

Webinar: The potential of secondary legumes and multispecies mixtures in forage production in North-West Europe

When: 12th March 2018 at 18:00 - 19:00 GMT
(19:00 - 20:00 CET)

Online Event Only

What to expect: The recent intensification in European forage production has raised environmental and sustainability questions. The effect on resource efficiency and biodiversity is also questioned.



The use of legumes reduces the need for N fertiliser whilst including herbs have a positive impact on the nutritive value of forage and to benefit animal health. Legumes and herbs containing phenolic compounds (e.g. tannins) are associated with nutrient use efficiency. Mixed swards can also increase herbage production if plants with various functional traits are combined and if deep-rooting species are included. Deep-rooting species can better adapt to different conditions.

Lindhof, Kiel University research farm, is currently in the fourth year of researching secondary legumes and multispecies mixtures. Grass-clover swards containing herbs (chicory, plantain, sheeps burnet and caraway) and birdsfoot are compared to a simple grass-clover sward under a grazing and cutting system. Results demonstrate that partial replacement of perennial ryegrass and white clover with herbs and birdsfoot did not reduce the total herbage yield under grazing or harvesting. When grazed in early growth stages the cows preferred the multispecies swards.

Join Ralf Loges for this webinar where he will compare a wide range of secondary legumes and forage herbs for forage production in North-West Europe with respect to productivity, forage value and competitiveness. Ralf will describe how they determined which selection of species to include.



Biography: Ralf Loges is a senior scientist at the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences of Kiel University in Germany, in the Department Grass and Forage Science and Organic Agriculture. Ralf has 20 years of research experience in the field of forage production and organic agriculture. His interest includes low-cost forage production systems, greenhouse gas emissions and the nitrogen cycle especially in the estimation of symbiotic Nitrogen-fixation by legumes, and Nitrogen-leaching. Ralf also focuses on the evaluation of organic cropping systems in respect to yield, product quality, sustainability, economic and environmental effects. Prior to his academic career, Ralf completed vocational agricultural training and gained 2 years of practical farming experience on both Danish and English dairy farms.

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