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# GRAZING FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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## 2020 SUMMARY

### PERCENTAGE OF DAIRY FARMERS WITH MEADOW GRAZING INCREASED AGAIN

Since 2015, the number of farmers who allow their cows outdoor access has been increasing. This was also the case in the past year. The percentage of farms that practice grazing has risen to 83.7%, of which 77.5% are outdoors permanently. The percentage of partial grazing has been decreasing since 2016. More and longer grazing appears to continue as the trend. In addition, increasing numbers of farmers are more aware of their grassland and grazing management. The aim is to convert more fresh grass directly into milk.

Year	Total	Full grazing	Partial grazing
2020	83,7%	77,5%	6,2%
2019	83,0%	76,7%	6,3%
2018	82,0%	74,8%	7,3%
2017	80,4%	73,2%	7,3%
2016	78,9%	70,5%	8,4%
2015	78,3%	69,8%	8,4%
2014	77,8%	70,1%	7,7%
2013	80,0%	72,2%	7,8%
2012	81,2%	–	–

% of dairy farms with meadow grazing in the Netherlands. Source: ZuivelNL.

### INTEGRATE GRAZING INTO FARM MANAGEMENT

The focus of the foundation's knowledge activities is to embed grazing more firmly in the management practice of dairy farmers. The principle is that meeting the criteria that define grazing is not the central focus for dairy farmers, but rather giving form to the two primary functions of grazing: harvesting grass and feeding cows. Optimally interpreting and satisfying both criteria can contribute to the efficiency and revenues of dairy farmers and help achieve the goals of the Sustainable Dairy Chain.

In 2020, the Grazing Foundation developed a project, in consultation with sector parties, for an integrated approach for dairy farms with grazing, to extend the number of hours of grazing and reduce the crude protein content in the ration. By tackling both themes simultaneously, dairy farmers can capitalise on synergy benefits and make an optimal assessment in cases where measures for the two themes are in conflict. Another important advantage is that a package of measures makes it easier for dairy farmers and their advisers to take steps. This approach has already been successfully implemented at the demonstration farms for New Dutch Grazing.

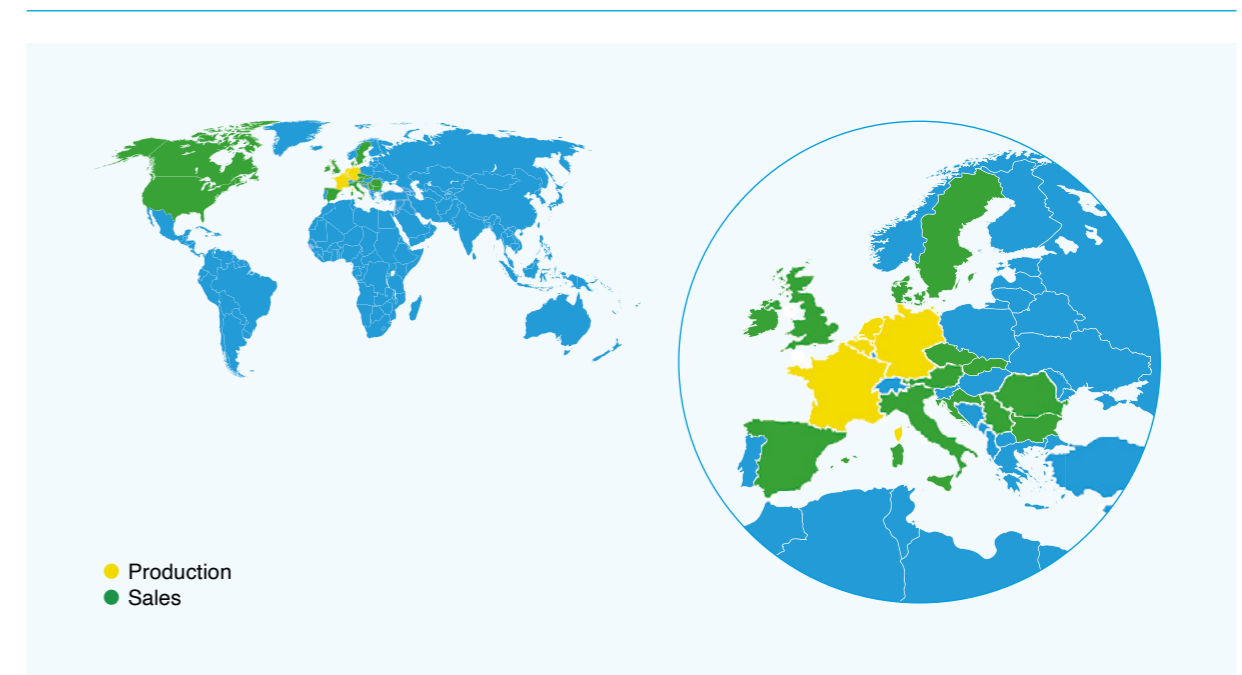
### NEW MEADOW MILK LOGO AND GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

