

Information Sheet

ESTIMATING THE QUANTITY OF FORAGE

One of the first steps when working out diets for a winter feeding season, either at the start or part way through the winter is to estimate the quantity of forage on farm.

The following give a quick indication of the tonnage of silage available in the clamp depending on silage dry matter.

The figures have been left in feet as that is how the majority of clamps are measured.

Multiply the length by the width by average height of the clamp (in feet).

Multiply this by:

	45 for a 23% DM Silage
	40 for a 26% DM Silage
or	50 for a 20% DM Silage

Then divide by 2205 = TONNES

Example:

In a clamp with dimensions 60ft x 160ft by average height 7ft. This would contain 1371T of 23% Dry Matter Silage. On average a cow will eat about 10 - 12kg of Silage DM through lactation i.e. 43 - 52kg of 23% DM fresh material (more if it is wetter and vice versa).

For the 240 day "Winter" (1st September - 30th April), this is the requirement of:-

10 tonnes for a 26% DM Silage
11.5 tonnes for a 23% DM Silage
13 tonnes for a 20% DM Silage

This does not allow any spare for buffer feeding the following spring.