
GRAZING FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT 2021



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2021 SUMMARY

PERCENTAGE OF DAIRY FARMERS WITH MEADOW GRAZING INCREASED AGAIN

Since 2015, the number of farmers who let their cows go outside has been increasing. This was the case last year as well. The percentage of farms that do outdoor grazing has risen to 84.0%, of which 77.9% are outdoors permanently. The percentage of partial grazing has been decreasing since 2016. What's more, increasing numbers of farmers are more aware of their pasture and grazing management. The aim is to convert more fresh grass directly into milk.

Year	Total	Full grazing	Partial grazing
2021	84,0%	77,9%	6,1%
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: Sustainable Dairy Chain (Duurzame Zuivelketen).

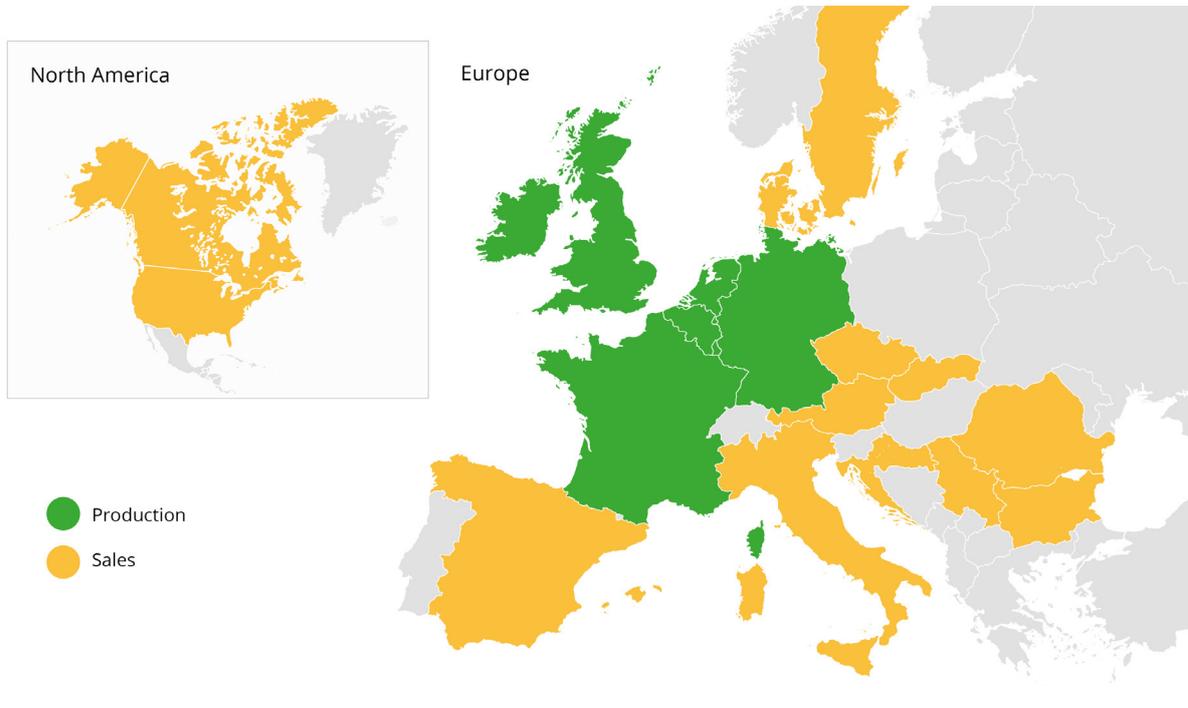
INTEGRATE GRAZING INTO BUSINESS OPERATIONS

The focus of the foundation's knowledge activities is to embed grazing even 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 2021 the Grazing Foundation and 200 dairy farmers started the Grip on Grass 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 utilise synergy benefits and make an optimal assessment in case measures for the two themes are conflicting. 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 companies for New Dutch Grazing.

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.

INTRODUCTION

In this annual report, we report on the activities and results of the Grazing Foundation in 2021. 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: greater grassland and grazing skills.
- Safeguarding: safeguarding the integrity of meadow dairy products and issuing the Meadow Milk logo.

The focus of the knowledge activities is on stimulating as many dairy farmers as possible to graze their cattle outdoors and to maximise 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 an independent and impartial certification, inspection and auditing process and a practical and workable system for stakeholders.

In Chapter 1, we show the progress made in 2021 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; agricultural consultancies, accountants, compound feed producers, seed companies and agricultural colleges and universities. 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.



In addition to our GrazingCoaches and GrazingTeachers, the foundation's secretariat also plays a major role in sharing knowledge. To this end, the foundation has developed ready-to-use concepts for practice and guidelines. These concepts and guidelines are propagated sector-wide by all major suppliers and advisers. To promote a single approach to grazing in which the dairy farmer is key, the foundation also contributes ideas on request about the implementation of research programs and policy, such as the implementation of grazing for the reduction of ammonia emissions and the way in which grazing can be structured in the Eco-scheme of the new Common Agricultural Policy.