A new, updated Meadow Milk Logo was introduced in 2020. After meticulous preparation, the amended general terms and conditions for grazing and meadow milk came into effect in 2020. In order to enable more targeted control of grazing, dairy farmers must, in addition to the days

on which the cows graze, also register the start and end times of grazing on those days. In addition, unannounced inspections and follow-up inspections can only be completed during the hours that the dairy farmer is grazing the cows. Finally, further guidelines have been developed for inspectors to assess dairy farmers.

### PRODUCTION OF MEADOW DAIRY AND THE USE OF THE MEADOW MILK LOGO

The figure below shows an overview of the countries in which meadow farm milk is produced and meadow dairy products are sold. Dairy farmers in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and France graze their cows according to the conditions of the foundation; in total there are over 15.000 participants. Meadow dairy is sold across Europe. The most important markets are the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany.



Countries where products with the Meadow Milk logo are produced and sold.

### BOARD CHANGES AT THE GRAZING FOUNDATION

In 2020, the foundation saw a change of chair for the first time since its foundation in 2008. Werner Buck took over from Chris Kalden. Chris has played an important unifying role in the foundation's success over the past twelve years as chairman.

## INTRODUCTION

In this annual report, we outline the 2020 activities and results of the Grazing Foundation. The objective of the Grazing Foundation is to encourage the visibility of cows in the Dutch landscape by stimulating grazing. A cow grazing in a meadow is an integral and typical aspect of the Dutch landscape.

The activities of the Grazing Foundation have two focus areas:

- Knowledge: increasing expertise about grassland and grazing.
- Safeguarding: safeguarding the integrity of meadow dairy products and issuing the Meadow Milk logo.

The focus of the knowledge activities is on encouraging as many dairy farmers as possible to graze their cattle and to optimise the benefits of meadow grazing. Two focal points were chosen to this end:

- Advice and guidance for dairy farmers on better grazing practice or how to start grazing. This is done via the GrazingCoaches and GrazingTeachers, via the Meadow Man and by developing new grazing concepts.
- Better integration of grazing into general farm management practice. We do this by expanding New Dutch Grazing into a total package for grassland and forage management. We are also putting this integrated approach to grazing on the agenda of suppliers and advisers, and in green education.

To safeguard this, ensuring a reliable quality assurance scheme is vital, that balances independent and impartial certification, inspection and auditing processes and a practical and workable system for stakeholders.

In Chapter 1, we show the progress made in 2020 for the knowledge activities. Chapter 2 sets out the facts and figures about safeguarding. Chapter 3 contains the foundation's financial statements.

