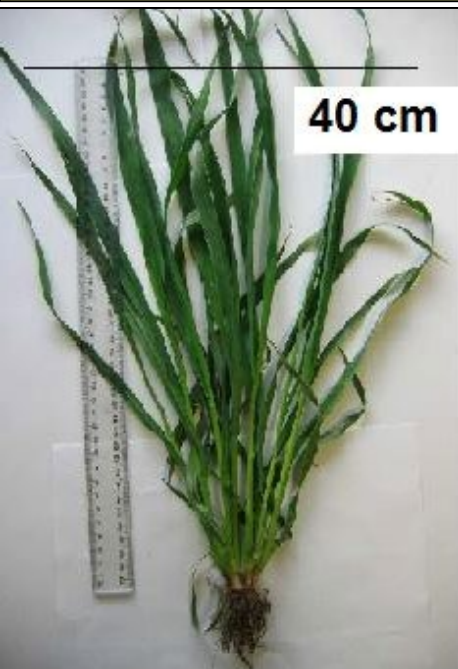




Grazing Guidelines

Fact Sheet 2

- All cereals can be grazed at any time from early – late tillering (GS22 – GS28) (Figures 1, 2 & 3)
- Grazing can start if plants pass the pinch test (twist & pull) & secondary roots have grown (~3 leaf stage)
- DO NOT graze cereals while soil is very wet
- Be wary of high nitrate levels. Do not graze with very hungry stock.
- Graze down to 5 – 10 cm. Grazing lower is likely to reduce silage yields
- Yields (utilisable) are about 1600 – 2300 kg DM/ha in normal growing seasons at mid – late tillering
- Sowing after early May can reduce grazing yields by ~15 – 30% less compared to Mar/April sowing
- Nutritive value is equal to that of ryegrass (>11 ME, >20% CP, ~35 to 40% NDF)
- Grazing once at/after stem elongation (GS30 - 32) will reduce silage yields by up to 50% (Figure 4 & 5)
- To boost silage yield apply 50 – 70 kg nitrogen/ha after grazing, if needed
- The longer that grazing is delayed, the higher the dry matter yield:-
 - BUT thicker the stems of older tillers and less palatable (Figure 6)
 - BUT greater the reduction in utilisation due to trampling during grazing (Figure 7)
 - AND later the crop maturity (~+10 – 14 days if grazed during late tillering)
- Mowing + Wilting before Grazing to ensure an even crop after grazing is not necessary, unless too long
- Graze cereal/ryegrass mixes at about mid-tillering (GS24 – 26) to avoid severe ryegrass shading
- If cereal at or past stem elongation (GS30 – GS32), mow/graze well above the top node (Figures 8 & 9)



1. Forage Oat GS26
1 main stem + 6 tillers
Good height for grazing

2. Dual purpose Barley GS31
Good height for grazing
(Approx. 25 – 30 cm)

3. Forage Oat GS25
Good height for grazing (Rear)
Residual 8 – 10 cm (Front)

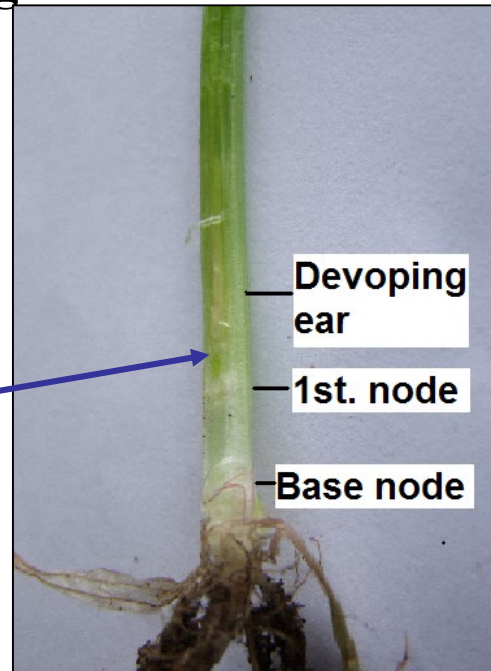
When is it too late to graze?

Determining Growth Stages 30 & 32



4. Forage Oat GS30
Stem elongation
Single tiller shown

5. Forage Oat GS30
Stem elongation.
Dissected stem showing
developing nodes & ear.
Can feel the node (bump)
between fingers



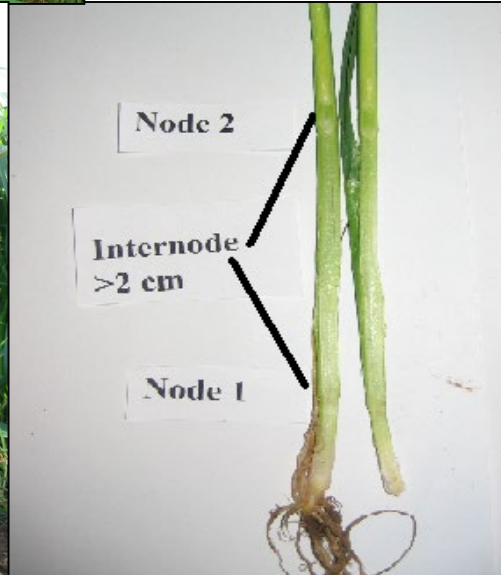
6. Forage and Dual purpose oats
Regrowth & height 1 wk after grazing



7. Forage Oat GS32
Too late & too long for grazing
- Excess trampling of crop
- Reduces silage yield substantially



8. Cereal plants GS32.
Too long for grazing



9. Forage Oat GS32
2 nodes near bottom of stem