The foundation also communicates via the Meadow Man in Veeteelt en Melkvee Magazine about craftsmanship for grassland and grazing. The grass growth figures are published weekly on the Veeteelt website and in their newsletter. In addition, the foundation offers content to trade magazines to inform dairy farmers about the possibilities of grazing.

GRIP ON GRASS

The demonstration project 'Grip on grass' was developed in 2020, in consultation with sector parties. For this project, more than 200 dairy farmers were guided individually and in study groups 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, 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, 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/silage), this also includes harvest time, conservation, grassland composition and the (distribution of) fertilisation. If the composition of grass and grass silage better matches the feed needs of cows, a farm may even be able to save on relatively expensive protein-rich feed materials. By controlling the cultivation, harvesting (and preservation) and the ration with Grip on Grass, the soil/raw material/cow manure cycle can also be further tightened. This enables dairy farmers to contribute to other sustainability themes.

The most important product that has been delivered in the project so far, is an options table with practical steps that dairy farmers can take, with a distinction being made. 8 steps that dairy farmers must choose from if they really want to take a step and 11 steps to further fine-tune fresh grass intake. The ambition level of the project is that, in addition to guiding 500 dairy farmers, we will develop a new standard to double the intake of fresh grass, comparable to the standards we have developed in recent years for Robot & Grazing and New Dutch Grazing.

PEAT MEADOWS AND GRAZING

One of the major concerns of peat dairy farmers in relation to raising the level is whether they can continue to graze their cows. Grazing is not only a characteristic part of peat meadow landscapes, but also an important part of the earnings model for dairy farmers because harvesting grass via meadows is cheaper and dairy companies give a premium for meadow milk. In 2021, the foundation carried out an exploration into the possibilities, limitations and points for attention of grazing on peat soil with a high water level. The results of this exploration will be published in the course of 2022.

NEW DUTCH GRAZING

New Dutch Grazing is a simple and well-integrated grazing concept with five 'standard' examples to help a dairy farmer to set up the system for his farm. The concept is making great strides in dairy farming, an ever-increasing group of dairy farmers are enthusiastic about the concept and are applying it. In addition, it has been adopted for all major suppliers and advisers to be able to implement grazing in a practical way at dairy farmers.

The Grazing Foundation promoted the concept in 2021 by demonstrating it at six demo farms for New Dutch Grazing and providing crash courses with suppliers and advisers.

NEW GRAZERS

The successful project to help dairy farmers, who have kept their cows in stables for years, to start grazing, has been extended for 2021. This enabled the foundation to guide more than 44 new dairy farmers. In total, about 1800 dairy farmers have been advised about starting grazing in recent years. 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), with these parties applying the foundation's approach.

ROBOT & GRAZING

The 2015 folder with our standard to combine automatic milking with grazing (Robot & Grazing) is still widely used in practice. For this reason, this standard has been updated with new knowledge and standards for New Dutch Grazing.

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 originates from farms where cows graze in the pastures from spring to autumn for at least 120 days a year and for at least six hours a day. The milk is collected separately and processed into fresh dairy products – such as milk, buttermilk, custard and yoghurt – cheese and other dairy products. The Grazing Foundation assures the production process, transport and processing of meadow milk.

The Meadow Milk logo was introduced in 2007 to encourage the grazing of cows in the Netherlands and to make products prepared from meadow milk easily identifiable. The logo was transferred to the Grazing Foundation in 2012. 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 under ‘Conditions’.

CERTIFYING BODIES

In 2021 a new certifying body joined the Foundation for the safeguarding of meadow dairy: Certis from Brittany in France. A total of five certifying bodies are now affiliated with the foundation:

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

CERTIFICATES

At the end of 2021, there were a total of 184 farms with one or more valid Grazing Certificates. Together, they hold 268 partial certificates. An up to date overview can always be found on weidemelk.nl/nl/certificaten.

	NL	BE	DE	FR	GB	LU	Total
Number of farms*	137	31	10	5	1	1	184

*Number of certified farms, categorised per country.

RESULTS INSPECTIONS 2021

The table below shows the results of the inspections performed on dairy farms in 2021 by Certifying Bodies.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Number of participating dairy farmers	9.802	9.441	9.565	11.450	15.828	16.837	16.259	15.470	15.771
Inspected Dairy Farmers total	39,6%	67,1%	34,1%	49,3%	44,1%	47,4%	44,6%	48,2%	47,7%
by CB after risk assessment	n.v.t.	n.v.t.	n.v.t.	17,0%	14,5%	15,7%	15,1%	27,3%	29,7%
by CB	10,2%	10,3%	28,5%	26,4%	22,2%	22,9%	25,8%	14,8%	10,8%
By Dairy Company	29,4%	56,9%	5,6%	5,9%	7,4%	8,8%	3,6%	6,1%	7,1%
Repeat inspections*	10,1%	8,1%	2,3%	9,4%	3,9%	3,3%	4,7%	3,4%	3,2%
Positive assessments*	95,5%	97,4%	98,7%	98,6%	98,4%	98,9%	98,6%	99,5%	99,4%
Negative assessments*	4,5%	2,6%	1,3%	1,4%	1,6%	1,1%	1,4%	0,6%	0,6%

Inspection results dairy farms, 2013-2020.

