

II. C- Graz:

Helpful Hints

1. Take the information from the field visits and develop the benchmark plan in C-Graz.
2. Once all the fields and animals are in, look for shortages and over production areas. Consider supplement feeding that is done. Production that is never near demand may be normal.

At this point create a new scenario and call it another name such as Alt 1 and then:

3. Modify animal numbers or management changes to meet farmer's goals, consider what can be done to meet these needs.
4. Review fields for production problems. Develop saved alternatives that you can discuss with the landowner and ones that meet his initial request.
5. Use guidelines in 528 Worksheet 2A for field sizing and recommended days of rest to determine useful subdivision fencing and watering needs. Always consider spitting fields into smaller management units. Splitting a field will always increase forage utilization, causes more uniform utilization which improves nutrient distribution and increases time for more regrowth, therefore improving plant vigor. Remember the only permanent fences you have to have are boundary fences and land use or safety fences. The rest will work best as portable or somewhat movable. This will make tinkering with the system easier and less expensive. This also will allow for opportunistic haying when forages need it such as in mid spring when many people have to mow to keep ahead of the greases, which is a short term loss in forage production. Remember C-Graz considers all forages produced as used or available in the system.

Remember to increase harvest efficiencies in C-Graz as your grazing period shortens. Use table? in Worksheet 2A for guidance.

6. Use the guidance in 528 Worksheet 2A for recommended herd size in lbs of live animals, this is important in creating a "herd effect" which will improve nutrient distribution and recycling, seedling establishment, plant

vigor, precipitation retention, increase good insect, microbial, and earthworm activities all improving soil structure.

7. Consider present pH and fertility management and use the tables created for your area concerning yield under different pH and management strategies as a way to "create" additional land for forage production. Change the yields in C-Graz to reflect these improvements.

8. Look at forage species that can fill forage production shortfalls and limitations on certain fields due to drainage, soil water holding capacity and management forage goals. Consider ways to extend the grazing season by summer stockpiling of orchardgrass alfalfa/clover pastures and stockpiling tall fescue for fall and winter use. This will cut costs and increase utilization of nutrients on the farm.

9. Run several alternatives and save each as you build a way to improve the management of the environment and meet the landowner's goals.

10. Have a meeting with the landowner to discuss the alternatives you have come up with for his prescribed grazing plan.

11. Take the alternatives he wants to try and use the MD grazing Template to finalize the plan.

12. Print copies of additional alternatives you feel he should consider in the future and identify them as conservation alternatives.