

# Calendar

## January

- Compile Nutrient Management Plan field-by-field for next growing season
- Assess yield potential and adjust targeted nitrogen input accordingly
- Assess silage harvesting equipment and have it serviced
- Carry out any repairs and maintenance
- Decide which fields are for first cut

## February/March

- Pasture health check and prioritise spring work
- Make first manure and fertiliser applications
- Carry out weed control
- Roll fields
- Apply slurry early for maximum growth rates and minimise risk of silage contamination
- Consider applying gibberellic acid after early grazing

## March/April

- Second fertiliser applications to silage where applications are split
- Allow time for fertiliser to be absorbed before mowing
- Make sure after cut fertiliser is ordered and delivered
- Over-seed tired pastures if less than 70% covered with sown species
- Establish clover in a grass ley (drilling clover later allows early weed control in new grass)
- Prepare clamps, speak to contractor and ensure forage additive has arrived
- Spray ragwort before it exceeds the rosette stage and observe the withdrawal period
- Spray buttercups before flowering and control chickweed

## May

- Assess grass growth stage and weather forecast for appropriate time to take first cut
- Top and rake fields or mob graze if unmown grass or residue is left
- Apply fertiliser/muck/slurry to boost regrowth as soon as possible after silage cuts
- Reseed if less than 50% covered with sown species
- Spray docks and other weed regrowth around two weeks after silage cut

## June/July

- Prepare for second silage cut
- Over-seed tired pastures after second cut
- Continue to apply fertilisers and manures as soon as possible after grazing/silage cuts
- Spray thistles as they come into bud
- Assess silage stocks and monitor wholecrop cereals
- Top thistles and nettles but never ragwort as it grows back stronger
- Spot spray ragwort and soft rush, or cut and treat soft rush regrowth with MCPA

## August

- Establish red clover/grass mixtures but avoid sowing in drought conditions
- Drill pelleted white clover into existing grass leys
- Get your first cut analysed
- Pull up any post-flower ragwort to remove roots
- Consider weed control measures in newly-sown leys

## September

- Last opportunity for a full reseed or renovation in most parts of the country
- To reduce winter kill, swards should be no more than 3-4cm in height going into winter
- Obtain fertiliser in early market
- Consider taking third cut silage
- Treat reseeded ragwort and control weeds in newly-sown leys
- Spray dock regrowth after cutting

## October

- Sow grass after maize by the end of the month
- Ensure fields are well topped and dead grass removed with raking
- Check herbicide labels as some do not allow autumn use

## November

- Take soil samples (once every three years in every field)
- Carry out mole control if necessary

## December

- Make sure Nutrient Management Plan records for current year are completed
- Minimise wheeled traffic and control winter grazing to reduce sward damage and compaction

### Manure and fertiliser closed periods in Nitrate Vulnerable Zones

Closed period for applying organic manure with high readily available nitrogen content (for example slurry, poultry manures, liquid anaerobic digestate or liquid digested sewage sludge)

Start date	End date	Land use	Soil type
August 1	December 31	Tillage land	Shallow or sandy soils
September 1	December 31	Grassland	Shallow or sandy soils
September 16	December 31	Tillage land with crops sown on or before September 15	Shallow or sandy soils
October 1	January 31	Tillage land	All other soils
October 15	January 31	Grassland	All other soils

### Manufactured nitrogen

Closed period for applying manufactured nitrogen fertilisers

Start date	End date	Land use	Soil type
September 1	January 15	Tillage land	All soils
September 15	January 15	Grassland	All soils

Download and read the full NVZ guidance for 2013-2016 from [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)