## 1 KNOWLEDGE: IMPROVING GRASSLAND AND GRAZING SKILLS

The GrazingCoaches and GrazingTeachers are the pivot of our role in strengthening grazing expertise. They are in direct contact with everyday practice. They offer advice and guidance to dairy farmers, both new and experienced in grazing. The figures, which are still increasing annually, show clearly that this approach works. We are proud that the Sustainable Dairy Chain awarded us the Meadow Trophy in 2020 for our many years of contributing to encouraging grazing. This award is primarily due to our people in the field, for communicating their knowledge and skills with such enthusiasm.



In addition to our GrazingCoaches and GrazingTeachers, the foundation's secretariat also plays a major role in sharing knowledge. It functions as a counter for questions from dairy farmers and suppliers and advisers, an advisory role in research projects such as 'Amazing Grazing' and an educational role in strengthening suppliers' and advisers' knowledge about grazing. The foundation also communicates via the Meadow Man about skills for grassland and grazing. The grass growth figures are published weekly on the Veeteelt website and in their newsletter.

### 1.1 GRAZINGCOACHES AND GRAZINGTRAINERS NETWORK

The GrazingCoaches and GrazingTeachers from the network are employed at a variety of companies: agricultural consultancies, accountancy firms, seed companies, compound feed producers and agricultural colleges and universities. In 2020, approximately 50 GrazingCoaches and 10 GrazingTeachers were active. In addition, the foundation trained 18 new GrazingCoaches in the Practical Institute for Grazing last year, including advisers from the

animal feed sector, veterinarians and independent advisers. On the one hand, we have fulfilled the market's need for knowledge about grassland and grazing, and on the other hand, the GrazingCoaches network has been updated and strengthened.

Due to corona, in 2020 the GrazingCoaches' opportunities to physically visit dairy farmers and to provide lectures for groups were limited. As an alternative, we have started to identify options for advising dairy farmers via video calling and WhatsApp, among other things. Several GrazingCoaches have also started working on this. These resources may also play a role in advising in the future, once the corona restrictions have been lifted. This offers added value in existing advisory relationships in particular. For new contacts with dairy farmers, physical visits remain a must.

## GETTING STARTED WITH GRAZING REMOTELY

**Gijs van Loon, Cattle Adviser at DLV Advies, trained to become a GrazingCoach in 2020. It was very different this year, but certainly no less valuable, he says.**

'Fortunately, we started out in the meadow with the group. Then the corona crisis was upon us, and this was not always possible any longer. The training turned into a combination of socially distanced outdoor meetings and digital sessions. It actually worked just fine. We received many practical tips through videos and theory. Sparring on screen is more of a challenge, but that doesn't make things less educational.'

In my position at DLV, I have been guiding starting and experienced grazers for some time. I wanted to deepen my knowledge with this training, to be able to provide even better advice on how to get the most out of grassland. I also found it inspiring to exchange knowledge with colleagues from all over the country. In the north, grazing is generally applied more and longer than here in the south; in this way we can learn from each other.

I think the crisis has shown how digital insight into a farm can supplement the physical consultancy work. We should certainly continue our so-called kitchen table talks, because that's where you get the most out of things. But for acute issues or questions, digital consultation between advisers and dairy farmers is actually ideal. That is here to stay.'

## 1.2 NEW GRAZERS

In 2020, we again informed, advised and guided dairy farmers who keep their cows inside, to help them successfully switch to grazing. This year, we advised 70 of these 'New Grazers'. In addition, we see that dairy farmers increasingly report directly to GrazingCoaches in their network, or receive information about starting grazing from other parties in the chain (such as feed companies).

	Intake / Orientation	One time advice / Plan of approach	2 years of guidance	Total
Runs	7	2	61	70
Conducted	1243	200	207	1650
<b>Total</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>1720*</b>

Number of advices New Weiders since May 2016.

\*More than 1350 dairy farmers were reached, some of whom made use of several recommendations.

A final offensive is planned for 2021, to complete this successful project, in which a total of 1,720 dairy farmers have been advised in recent years about starting grazing.