* % of inspected dairy farmers.

LICENCES

5 new licences for the use of the Meadow Milk logo were issued in 2021. The Grazing Foundation has concluded licence agreements with a total of 47 parties.



QLIP GRAZING INDICATOR

The Qlip Grazing Indicator is an indicator for the plausibility of grazing on dairy farms based on measurements in tank milk samples taken at all dairy farmers every three days. In the Grazing Indicator, the measurement results for composition and quality, as well as the recorded mid infra-red spectra from the regular payout survey are used. The underlying calculation model is based on relationships found between dairy farmers' grazing declarations, grazing calendar data made available and measurement data in bulk milk samples. The Grazing Indicator is used to estimate the plausibility of grazing. Independently and in combination with data from the digital grazing calendar of dairy farmers, Qlip makes a risk assessment and selects dairy farmers for

grazing checks. In the new set-up of the inspection regime, in addition to the application of the Grazing Indicator, all inspections were also carried out unannounced.

In 2021, Qlip has validated the new inspection regime with the Grazing Indicator in a survey with 2500 dairy farmers. In this new inspection regime, grazing inspections are carried out unannounced at least 20% of the dairy farmers. 15% of the dairy farmers are selected for the inspections on a risk basis with the Grazing Indicator. TNO, commissioned by the Grazing Foundation, has assessed this validation and concluded that the validation was carried out correctly and that it has been made plausible that this approach leads to at least as many assessments of 'insufficient' or 'doubtful' as the foundation's current inspection regime.

Based on these results, the decision will at the start of 2022 make some decisions to enable dairy companies, within the Grazing Foundation scheme, to choose between this new inspection regime with the Grazing Indicator and the already existing inspection regime where at least 10% of the dairy farmers are inspected unannounced on the basis of a risk indication from the dairy company and an additional 30% of the dairy farmers are inspected unannounced.

EUROPEAN CERTIFICATION MARK REGISTRATION

The Meadow Milk logo is recognised by the European Trademark Office (the EUIPO) as a certification mark in the European Union.

3 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE

REVENUE	2021	2020
ZuivelNL; secretary	20.382	21.598
ZuivelNL; knowledge development and sharing	144.618	178.402
ZuivelNL; New Grazers project	37.635	44.380
Ministry of EA; New Grazers project	37.635	44.380
Dairy farmers/dairy companies' own contribution for advice and training for grazing	10.950	53.700
Contribution-transfer certificate holders and CBs for Meadow Milk safeguarding	300.659	272.897
Ministry of EA; More Grazing project	0	19.753
RVO contribution: Raising Level Peat Meadows and Grazing	24.793	0
Grip on Grass subsidy	180.467	0
Total revenue	757.140	635.108

Revenue Grazing Foundation, 2020-2021.

OPERATING EXPENDITURE	2021	2020
Secretary	46.147	44.882
Knowledge development and sharing	147.993	224.477
New Grazers project	82.845	96.384
Safeguarding Meadow Milk	187.004	206.302
More grazing	0	19.753
Raising Level Peat Meadows and Grazing	25.457	0
Grip on Grass	180.467	0
Other	0	-4
Total operating expenditure	669.914	591.794

Operating expenditure Grazing Foundation, 2020-2021.

BALANCE	2021	2020
Balance	87.226	43.315

Balance Grazing Foundation, 2020-2021.

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS PER 31 DECEMBER 2021

ASSETS	2021	2020
Receivables		
Accounts receivable	166.373	15.895
Other receivables	11.071	25.842
Accrued assets	76.332	86.162
<i>Total receivable</i>	<i>244.776</i>	<i>127.899</i>
Liquid assets		
Payment Accounts	718.507	312.756
Total assets	963.282	440.655

Assets Grazing Foundation, 2019-2020.

LIABILITIES	2021	2020
Equity capital		
Capital	234.574	147.354
<i>Total equity capital</i>	<i>234.574</i>	<i>147.354</i>
Short-term liabilities		
Accounts payable	69.603	147.377
Suspense accounts for VAT	0	0
Accrued liabilities	659.105	145.927
<i>Total short-term liabilities</i>	<i>728.708</i>	<i>293.305</i>
Total liabilities	963.282	440.659

Liabilities Grazing Foundation, 2019-2020.



CONTACT

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

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