



Grazing management with dairy goats in a mountain environment and regional marketing of products



Kleinstahlhof/ Helmut Grossgasteiger

1 Description of the innovation



In 2006 the organic farmer of the Kleinstahlhof reorganized the stall of the family farm, which kept until then dairy cattle and comprises very steep slopes, into a playpen for goats. The goats of the breed "Weiße deutsche Edelziege" (on average 10 LU) are kept on grassland without import of off-farm forage. The total agricultural area of the farm is 8.5 ha (leased land included), of which 4 ha are used exclusively as meadows (3 cuts/year) and on 4.5 ha grazing and mowing are combined. The practiced grazing management system is a flexible rotational stocking. The animals are grazing from mid of April until the end of October. During this period, they receive additionally 200 g of concentrates per day. The entire produced amount of milk of 30000 l per year is transformed into high quality products directly on farm (5 different types of cheese, all manufactured of raw goat milk). The own products are locally marketed to resellers (50%), local shops (30%) and in their own farm shop (20%). All products are only available seasonally; there is no production in the period between winter and Easter.



Added value:

- Better economic results
- Job creation on the farm
- Higher grassland quality



A high forage quality is very important for the farmer. It can be achieved by early cuts, reduction of crumble losses at hay harvest (reduction of unnecessary turning of herbage) and a well-working barn-drying system (roof suction coupled with a dehumidifier).

Reasons for innovation

- Short marketing chain
- Solving a problem (the need to change)
- decreasing costs (no silage)

2 Farm description

ENVIRONMENT

Main soil type: sandy loam

Climate type: temperate continental climate

Average altitude (m a.s.l.): 1134 (970 m to 1268 m)

Average slope (%): 54 (26% to 63%)

GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT

Grazing: Yes, combined with cut use

Grazing management type: flexible rotational stocking

Length of the grazing period (months/year): 7

Number of cuts for exclusively mowed areas: 3 cuts/year

Forage conservation type: hay

Average fertilisation rate: 100 kg organic N/ha/year

STRUCTURE

Annual work units per year: 3

Agricultural area (ha UAA) : 8.5 ha

47% of the area is exclusively mowed, 53% of the area are mixed use grassland area (mowed and grazed)

ANIMAL PERFORMANCE

Breed type:

Weißer deutsche Edelziege

Total livestock unit (LU): 10

Average stocking rate (LU/ha): 1.17

Average rate of bought roughage: 0%

Reasons why this innovation is working on the farm

- Animals are suitable for grazing on steep slopes
- High forage quality because of efficient drying method (rooftop suction and dehumidifier)
- Closed operation cycle, working in and with the nature, minimal rate of additional acquisition (approx. 200 g feed concentrates/goat/day)
- High motivation, periodic attending of courses on goat farming and cheese production

Country shapes



Domains of innovation



Machinery, tools



Forage mixture



Forage conservation technique



Grazing management system



Legume management



Animal feeding management



Animal type (breed)



Product processing



Marketing



Farm system



Landscape

Main types of animal