## 1.3 NEW DUTCH GRAZING AND DEMO FARMS

New Dutch Grazing is a simple and easy-to-implement grazing concept with five 'standard' examples, to help dairy farmers set up the system for their farms. In 2020, the Grazing Foundation, in collaboration with the Committee on Fertilisation of Grassland and Forage Crops (CBGV), developed a grassland use calendar with a fertilisation schedule for each soil type and intensity. All grassland use calendars and fertilisation schedules, including an explanation of New Dutch Grazing, have been bundled in a clickable PDF: [edepot.wur.nl/521002](https://edepot.wur.nl/521002).

**NIEUW NEDERLANDS WEIDEN**

**EENVOUDIG, GOED WEIDEN**

**DE DRIE STAPPEN VAN NIEUW NEDERLANDS WEIDEN**

- 1 Deel eenmalig je huiskavel op in percelen van gelijke grootte (met flexibele draadjes)
- 2 Maai elke 4-5-6 weken en kies je percelen in je weideplatform
- 3 Geef je koeien elke dag een nieuw perceel door te roteren op je weideplatform

*Niet denken maar gewoon doen!*

VERSIE APRIL 2020

**TIJDS VOOR HET BESTE RESULTAAT**

**KLK OP OM HET BEMESTINGSSCHEMA TE ZIEN WAT BIJ JOUW HUISKAVEL PAST**

**GROOTTE HUISKAVEL**

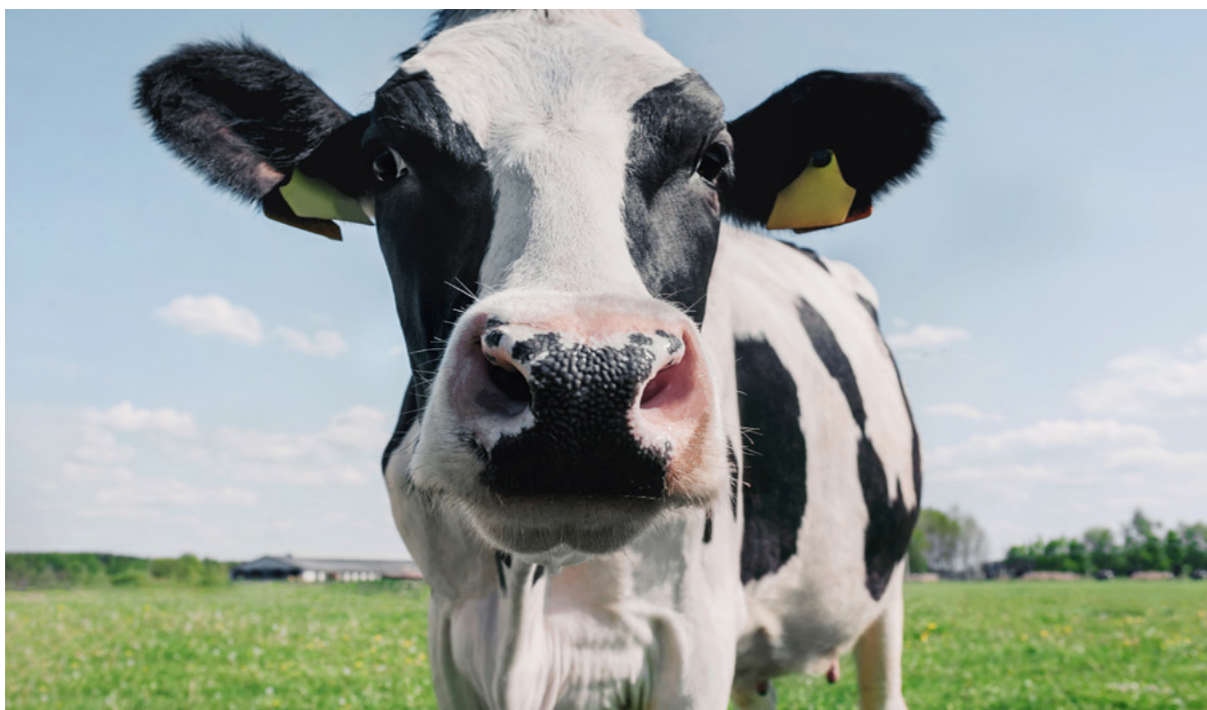
- 60 HA = XL
- 30 HA = L
- 20 HA = M
- 15 HA = S
- 15 HA = XS

