

Wildfire Groups their Impact and Liaison within the Agricultural Sector

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Myerscough College

- We are a Land Based College in Lancashire, nationally we are seen as one of the top Landex College in the Country.
- OFSTED rated Agriculture and Countryside Studies as Outstanding.
- My role is to deliver the Agricultural Apprenticeship Scheme to approx Fifty Apprentices on farms across the North West of England.



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Fire Service Career & Involvement with Wildfire Groups

- Fire Service 31 years service.
- Greater Manchester(1979-1986)(1991- 2010)
- Derbyshire (1986 -1991)
- Ten years involvement in Peak District FOG
- Station Commander @ Hyde & Mossley linking in directly to Fire Operations Group.
- Whilst doing the above post I achieved a degree in Agriculture at Myerscough in 2007.



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Fire Service Career & Involvement with Wildfire Groups

- Been involved with several Major Moorland Fires & Small ones.
- Trainer on Fire Operations Group Courses
- Part of the UK Wildfire Group that undertook the two week Wildfire Course in Greece.
- Attended the Advanced Wildfire Training in Northumberland
- Attended several Wildfire Conferences



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Areas to Explore

- Wildfire Groups impacting on Agricultural Practises
- Better understanding of Farming Techniques by Wildfire Groups to reduce Fire Spread
- Planning within Wildfire Areas
- How Wildfire Groups can integrate within Farming Groups / Organisations.



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Increasing the Windows of Opportunity

- Engage with Farmers & Land Owners
- Provide fire stops or slow fire spread narrowing etc.
- Area for Fire-fighting.
- Emergency Evacuation area.
- Include these areas in the pre attack plan.
- Informing Crews MDU etc



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What to Aim For

- Corridor or Strip of Grazing or Land Suitable to put in a stop. (Control Line)
- Its not intended to impact on all the land
- Its got to be an area that will provide a beneficial stop / refuge. (Laces)
- Link it back to Fire Safety in Buildings then its putting in place that protected structure. (Wall/compartment)



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Conditions for &Types Of Fires

Early Spring

- Surface Burn
- Air Temperatures can be Cold
- Wind Direction Crucial
- East Winds (Drying)
- Grass Growth minimal
- Fire involves dead vegetation

Summer

- Can be Surface or Sub Surface.
- Temperatures promoting grass growth
- Soil Temperatures above 6°C
- Fires tend to involve fresh growth that as dried/died off.



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Spring Fire (Surface)



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Spring Fire

- To have an impact on this type of fire then steps should be taken before the end of the year.
- Hard grazing by sheep (cattle?)
- May not be suitable around Topping time but soon after before scanning, post scanning then would provide good grazing for singles.
- Once grazed off then there should only be minimal re-growth if soil temperatures remain below 6°

Locate the ring feeder



Summer Fire



Summer Fires

- Surface/ Sub Surface Fires
- To impact this type of fire then steps should be taken early part of the year or as weather conditions change.
- Tends to be caused by periods hot dry weather.
- Grass growth is vigorous due to good soil Temperatures, Sunlight Hours, Intensity and Moisture Content



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Steps That Could be Taken Two Fold

- Firstly **Grass Growth**
- Applying Slurry as early as spring growth occurs outside NVZ restriction date.
This will encourage vigorous grass growth as the growing season progresses causing it to green becoming less susceptible to drought.



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Spreading Widths can be 6m (20ft) and 27m (88 ft)



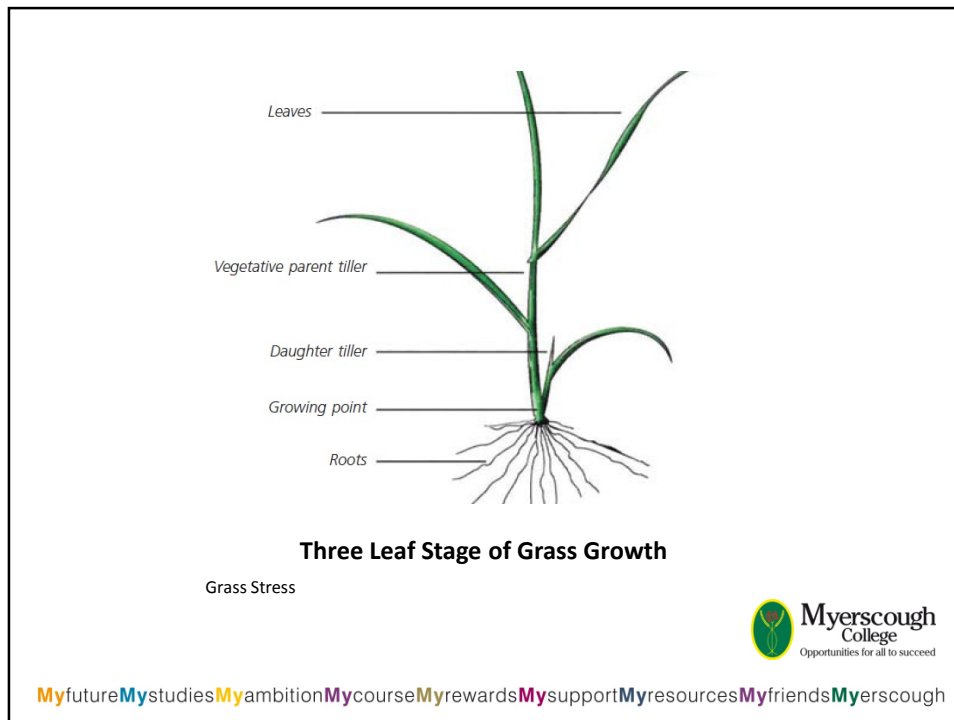
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Grazing

- Grazing hard following initial spring growth with ewes & lambs cattle?
- To try and keep the grass greening up. In particular keep the three leaf stage tight.



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Other Measures for Consideration

- Re Seed Areas of grass land. Where possible seed with Ryegrass (Perennial/Italian)
- Re assess use of fertilisers
- Cropping Rotation
- Grass Topping / Raking during risk times.
- Early silage taken from the land.
- These are just a few examples there are many more to consider.



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Getting the message to the Farming Community

Wildfire Groups and their Interaction with Agriculture

- Liaison with Local Land Owners/ Farmers
- Close Co-operation with National Farmers Union.
- Upland Farmer Groups
- Young Farmers Club
- Wildfire Groups to provide input to courses @ Land Based Colleges. HE/FE
- Encourage Further Studies.



Major Attraction
Maybe low cost or even free

Thanks For Listening
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Any Questions



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