For more information read the BRP manuals
[Managing nutrients for Better Returns](#) and
[Planning grazing strategies for Better Returns](#)