**GRONDSOORT**

- KLEI MET LAAG NLV (<180)**: XL, L, M, S, XS
- VEEN EN KLEI MET HOOG NLV (>180)**: XL, L, M, S, XS
- ZAND/LÖSS IN OOST OF ZUID NEDERLAND**: XL, L, M, S, XS
- OVERIG ZAND**: XL, L, M, S, XS

his grazing concept is demonstrated on six demo farms in different regions of the Netherlands and on different soils. In addition to allowing dairy farmers and advisers on the farms to see how the grazing concept works in practice, these dairy farmers have started to combine New Dutch Grazing with longer grazing and lowering the crude protein in the ration.

The six demo farms for New Dutch Grazing have increased the share of grazed grass in the ration to over 1,000 kg of dry matter per cow over the past three years. At the same time, the urea number has been reduced by five points to an average of 18, with a constant average milk production of 29 kg of FPCM per cow per day.



The starting point for longer grazing is a higher intake of grazed grass, in order to make full use of the cost benefits of grazing. By starting grazing early on in the year on the one hand and also having as much autumn grass as possible taken directly from the meadows by the cows, and on the other hand optimally arranging the plot for grazing, the farms have increased the amount of grazed grass from 850 kg of dry matter per cow in 2018 to 1,050 kg in 2020.

Nitrogen emissions were significantly reduced by focusing more sharply on crude protein in the ration and by increasing the protein quality. This did not involve loss of milk production. To achieve this, the farms switched to cheaper concentrates with less protein as a first step, right at the start of grazing. Next, they adjusted the other supplementary feed to better match the available protein in the meadow grass. Grass silages with less protein have been created on farms without maize, by mowing the grass later. The protein quality has also been improved by ensiling the grass at a drier stage, to help the cows make better use of the grass protein. Regularly analysing fresh grass gives dairy farmers more control over the ration, as well as confidence to steer more sharply with rations with fresh grass.

## 1.4 GRIP ON GRASS

The demonstration project 'Grip on Grass' was developed in 2020, in consultation with sector parties. For this project, we will guide 500 dairy farmers individually and in study groups in order to gain experience with more grazing, combined with a reduction in the crude protein content in the ration. They exchange experiences mutually, and the results are widely shared in the sector, the trade press and among suppliers and advisers.

The project was prompted by the letter to parliament 'Progress on nitrogen problems, structural approach' of 24 April 2020, in which the government indicated that increasing grazing is a broad social desire that also contributes to the reduction of ammonia emissions. It is the government's ambition to increase the number of hours of grazing by 125 hours in 2021, and 250 hours from 2022, in order to achieve a nitrogen reduction of 0.8-3.7 mol/ha/year. The cabinet's ambition is to simultaneously reduce the crude protein content in rations, in order to also achieve nitrogen reduction.

Grip on Grass is key to this approach. Grass not only plays an important role in grazing; as the main protein source in the dairy ration, it also plays a key role in reducing the crude protein content in the ration. Moreover, steering with grass can be an essential part of achieving broader sustainability goals. In dairy farming practice, there are still several opportunities to do this more effectively. In addition to harvesting methods (grazing or mowing/ensilage), this also includes harvest time, preservation, grassland composition and the (distribution of) fertilisation. If the composition of grass and grass silage better matches the nutritional needs of cows, a farm may even be able to save on relatively expensive protein-rich feed materials. By controlling cultivation, harvesting (and preservation) and the ration with Grip on Grass, the soil/roughage /cow/manure circle can also be further closed. This enables dairy farmers to contribute to other sustainability themes.

