



PLT10 - Montana Supplement

Intensive Management of Rotational Grazing – (Plant Enhancement Activity)

Montana Clarification

In Montana this activity will apply only to short duration grazing systems *on tame pastures* which consist of multiple paddocks or pastures and frequent rotations. On non-irrigated pastures, the producer may be able to rotate only once, based on precipitation.

Montana Specifications

Table 1. Optimum grazing periods for tame grass and legume varieties, their re-growth ability, and recommended stubble height (inches) after grazing.

Grass Variety	Re-Growth Ability	Optimum Timing of Use	Stubble
Kentucky bluegrass	High	Spring, Fall	2
Meadow brome	High	Spring, Summer, Fall	4
Smooth brome	Medium	Spring, Summer, Winter	4
Tall fescue	Medium	Spring, Fall, Winter	4
Creeping and meadow foxtail	High	Spring, Summer	4
Orchardgrass	High	Spring, Summer, Fall	4
Timothy	Medium	Spring, Summer	4
Crested and Siberian wheatgrass	Low - Medium	Spring, Fall	3
Intermediate wheatgrass	Medium	Spring, Summer, Fall	6
Pubescent wheatgrass	Medium	Spring, Summer, Fall	6
Tall wheatgrass	Medium	Summer	6
Altai wildrye	Medium - High	Spring, Summer, Fall Winter	6
Russian wildrye	Medium - High	Summer, Fall, Winter	3
Reed Canarygrass	High	Spring, Summer	4
Alfalfa	High	Summer	2
Clover, white and red	High	Spring	2
Cicer milkvetch	High	Summer, Fall	2
Sainfoin	Medium	Spring, Summer	8
Sweetclover	High	Summer	12
Birdsfoot trefoil	High	Summer	4

PASTURELAND

Following routine winter feeding, grazing of pasture forage plants will not be allowed until forage plants grow to at least the four-leaf growth stage. Pastures may be grazed earlier in the

spring before the four-leaf growth stage has been achieved only if an adequate rest period is allowed for plant re-growth during the peak-growing season (prior to June 15). Residual grazing heights for pasture species under continuous stocking and rotational grazing are listed in Forage Harvest Management (Code 511) specification, TABLE 1. These heights are suggested to allow for plant growth and recovery following grazing. Refer to *Montana Interagency Plant Materials Handbook* for management information on individual forage species.

The planned grazing system for the pasture units must identify key species and balance forage supply with animal demand. Pasture condition and yield information will be used to determine appropriate stocking rates. Refer to *MT-NRCS Pasture Inventory Worksheet (MT-ECS-116)*. See additional specifications for planned grazing systems under Rangelands. Occasionally pasture plants may become over-mature and livestock will reject them. In this instance mowing is desirable to maintain high quality pasture. Mowing pastures should be done only if there is a need to remove undesirable or stagnant vegetation.

Pastures must maintain an appropriate amount and balance of nutrients to be productive. Fertilizer programs will consider the maintenance requirements of the plant species, desired production levels, and soil textures. Soil tests are required prior to the application of fertilizer. Nitrogen fertilizers are used to increase grass production and split applications of nitrogen may be more effective than a single application. Phosphate applications will favor an increase of legumes in the stand. Legumes that are properly inoculated with the appropriate rhizobium will not respond to nitrogen fertilizer and may have soil test results that indicate no nitrogen fertilizer is necessary. Legumes that have not been properly inoculated will respond to nitrogen fertilization. Sulphur and other trace nutrients may be needed.

With rotational stocking methods the need to spread manure should be minimal. There may be areas of manure accumulation where continuous stocking occurs that will need to be dragged to redistribute nutrients back to the pasture.

The maintenance of vigorous stands of forage plants and an adequate fertilizer program will help control weedy plants. If new populations of weeds appear in a pasture, it may be a sign of improper grazing management. Grazing periods can be adjusted to target harvesting of undesirable plants. A combination of control methods should be initiated if weeds become a problem.

Reseeding should be the last step in making a pasture become more productive. In many cases, controlling the management of grazing animals by implementing a grazing plan, followed by correcting deficiencies in soil fertility, will be adequate to bring a pasture back to an acceptable level of productivity. Pasture reseeding should only be considered after these factors have been evaluated.

On irrigated pastures, the type and scheduling of irrigation must be considered when designing the grazing plan. Ideally, pastures should reach field capacity following irrigation before livestock are allowed to graze.

Incompatible Enhancements

This enhancement may not be contracted with the following enhancements:

For pasture: ANM09, ANM12, ANM20, ANM21, ANM22, ANM23, SOE02, ANM30

For range: ANM09, ANM26, ANM30, SOE02, PLT10

Eligible Land

Pasture and rangeland

Applicable Amount

Acres of pasture and/or rangeland

Example (System)

If a participant has 600 acres of pastureland and 800 acres of rangeland; the applicable acres will be 1400 acres. If the participant is willing to intensively graze 80 acres each year beginning in year 2, the applied acres will be 320 (80 acres x 4 years), the Toolkit plan would look like this:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
PLT10		320 ac	320 ac	320 ac	320 ac

Documentation Requirements

1. Provide a prescribed grazing plan that addresses the criteria for this enhancement.
2. Provide a map or aerial photo showing the pastures/paddocks making up the rotational grazing system.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand all that is required for the implementation of this CSP Enhancement Activity.

Contract participant

Date