

Steve Thorne and TechnoGrazing™

Steve Thorne is one of the producers involved in the AHDB Beef & Lamb-funded farm innovation grant (FIG) project on TechnoGrazing™. Since implementing the TechnoGrazing™ system across some of the grazing platform at West Panson Farm, there has been a significant increase in grass dry matter production which has led to a 60% increase in gross margin per ha.

TechnoGrazing™ was developed in New Zealand over 35 years ago by Manawatu farmer, Harry Wier. This innovative method of grazing has been successfully adopted in Australia and the Americas. James Daniels of Precision Grazing Ltd. introduced TechnoGrazing™ to the UK having worked on the farm where the system was developed; he is also managing the FIG project.

The fundamental aspect of the system is to ensure that sward quality is optimal and that cells are given sufficient time to recover after grazing. This innovative and efficient method of grazing uses permanent and flexible electric fences to construct lanes and cells. These are designed to provide easily adjustable rotation lengths while ensuring that animal shifts are time efficient. Grass growth must be regularly assessed and, from this, stock movements can be accelerated or slowed accordingly. The aim is to allow sufficient regrowth for the following rotation, ensuring a young, leafy sward with a metabolisable energy (ME) of more than 11.

Steve focuses on using grass and forage to feed his 88 Limousin-cross cows plus their offspring. The majority of the suckler cows are out-wintered on kale, alongside baled silage. Those with a lower body condition score (BCS) are housed for preferential treatment before the calving period.

Some of the homebred youngstock are finished at West Panson Farm. The aim is to maximise the proportion of finished weight coming from grass. This summer, average daily liveweight gain (DLWG) of the youngstock mob within the TechnoGrazing™ system was 1.59kg per day. The system allowed stocking rates to be increased by 80%, which has been key to its success.



The system has since been partially adopted by other farmers on some of their grazing platform. Steve has been pleased with the system and now hopes to expand it at West Panson Farm.

AHDB Beef & Lamb recently held an open day which focused on the findings from the Technograzing™ project. The attributes of the system at West Panson Farm was described to attendees and a brief demonstration proved the system's ease of use when moving stock.

For more information on rotational grazing see the BRP manual

[Planning Grazing Strategies for Better Returns](#)