## 2 SAFEGUARDING: SAFEGUARDING THE INTEGRITY OF MEADOW DAIRY PRODUCTS AND ISSUING THE MEADOW MILK LOGO

The Meadow Milk logo guarantees that the product is made from meadow milk. Meadow milk is milk from farms where the cows are in pastures from spring to autumn for at least 120 days a year, for at least 6 hours a day. The milk is collected separately and processed into fresh dairy products, such as milk, buttermilk, custard, yoghurt, cheese and other dairy products. The Grazing Foundation safeguards the production process, transportation and processing of the meadow milk into the final meadow dairy product.

The Meadow Milk logo was introduced in 2007 to encourage the grazing of cows in the Netherlands and to make products made from meadow milk easily identifiable. In 2012, the logo was transferred to the Grazing Foundation. Since then, all dairy companies and food retailers have been able to use the Meadow Milk logo. As of 2016, it has also been made available for dairy products produced outside the Netherlands. The same conditions apply. The logo is available in a variety of languages. For more information on grazing, meadow dairy and the certification scheme, please consult our manuals at [www.weidemelk.nl](http://www.weidemelk.nl) under 'Conditions'.

### 2.1 MEADOW MILK LOGO AND WEBSITE

A new, updated Meadow Milk Logo was introduced in 2020. While still recognisable and familiar, the logo is more up to date and more practical for designers and printers thanks to the use of the Pantone colour system with a green and black colour. The logo is available in Dutch, English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Swedish and Danish, and in various combinations of these languages.



In addition, the [www.weidemelk.nl](http://www.weidemelk.nl) website has been updated and optimised for display on a variety of devices (laptop, tablet, smartphone). The entire site is available in Dutch, English, German and French. For the other languages of countries where Meadow Milk products are sold – Spain, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Czech Republic, Croatia, Serbia, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria – the homepage with the most relevant information on meadow milk for the public has been translated into the language concerned.

## 2.2 INTRODUCTION OF AMENDED GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR GRAZING AND MEADOW MILK

After careful preparation, the amended general terms and conditions for grazing and meadow milk came into force in 2020. In order to enable more targeted control of grazing, dairy farmers must, in addition to the days on which the cows graze, also register the start and end times of grazing on those days. In addition, unannounced inspections and follow-up inspections can only be completed during the hours that the dairy farmer is grazing the cows. Finally, further guidelines have been developed for inspectors to assess dairy farmers.

### 2.3 CERTIFYING BODIES

In 2020, two new certifying bodies joined the Foundation for the safeguarding of meadow dairy: SGS in Germany and Bureau Veritas in France. In addition, MCC has expanded the activities it is allowed to perform: in addition to audits and inspections of dairy farmers, MCC is now also allowed to perform audits for the transport and processing of Meadow Dairy. A total of five certifying bodies are now affiliated with the foundation:

- Qlip, Leusden, the Netherlands
- Melkcontrolecentrum Vlaanderen (MCC), Lier, Belgium
- ABCG, Alsfeld, Germany
- SGS, Emstek, Germany
- Bureau Veritas, Paris, France

Based on the guidelines of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), the foundation has drawn up a protocol that allows certifying bodies to audit dairy companies remotely (via video calling). Remote audits give certifying bodies the option of continuing the quality assurance even in the event of travel restrictions, for example, caused by corona. For certification audits, the condition is that a physical on-site audit must also take place within six months after the certificate has been issued. Qlip and MCC have now implemented these audit protocols for remote audits and have received permission from the foundation to conduct remote audits.

### 2.4 CERTIFICATES

At the end of 2020, a total of 176 farms held one or more valid Grazing Certificates. Together, they hold 269 partial certificates. The latest overview can always be found on: [weidemelk.nl/nl/certificaten](http://weidemelk.nl/nl/certificaten).

