

Forage production Summary

Forage spreads through the seeds, wind, cow dung or even through gumboots can spread it. Napier stunt diseases means the grass is short and doesn't give much yield. A sign of stunt disease is yellowing of leaves. If your napier has this disease, it's best to uproot, burry or burn the affected plants.

Forage Varieties

You can plant other varieties such as brachiaria or panicum grasses or disease resistance napier grass. This way, if the napier is diseased it still has good fodder for your cows.

There are several ways of planting these varieties: you can set up a nursery and then transplant the seedlings or you can plant the seeds right into the ground during rains; you can also grow the crops from cuttings and splits, this is especially good when you want to expand an existing plot.

Watering Grass

Be sure to water your grass regularly especially when they are still young, this will also help get rid of pests such as red spider mites. From seed to harvest, it takes between four to five months, you know the time is right when the leaves show flowers. It's really important you make hay and silage so that you have good enough fodder all year round especially when its dry and milk prices go up.

Remember in order to keep healthy cows you need to make sure to feed them often and enough. One cow needs three percent of its body weight in dry matter every day. For a healthy cow, weighing about 380kg that's about 11kg or just about one bale of hay every day, it's about 60kgs of fresh fodder. If you are growing your own fodder you will need about one whole acre to feed one cow, a heifer and a calf per year. Also remember

always have clean water. Well-fed cows give good and plenty of milk.