



CHOICE CHICORY FOR YOUNG HEIFER CALVES.

Crop and Feeding System Guide

MEETING HEIFER LIVEWEIGHT TARGETS

Grasslands®

Choice

Chicory

A well-fed heifer achieves target liveweights, produces more milk in her first lactation and competes better with mature cows. To achieve this, the heifer's diet needs sufficient energy and protein. Ryegrass pastures can fully satisfy a heifer's dietary requirements most of the time, but pastures in their reproductive phase or under summer dry conditions may not meet their needs. Grazing heifers on **Choice** chicory over the summer can be an excellent solution to meeting the needs of the heifer.

Growth of weaned calves

Weaning to nine months of age

The focus during this period is on lean growth (muscle and skeletal); targeting 30% of mature liveweight at six months. Achieving these will result in:

- Increased frame size while maintaining a consistent body condition score
- Improved skeletal development results in taller heifers that experience fewer calving difficulties.

Underfeeding during this period can also disrupt bone growth with the potential to lead to weakening and fractures later in life.

Rumen capacity can be a limitation at this age so energy and high protein dense diets are critical. **Choice** chicory, with a ME of 11.5-13.0 MJ ME/kg DM and crude protein of 18%+, is a well-balanced feed to meet the dietary requirements of young heifers.

TABLE 1. FEED REQUIREMENTS OF YOUNG HEIFERS (WEANING - NINE MONTHS)

Liveweight (kg)	Maintenance (MJ ME/day)	Growth per 1 kg of liveweight gain (MJ ME/day)	Protein (%)
100	19	17	17
150	26	24	17
200	32	28	17
250	37	29	15
300	42	31	15

CHICORY ALLOCATION

TABLE 2. DRYMATTER (DM) INTAKE REQUIRED FOR DIFFERENT RATES OF LIVEWEIGHT GAIN (LWG) IN YOUNG HEIFERS (WEANING - NINE MONTHS)

Start weight	DM intake for different rates of LWG (kg/hd/day)			
	0.4	0.6	0.8	1.0
100 kg	2.4	2.8	3.2	3.6
150 kg	3.0	3.4	3.9	4.4
200 kg	3.7	4.2	4.7	5.2
250 kg	4.3	4.8	5.4	5.9
300 kg	4.9	5.5	6.1	6.8
350 kg	5.5	6.2	6.9	7.6

TABLE 3. CHICORY CROPPING AREA AND DAILY ALLOCATION GUIDE

Amount of chicory to be fed per head (kg DM/hd)	Area to sow in chicory (ha)	Daily area of chicory (ha/day)
2 kg	2.3 ha / 100 calves	0.11 ha / 100 calves
3 kg	3.5 ha / 100 calves	0.17 ha / 100 calves
4 kg	4.7 ha / 100 calves	0.23 ha / 100 calves

TABLE 4. AREA OF CHICORY REQUIRED FOR HEIFERS BASED ON DAILY ALLOCATION AND CROP REGROWTH SPEED (HEADS PER HA: 100)

Allocation (kg/DM chicory /hd/day)	Expected chicory regrowth kg/DM/hd/day						
	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
2	5	4	3.3	2.9	2.5	2.2	2.0
3	7.5	6	5.0	4.3	3.8	3.3	3.0
4	10	8	6.7	5.7	5.0	4.4	4.0
5	12.5	10	8.3	7.1	6.3	5.6	5.0
6	15	12	10.0	8.6	7.5	6.7	6.0
Area required							

Average growth rates vary. Based on 24 day rotation. Growth rates are all dependant on the following: weather, fertility and management. To discuss this further, contact your local Agricom Territory Sales Manager.

Chicory should make up to 75% of the heifers' diet, with the remaining 25% coming from a fibre source such as pasture, baleage, silage or hay/straw. It is important that these fibre sources are palatable.

Rotational grazing and using three and four-day breaks (shifting twice a week) are a great way to ensure heifers are not being underfed. If residuals are lower than 5-10 cm (<1600 kg DM/ha) two days into their 3-day break, then not enough chicory is being allocated.

Aim for a utilisation rate of 70%. Exceeding this threshold will limit both intake and regrowth of the crop.

For the ideal **Choice** chicory post grazing residual refer to Image 1.



Image 1. Ideal **Choice** chicory post grazing residual

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