	The Netherlands	Belgium	Germany	France	Total
Number of farms*	137	26	11	2	176

\*Number of certified farms, categorised per country.

## 2.5 RESULTS INSPECTIONS 2020

The table below indicates the results of the inspections carried out in 2020 on dairy farms by the Certifying Bodies. Despite the stricter requirements for registration and more targeted checks in 2020, negative assessments have continued to fall.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of participating dairy farmers	9.802	9.441	9.565	11.450	15.828	16.837	16.259	15.470
Inspected Dairy Farmers total	39,6%	67,1%	34,1%	49,3%	44,1%	47,4%	44,6%	48,2%
by CB after risk assessment	n.v.t.	n.v.t.	n.v.t.	17,0%	14,5%	15,7%	15,1%	27,3%
by CB	10,2%	10,3%	28,5%	26,4%	22,2%	22,9%	25,8%	14,8%
By Dairy Company	29,4%	56,9%	5,6%	5,9%	7,4%	8,8%	3,6%	6,1%
Repeat inspections*	10,1%	8,1%	2,3%	9,4%	3,9%	3,3%	4,7%	3,4%
Positive assessments*	95,5%	97,4%	98,7%	98,6%	98,4%	98,9%	98,6%	99,5%
Negative assessments*	4,5%	2,6%	1,3%	1,4%	1,6%	1,1%	1,4%	0,6%

Inspection results dairy farms, 2013-2020.

\* % of inspected dairy farmers.

## 2.6 LICENCES

Six new licences for the use of the Meadow Milk logo were issued in 2020, out of a total of 42 licenses.

## 3 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

### 3.1 REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE

REVENUE	2020	2019
ZuivelNL; secretary	21.598	19.531
ZuivelNL; knowledge development and sharing	178.402	279.569
ZuivelNL; New Grazers project	44.380	115.340
Ministry of EA; New Grazers project	44.380	115.340
Dairy farmers/dairy companies' own contribution for advice and training for grazing	53.700	38.875
Contribution-transfer certificate holders and CBs for Meadow Milk safeguarding	272.897	257.942
Ministry of EA; More Grazing project	19.753	0
Other	0	0
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>635.108</b>	<b>826.598</b>

Revenue Grazing Foundation, 2019-2020.

OPERATING EXPENDITURE	2020	2019
Secretary	44.882	39.062
Knowledge development and sharing	224.477	299.819
New Grazers project	96.384	249.306
Safeguarding Meadow Milk	206.302	199.053
More grazing	19.753	
Overige	-4	-5
<b>Total operating expenditure</b>	<b>591.794</b>	<b>787.235</b>

Operating expenditure Grazing Foundation, 2019-2020.

BALANCE	2020	2019
<b>Balance</b>	<b>43.315</b>	<b>39.363</b>

Balance Grazing Foundation, 2019-2020.

## 3.2 ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS PER 31 DECEMBER 2020

ASSETS	2020	2019
<b>Receivables</b>		
Accounts receivable	15.895	9.623
Other receivables	25.842	48.154
Accrued assets	86.162	51.913
<i>Total receivable</i>	<i>127.899</i>	<i>109.690</i>
<b>Liquid assets</b>		
Payment Accounts	312.756	200.386
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>440.655</b>	<b>310.076</b>

Assets Grazing Foundation, 2019-2020.

LIABILITIES	2020	2019
<b>Eigen vermogen</b>		
Capital	147.354	104.039
<i>Total equity capital</i>	<i>147.354</i>	<i>104.039</i>
<b>Short-term liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable	147.377	143.064
Suspense accounts for VAT	0	0
Accrued liabilities	145.927	62.973
<i>Total kortlopende schulden</i>	<i>293.305</i>	<i>206.037</i>
<b>Totaal short-term liabilities</b>	<b>440.659</b>	<b>310.076</b>

Liabilities Grazing Foundation, 2019-2020.



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For any questions, comments or suggestions, please contact the secretariat of the foundation via:

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