

Grassland management makes it possible!



Increased milk yields from about 8,000 litres to 10,400 litres in 2 years

Company overview:

Fraederk Meppen
30 years old
Production manager since 2017

Facts:

- Milk production from 80 cows
- 60 female offspring
- 55 ha grassland
- 20 ha arable land
- Manpower 2.5 workers (apprentices, parents, managers)



The Meppen dairy farm is situated in northern Germany. It milks 80 cows and has been headed by Fraederk Meppen for the last 2 years. As seed company, Feldsaaten Freudenberg was able to work alongside the dairy farm's development through the business takeover.

Fraederk, you have been managing the business for the last 2 years. What has changed during this period?

My father ran this business with quite an extensive dairy operation. His main idea was to run the business with as few expenses as possible. As I began to have more influence on the business, I've turned the philosophy further towards intensive husbandry and management. Of course, intensive does not necessarily imply that the input factors have been increased. Rather, my aim is to optimise the existing factors and to make use of the resources effectively and efficiently.

What were these steps in detail and what were the biggest challenges?

We took the first major step in 2012. That year, we put measures in place in terms of light, air and stalls to make our cows more comfortable. In addition, we procured a mixer wagon to improve the feed intake. With these measures, we were able to increase our supply by around 1,000 kg per cow per year. In the follow-

ing years, we continued to search for other optimisation possibilities, but we were unable to achieve any concrete improvement. The breakthrough from 8,000 to about 10,400 kg of milk per cow per year came only after the change in grassland management.



Fraederk Meppen (right) and his father (left)





Modern combination equipment helped to combine the advantages of harrows and levellers while carrying out the grassland reseeding.