

Grassland & Muck 2017, Stoneleigh

This year's Grassland & Muck event was held at Stoneleigh Park on 24 and 25 May. AHDB exhibited at the event over the two days.

The event saw the official launch of the updated Nutrient Management Guide (RB209.) The original publication was released in 1973 and was the first comprehensive set of fertiliser recommendations published by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF).

This latest revision of RB209 is based on research carried out since the previous edition was published in 2010. The revision includes updated advice, recommendations for additional crops and information on the nutrient content of additional organic materials. To make the recommendations more accessible, it has been published as seven sections that can be updated individually. For beef and sheep producers, there is a particularly relevant section that covers grass and forage crops, with significant changes to the grass nitrogen recommendations.



The AHDB stand at Grassland & Muck had information on soil health and structure, the importance of measuring grass, advice on selecting varieties for reseeding and the options for grass and forage in arable rotations. The stand also aimed to update producers on how to grow and utilise home-grown forage crops for improved whole-farm feed efficiency:

Soil

This area of the stand featured a soil pit and focused on the importance of digging holes to understand soil structure. Information on using earthworms as an indicator of soil health was also outlined.

For more information visit the [Healthy Grassland Soils area](#) of the AHDB Dairy website.

Grass

This area looked at the importance of measuring grass, what to do with information from grass measurements and the impact of nitrogen on reseeds. Grass growth displays and sward measuring demonstrations were available from AHDB Dairy knowledge exchange officers. The aim of this was to reinforce the message of increasing sward utilisation – there is no point in increasing the amount of grass grown if it is not going to be utilised by grazing stock.

Reseeding

AHDB also launched the updated Recommended Grass and Clover Lists (RGCL) at this year's event. There was advice on selecting varieties from the RGCL, how to manage a ley in its first year and weed control in reseeds.

Stock in arable rotations

There is growing interest in grazing cover crops and so we displayed information on current work by AHDB looking at the benefits of integrated crop and livestock production systems.

Muck grid

Demonstrations of spreading rates along with the nutrient and financial values of manures, digestate and slurry were demonstrated with a muck mat, this aimed to increase awareness of the values of organic materials, which could improve on farm efficiencies when used appropriately. It also included the new organic material values from RB209.



For more information download the [Recommended Grass and Clover Lists](#) and
the [Grassland reseeding guide](#)

You can view our special edition of [June's Bitesize](#) that was filmed at Grassland & Muck 17