

Grazing Management Plan Guide

The Pasture for Life Certification Standards (Standard 5.1.1) require producers to have a grazing management plan.

What is a grazing management plan?

A grazing management plan is a strategic, written document that outlines how livestock will graze an area to achieve specific goals, such as improving habitat, increasing pasture yield, or ensuring animal welfare and production. It involves mapping fields, planning rotational grazing patterns based on pasture cover and grass growth, managing stock levels and welfare, and detailed monitoring of pastures and animal performance to adjust the plan as needed.

The plan must take into account the following:

- Stocking rate (across the whole grazing area) and stocking density (across the area being grazed at any one time).
- Rotation

- Ley and permanent pasture composition
- Re-seeding/over-seeding targets
- Nutrient management including fertiliser/ manure application targets
- Weeds and their control
- Actions to eliminate soil erosion and other damage to soil structure
- Actions to maintain and build soil nutrients, soil organic matter and soil microbiological activity
- Seasonal variations

We have not provided a specific template for this as a grazing management plan is very individual to each piece of land and those managing that land. Instead, we have put together this short guide to help you think about what may be useful to include in your plan.

Things to consider for your Grazing Management Plan:

Goals and objectives

What are you hoping to achieve through the grazing activities? Examples may include:

- Maintain healthy, diverse pastures that support livestock and wildlife.
- Optimize forage use while preventing overgrazing.
- Improve soil health and water infiltration.
- Increase carrying capacity by 10% over the next 5 years.
- Increase rest periods for pasture.

What resources do you have?

It's useful to consider these resources when creating your plan.

- Land area
- Pasture division - number and size of paddocks
- Fencing infrastructure
- Water sources
- Forage types
- Number and type of livestock



- Estimated carrying capacity

The grazing system

- What grazing method will you use? How often will you move animals, how many groups of animals will you have etc?
- What are your rest period goals?
- Stocking rate/density
- Winter grazing/bale grazing planning, if applicable
- Adverse weather plans - shade/shelter/access to forage
- Will there be any organic matter or fertiliser application? If so, where and when?
- Conserved forage planning - which fields will be cut and when?

This [link](#) provides good resources for creating a grazing chart, which can be a really useful visual plan for your grazing season. There are also some resources on the AHDB website about **rotational grazing planning** which may be useful.

Monitoring and recordkeeping

What data is important to you to measure the performance of your system against your goals and objectives? Examples might include:

- Forage height
- Soil health
- Livestock condition/growth rates
- Rainfall records
- Biodiversity

Adaptive management

What measures might you take to respond to challenges or changes? Examples may include:

- Reduce herd size or adjust rotation in drought years.
- Adjusting the size of paddocks or frequency of moves when needed
- Overseeding or reseedling
- Adjusting rest period length as required

Environmental protection

What measures are in place to protect the environment? Examples

may include:

- Actions to eliminate soil erosion and other damage to soil structure
- Actions to minimise water or air pollution

Expected outcomes

The outcomes of meeting or working towards your goals and objectives. Examples may include:

- Improved pasture resilience and forage production.
- Reduced bare soil and erosion.
- Increased biodiversity of native grasses and forbs.
- Stable or improved livestock performance.



Cotswold Beef



Pasture-Fed Livestock Association, t/a Pasture for Life
Romshed Farm, Underriver, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 0SD

t:
0333 772 9853

w:
pastureforlife.org

  
[@pastureforlife](https://www.instagram.com/pastureforlife)