

Livestock grazing behaviour and impact on soil nutrients

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Project description:

Livestock production impacts on the environment in a variety of ways. One area of concern is how the defecation and urination patterns of pasture grazing livestock impact on soil nutrient retention and loss. The contribution of urine and faeces in maintaining the fertility, structure and productivity of pasture is well recognised. However, retaining this nutrient source within the soil as an evenly distributed, effective and sustainable fertilizer remains a challenge. There are worldwide reports of concern that surface water runoff and leaching of the elimination products of livestock contribute to water course pollution. Losses to the atmosphere can also produce pollution (NH₃) and affect climate due to emissions of greenhouse gases. This project aims to investigate the grazing behaviour of cattle and its relationship to soil nutrient deposition, retention and transfer and assess strategies to mitigate soil damage and nutrient losses to the environment.