



# North Carolina Score Card for Pasture Condition Evaluation

<b>Farm Name:</b>					<b>Date:</b>						
Indicators (with relative weight for determining score)					Weight factor	Pasture Number					
						1	2	3	4	5	
Multiply wt. factor by score to get weighted score											
<b>PERCENT DESIRABLE PLANTS (10%)</b> % of plant cover by weight that is desirable for animals using the forage:					1.0						
1 <20	2 20-40	3 40-60	4 60-80	5 >80							
<b>LIVE PLANT COVER (15%)</b> Live stems and green leaf cover by all species assuming 3" stubble hts:					1.5						
1 <40	2 40-60	3 60-75	4 75-90	5 90-100							
<b>PLANT DIVERSITY (10%)</b> diversity may be determined for each pasture or for the farm as a whole					1.0						
1 1-species & /or 1 seasonal growth grp.	2	3 3+species all palatable cool or warm	4	5 4-5 species warm & cool & legume							
<b>PLANT RESIDUE (3%)</b> organic residue on ground between plants:					0.3						
1 0%	2 1-10%	3 10-20%	4 20-30%	5 30-70%							
<b>PLANT VIGOR (level of potential recovery post graze) (20%)</b> Degree of plant stress which affects recovery: If <4, score the factors causing poor vigor (see next page for reference ONLY)					2.0						
1 none	2 slow	3 med.	4 rapid	5 very rapid							
<b>LEGUME Content (5%)</b> Percentage of legume present as total air dry weight:					0.5						
1 <10, or >60	2 10-19	3 20-29	4 30-39	5 40-60							
<b>UNIFORMITY OF GRAZING (7%)</b> Degree of Spot grazing is:					0.7						
1 >50%	2 25-50%	3 10-25%	4 minor	5 none							
<b>LIVESTOCK LOUNGING AREAS (10%)</b> Presence of livestock concentration area covering ?% of pasture and proximity to surface water:					1.0						
1 >10	2 5-10	3 <5	4 some	5 none							
<b>SOIL COMPACTION (5%)</b> Probe moist soil comparing to an ungrazed area (i.e. beneath fence)					0.5						
1 very severe	2 severe	3 moderate	4 slight	5 not visible							
<b>EROSION (15%)</b> Consider all the following: Sheet, rill, gully, streambank, shoreline, or wind					1.5						
1 very severe	2 severe	3 moderate	4 slight	5 not visible							Total Average
<b>PASTURE CONDITION SCORE, total for each field based on weighted values</b>											
<b>Acres in each field</b>											
<b>Weighted score by acreage</b>											

FACTORS AFFECTING PLANT VIGOR, Used to identify causes of poor plant vigor (do not average these scores into previous page)					Pasture or field number				
					1	2	3	4	5
<b>P &amp; K Status of soil</b> <sup>1/</sup> Phosphorus and potassium status of the soil is:									
1 very severe	2 severe	3 moderate	4 fair	5 optimum					
<b>N Status in plant tissue</b> <sup>1/</sup> Nitrogen status of the plant tissue is:									
1 very severe	2 severe	3 moderate	4 fair	5 optimum					
<b>SOIL pH</b> <sup>1/</sup> pH status of the soil for the upper 4" rooting zone best fits:									
1 <4.5 or >9.0	2 4.5-5.0 or, 8.5-9.0	3 5.1-5.5 or, 7.9-8.4	4 5.6-6.0 or, 7.4-7.8	5 6.0 to 7.3					
<b>SEVERITY OF USE</b> Degree of forage removal is:									
1 very severe	2 severe	3 moderate	4 fair	5 optimum					
<b>SITE ADAPTATION OF DESIRED SPECIES</b> Long term climate and natural soil characteristics affect adaptation of desired species.									
1 very poor	2 poor	3 good	4 very good	5 excellent					
<b>CLIMATIC STRESSES</b> Degree of plant stress due to recent weather effects is:									
1 very severe	2 fair-severe	3 moderate	4 slight	5 none					
<b>INSECTS &amp; DISEASE PRESSURE</b> Level of plant stress due to insect or disease pressure is:									
1 severe	2 threshold	3 < threshold	4 slight	5 none					
<sup>1/</sup> Rate electrical conductivity and sodium adsorption ratios in regions where appropriate. Where excess salts, exchangeable sodium, or exchangeable aluminum hinder plant growth, they are the controlling factor rather than soil pH conditions. Use appropriate criteria for them as found in the National Range and Pasture Handbook under Evaluating and rating pastures, Pasture Condition Scoring. See pH criteria below for highly weathered soils.									
Soil pH Criteria for Major Landuse Resource Areas with Oxisols and Ultisols pH status of the soil for the upper 4" rooting zone best fits:									
1	2	3	4	5					
<4.0 or > 9.0	4.0-4.5 or, 7.0-9.0	4.5-5.0 or, 6.5-7.0	5.1-5.5 or, 6.2-6.5	5.6-6.2					
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<b>General management changes based on overall score for individual pasture or whole farm.</b>									
Overall Pasture Condition Score		Individual Indicator Score		Management Change Suggested					
46 to 50		5		No changes in management needed at this time.					
36 to 45		4		Minor changes would enhance, do most beneficial first.					
26 to 35		3		Improvements would benefit productivity and/or environment					
16 to 25		2		Needs immediate management changes, high return likely					
10 to 15		1		Major effort required in time, management and expenses.					