



July 2013

HELP IS
AVAILABLE
CONTACT YOUR
LOCAL ADVISER

Take action now...

...if you are short of fodder.

1. Start planning now. Those that acted earliest last year came through the spring more easily.
2. Increase the fodder required by 10-20% to replace depleted silage stocks.
3. Once you have at least 50-60% of your winter silage requirements, you have options available.
4. Silage dry matters can vary. The standard is 200kg DM per tonne of pit silage and 180kg per bale. These are typical with a maximum of one day wilting. If DM is higher, take this into account.
5. There is no single strategy to deal with the shortage. A combination of actions will be needed to help you deal with the problem:
 - a. Reduce demand for winter feed:
 - i. sell off cull cows/empty cows (scan cows early);
 - ii. sell store cattle; and,
 - iii. put finishing cattle on meals and minimal silage.
 - b. Maximise grass growth on the farm over the next few months: apply 20-30 units of nitrogen (N) to grazing ground and remove surplus grass as bales, where possible.
 - c. The alternative feed options include:
 - i. buying silage – standing crops of grass for silage or baled/pitted silage;
 - ii. buying ration to fill the gap;
 - iii. growing forage crops such as rape;
 - iv. buying alternative forages such as maize silage, whole crop cereal silage, or fodder beet; or,
 - v. buying cereal grains and store.
 - d. Examine the options carefully. Cost is important but other factors also need to be considered, including the risk of poor yields/quality, the need for storage/handling facilities, the cost of balancing for protein and minerals, the labour input, cash flow implications and feed space requirements.
6. Don't panic buy feedstuffs to fill the gap. Talk to an adviser before making your decision.

ON A FIVE-MONTH WINTER:

SAVE 50 TONNES OF SILAGE (or 55 bales) by selling six cull cows

SAVE 50 TONNES OF SILAGE (or 55 bales) by selling seven store cattle

FODDER BUDGETING SHEET

Farmer details

Name

Enterprise

Herd number

Land type

County

SECTION 1: What fodder is required on the farm?

Animal type	A No. of stock to be kept over winter	B Number of months	C Pit silage needed/ animal/month	Total tonnes of silage needed – multiply AxBxC
Dairy cows			1.6	
Suckler cows			1.4	
0-1 year old			0.7	
1-2 year old			1.3	
2+ year old			1.3	
Ewes			0.15	
Total tonnes needed				Tonnes X
or				or
Total bales needed (tonnes multiplied by 1.1)				Bales Y

SECTION 2: How much silage is in the yard and/or to be harvested?

Farms with pit and bale silage	A	Pit silage – currently in the yard ¹	
	B	Pit silage – to be harvested (acres multiplied by 7t/ac)	
	C	Total pit silage (A+B)	
	D	Bales – in the yard	
	E	Bales, converted to equivalent of pit silage (Multiply D by 0.9)	
	F	Total silage (C+E)	F
Farms with bale silage only	A	Bales – in the yard	
	B	Bales – to be harvested	
	C	Total bales (A+B)	C

¹ Pit silage (length x breadth x settled height) metres ÷ 1.35 = tonnes (t) equivalent.

SECTION 3: Surplus or shortage?

Surplus or deficit

Using pit and bales
Deficit in tonnes (F-X)

Using bales only
Deficit in bales (C-Y)

What's the % deficit? (Deficit/X (or Y) *100)

* If you are using alternative feed sources, please contact your adviser.