

MLA Pasture Ruler

Pasture Height to
Pasture Quantity Indicator

See other side of ruler and 'Tips & Tools'
provided for information about how to use
this ruler to predict animal performance
and \$ returns

Height
(cm)

Pasture quantity for
a moderately dense pasture
(indicative estimates of kg
green dry matter/ha)

14 & OVER	3000 PLUS	Surplus quantity – growth slows, no real additions to intake, quality declines
12	2500	
10	2200	Preferred range of DM/ha for animal and pasture production
8	1900	
7	1700	
6	1600	
5	1400	Too little quantity – retards regrowth, restricts intake and increases erosion hazard
4	1200	
3	1000	
2	700	
1	400	

Figures are indicative only. Very dense, closely grazed pastures will have a higher (up to +25%) kg green DM/ha at the same height. Conversely, with lightly grazed open pastures. Differences due to density are greater at heights above 6cm.

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How much feed do I need to get the performance I want?

Estimated minimum pasture quantity (kg green DM/ha) required to achieve targeted production levels of livestock

Livestock class	Pasture energy density MJ ME/kg DM (and approximate dry matter digestibility %)		
	11.2 (75%) Active pasture growth, green	10.1 (68%) Late vegetative to early flowering green	9.0 (60%) Mid to late flowering some dead
Dry cow	700	1100	2600
Preg. cow, 7-8 mths, no calf	900	1700	np
Lactating cow calf 2 mths	1100	2200	np
Growing steer 0.61 kg/day	800	1600	np
0.85 kg/day	1200	2600	np
1.12 kg/day	2200	np	np
Dry sheep	400	600	1200
Pregnant ewes - mid	500	700	1700
- last month	700	1200	np
Lactating ewes - single	1000	1700	np
- twins	1500	np	np
Growing sheep 125 g/day	600	1000	np
175 g/day	800	1700	np
225 g/day	1600	np	np

Estimated growth rates for a 13 month old steer of 320kg, and a weaned 4 month old crossbred lamb of 32kg. Pasture contains 500kg/ha dead material and 15% legume. Close to maximum intake is achieved once a pasture reaches about 6cm for sheep and 14cm for cattle. 'np' – the indicated animal performance from pasture of this quality is not possible. Pasture quantities shown in red are below recommended amounts for maximum pasture growth. Estimates calculated using GrazFeed™