

The first pasture group meeting was held on Tuesday 12th August with 12 people attending the morning at Mortans dairy “Grayston”.

The first stop was to look at a paddock that had been sown in Autumn 2013 with 150 perennial rye grass. The 150 ryegrass with AR37 endophyte in an old sub clover paddock had taken awhile to establish but once it got going was performing extremely well. They had stopped watering in the extreme heat of summer 2013, let it dry off and grazed it with dry cows. Then in March irrigated it, and were pleased and surprised with the fantastic rate of regrowth.

Plantain a broad leaf perennial grazing herb was also discussed. It has been tried as an alternative in the past, but like Chicory was found to not perform very well in their area. Simon also mentioned the cows did not find plantain palatable.

Icon lucerne and Aurora lucerne were described as having the same winter activity rating but the Icon proved to be a better performer. The Icon lucerne is grazed with a 25 day rotation over summer. Super is applied to the Lucerne twice a year.

The Morton’s like having a balance of subs and perennial pastures allowing more time to establish summer crops without being rushed by a lack of feed.

Summer fodder wise millet seemed to be preferred over sorghum as their millet performed better and sorghum yields were disappointing. Summer grazing was basically 50% of time on millet and 50 % of time on lucerne.

There fertiliser use tended to be a combination of single super, urea and liquid nitrogen. They also had excellent results from a product called Calx which was used as an alternative to Gypsum and had been very benefical.

When required Lemat had been applied successfully with Liquid Nitrogen. Broadleaf’s in particular dock was the main focus of weed spraying in pastures. Discussions were had about both the cost and effectiveness of Buttress compared to an Ecopar/Mcpa750 mix. Lucerne was cleaned in August with a Sprayseed Diuron mix.

Thankyou to Simon, Paul and Terry for the morning